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THE MEMOIRS OF

HUBERT C. WYCKOFF, JR.

VOLUME I

WATSONVILLE RECOLLECTIONS

Interviewed by Randall Jarrell

Edited by
Randall Jarrell
Doris Johnson

Santa Cruz
1978

Hurbert C. Wyckoff, Jr.
1930

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INTRODUCTION

The Regional History Project was very fortunate to be able to interview Hubert C. Wyckoff, Jr., as part of our series of interviews documenting the history of southern Santa Cruz County. Mr. Wyckoff's family settled in the Pajaro Valley in the 1850s and he is a fifth-generation resident of the area. He has spent much of his life in Watsonville, where he still practices law in the firm established by his father. As one of the founders of the Pajaro Valley Historical Association, Mr. Wyckoff has acquired a respected reputation as a knowledgeable student not only of his family history and genealogy, but of the region's history as well. Devoted as he is to Watsonville history, he recognizes the usefulness of

oral history as a tool for enriching local history sources, and readily agreed to participate in this interview project. We completed twelve taped interviews with Mr. Wyckoff from January 28, 1975 to June 18, 1976, six of which comprise this volume which is devoted to county history. The other six interviews, when processed, will be published in a second volume which will focus on Mr. Wyckoff's work as an attorney, as an administrator of the War Shipping Administration during World War II, and on his distinguished career as a labor arbitrator.

The interview sessions were held in the back parlor of the Wyckoffs' spacious and comfortable home, which formerly belonged to his parents. It sits above Corralitos Road over-looking acres of apple orchards and rolling hills, and in the distance, the Santa Cruz Mountains. Books line the parlor walls, including Mr. Wyckoff's remarkable collection of books on food, wine, and cooking. Several fine landscape paintings adorn the redwood panel walls. Lustrous old Oriental rugs are scattered on the polished oak floors. The antique furnishings of carved walnut and velvet upholstery, the room's dim light and peaceful quiet, and an occasional crackling fire on chilly mornings, provided a conducive atmosphere for Mr. Wyckoff's leisurely and evocative recounting of an earlier way of life. This first volume of memoirs focuses on the turn-of-the-century

daily life of some of Watsonville's prosperous families who were part of the town's small professional community of lawyers, physicians, and businessmen. Mr. Wyckoff was born in 1901, when his parents lived on Carr Street in Watsonville. Shortly thereafter they built a home in an early subdivision, on East Third Street, where he spent his childhood. His neighborhood he affectionately calls the "Roosevelt Addition," since, he explained, President Theodore Roosevelt was an ardent advocate of large families, and the Wyckoff neighborhood had a large population of children.

While Mr. Wyckoff's neighborhood recollections are in no way romantic or nostalgic in the sense of recalling some nonexistent scene of the "good old days," he nonetheless conveys a sense of a way of life, whose characteristic social fabric and daily rhythms have mostly ceased to exist in today's urbanized, densely populated, automobile-dependent towns and suburbs. The small-town life of this well-to-do group of families and individuals in Watsonville during this period before World War I and into the 1920s was perhaps harder, more physically demanding and laborious, and maybe simpler than it is today. Mr. Wyckoff particularizes this generalization in his narration by giving many descriptions of how people lived and worked which illustrate the dailiness of life during that era, and how it contrasts with our own styles of life in the 1970s.

He described affectionately and with humor how people made a living, spent their evenings after dinner, amused and entertained themselves, purchased food and prepared daily meals, raised and disciplined their children, planted gardens, furnished homes, and participated in the life of their community. Mr. Wyckoff's strong sense of what he wanted to talk about, his shar[p] memory for detail, for the evocative smells and visual memories of his youth, and his marked predilection for the anecdotal mode all contribute to the vitality and concreteness of his recollections.

He begins his story with the history of his paternal and maternal families and how they came to settle in California. He discusses the evolving agricultural economy of the Pajaro Valley in the last third of the nineteenth century and how it was influenced by the coming of the railroad in 1872. This provides the large-scale context for his finely-focused narration of his own family history, for his impressionistic biography of his neighborhood and its residents, and for the primary institutions of family and public life.

In addition to the topics covered in the chapters on turn-of-the-century daily life, Mr. Wyckoff discusses the cultural and economic evolution of his community and its maturing public life. He describes the establishment of city services such as the building of the highway connecting Santa

Cruz and Watsonville, the founding of the telephone company, and local railroad transportation. Citizen participation in educational activities, in church and religious organizations, in the founding of the public library and the public park attest to the city's economic health and civic vitality during this period.

Mr. Wyckoff also narrates the story of his father's legal practice, his most noteworthy clients and cases, his wide-ranging activities in state legal circles, and his tenure as president of the California State Bar. He concludes with a commentary on the divergent economic history of the two very dissimilar cities of Watsonville and Santa Cruz which sheds light on the occasional difficulties in their historical relations.

The interviews comprising this volume were transcribed verbatim and edited for continuity and clarity. The manuscript was returned to Mr. Wyckoff for his perusal, final editing, and approval. He made numerous small changes in the transcript, clarified ambiguous or inaudible passages, and made several lengthy amendments which further clarified his spoken narration. These have been incorporated into the finished manuscript. We thank Mr. Wyckoff for his careful reading of the manuscript and are grateful for his concern with accuracy and detail.

The interview tapes have been preserved in the Regional History office, and a portion of the tapes is available for those who might like to listen to the conversations.

The frontispiece photograph was provided by Mr. Wyckoff. Special thanks are due to both Mr. W[y]ckoff and his wife, Florence Wyckoff, for their help in locating photographs, and to Doris M. Johnson, the project's Editorial Assistant, for preparing the map of Mr. Wyckoff's Watsonville neighborhood.

This manuscript is part of a collection of interviews on the history of Santa Cruz County which have been conducted by the Regional History Project. The Project is under the administrative supervision of Carl Wensrich, a University Librarian and head of the Reader Services Division.

Randall Jarrell

June 12, 1978
Regional History Project
McHenry Library
University of California, Santa Cruz

EARLY FAMILY HISTORY

Maternal Family -- Anabel McDonnell

Jarrell: Since I know that your family has lived in the Pajaro Valley for five generations, I thought we could start out with a discussion of your family background and your knowledge of what this area was like in the late 19th century.

Wyckoff: George Stevens, who was of course my [maternal] great-grandfather, had a large family. He was a wood carver and a tinsmith and lived in Gloucester, Massachusetts. One of the things he did was to carve female figures on the prows of clipper ships. In the early 1850s, with the decline of these ships, he was thrown out of work. He wanted to go to California, but he had a large family; he had six or seven daughters and no sons. Or, if he had a son, he died in early youth. He couldn't afford to take the family with him, so he went out by himself to sort of look things over. He took a sailing vessel from New York in 1851 or 1852 to California. It was a big vessel, with 300 people aboard, and sailed around the Strait of Magellan, and up to San Francisco, the journey taking about three months. Life went on in this ship almost as if in a town or city; people were married; many of the women bore children; they had a church sermon every Sunday morning. My great-grandfather kept a diary [which is

how I know about this voyage]. But it was rather dull reading since he accounted for everything. I've had it published as a Christmas present for members of my family. But I did cut out the sermons, which he seemed to have produced in full all the way through the voyage. He must have been a stuffy old man. Once they were becalmed in the Strait of Magellan in the doldrums; without wind, they couldn't move for several days. They stopped only twice on purpose--once in Buenos Aires on the Atlantic side, and once in Valparaiso, Chile, on the Pacific side. When they got to these ports, they stayed a few days to take on water and provisions and to let the passengers go ashore for a while. They all got drunk and the old man didn't approve of that, didn't like that at all. In any event, he got to San Francisco and concluded he wouldn't go to the gold mines. He set up a tinsmith shop on Tehama Street out at the mission, then he sent for his family. His wife and six or seven children took a boat from -- I shouldn't say "boat", I should say "vessel" -- from New York down to the Isthmus of Panama. They walked across the Isthmus and took another boat from the other side of the Isthmus to San Francisco. My grandmother, Mary Dill, was the youngest

child. She was three years old at the time of this journey. This was about 1853 or '54. Since she was too small and young to walk, they hired a porter to carry her on his back across the Isthmus. Some kind of an argument with the porter occurred, and that night when they stopped, she was nowhere to be found. Somebody hurt the porter's feelings and he put Mary Dill down and went back home. They walked back and found her sitting under a bush, playing with a flower. So my grandmother almost didn't make it. She, Mary Stevens, my mother's mother, married a man named McDonnell. He came to San Francisco, but he didn't stay there very long because he suffered very badly from asthma. He moved with my grandmother to Sonoma where the change of climate or air seemed beneficial to him. McDonnell was an active politician. He served as assemblyman in the California Assembly in Sacramento. He also got an appointment from President Cleveland to be Postmaster in Sonoma. They had two daughters, Anabel and May. Mother grew up in Sonoma and attended the local schools in the area. I've seen her name in a museum in Sonoma on programs of school exercises in the early days. My mother entered the University of California in 1892. There were very few women in college in those

days. My mother, Anabel, was named after two aunts, Aunt Anna and Aunt Belle. She changed her name herself, characteristically, to Anabel.

Paternal Family -- The Watsonville Wyckoffs

Wyckoff: My father's father and grandfather came out here in the 1850s. They came to the Pajaro Valley because Stephen Short was living here at the time. One of Stephen Short's daughters, Elizabeth, married my father's grandfather, Jesse Wyckoff. Jesse's son, Stephen Nicholas Wyckoff, was my father's father. [Another daughter, Arminta, married Jacob Blackburn ... thus Arminta Short Blackburn was my father's great aunt.] So, counting Stephen Short, I was the fifth generation in my family to live in the Pajaro Valley. When my father's father and grandfather came to the Valley, they had little money. They were both a couple of hayseeds. They came here and my great-grandfather Wyckoff bought a ranch in Prunedale. He was a genius at buying poor land, marginal land. Anything you could get for $10 an acre, he'd buy it. They had a hell of a time eking out a living on that land. When he could no

longer make a go after that first parcel, he bought some more poor land in Buzzard's Lagoon, which is up Eureka Canyon near a place called Ryder's Ranch. You can still go up and see Buzzard's Lagoon. It's quite a place for an outing because you can picnic on the shores of the lagoon and look out over Monterey Bay and see the entire Monterey Peninsula. I can remember going back to the place where my grandfather was born. It was a town called Oquawka, in the northwest corner of Illinois, near Monmouth College, on the banks of the Mississippi River. I went to the recorder's office in the courthouse to see if I could find the land where my grandfather Wyckoff was born and where he lived. He passed his youth up until the time he was about 21 in Oquawka. I found the place and got somebody in town to drive me out to look at it. This fellow who took me out there said, "Is this where your grandfather lived?" And I said, "Yes." "Well," he said, "this is mighty poor land. It's the poorest land around here."

Early Life -- Anabel McDonnell and Hubert Coke Wyckoff

Wyckoff: Well, my father was born in Prunedale and my uncle Alfred, my father's younger brother, was born in

Buzzard's Lagoon. My father's grandmother insisted that he be named Coke, which was her husband's middle name. The famous Lord Chief Justice of England was named Coke, and Grandmother Wyckoff decided that my father should be named Coke, too, and that he should become a lawyer. I don't know whether the name influenced him or not, but my father was foolish enough to become a lawyer. My father went through the local schools in Watsonville, and he graduated from Watsonville High School in the class of 1892. His father then moved to Berkeley and built a large home on Bancroft Way between Telegraph and Bowditch Street, directly across the street from the University. In this house my father lived with his parents and his sister and two brothers during the time he was in college. All of my father's brothers and his sister went to the University of California. My mother and father apparently got to know one another quite early in the course of their college careers. It's hard to believe, but there were only 300 students in the University of California at Berkeley at the time they entered. I've seen an old Blue and Gold joking about Bert Wyckoff and Anabel McDonnell holding hands in the glade. But in any event, they apparently became

engaged; they were both graduated in the class of 1896. My father decided he couldn't go to law school. He had a younger sister and two younger brothers and even though my grandfather had means and a large home on Bancroft. Way, my father didn't want to be a further burden on him as soon as he got out of college. In order to earn enough money to go to law school, my father joined a survey party and went down to Guatemala City, Guatemala, to make a survey for the first railroad to be built there. The railroad went from Guatemala City up into the mountains to a place called Chichicastenango. He was there for a year with this surveying party. So he earned enough money to go to law school. But he didn't want to go to the local law schools in San Francisco; he wanted to go to Columbia Law School, which he did. During the time my father was going to law school, my mother taught school in Sonoma. She had a teacher's certificate. One of her pupils was Stanley Dollar, son of the original Robert Dollar of the Dollar Steamship Company. There were other families who remembered her. The Martinellis were one of the families living in Sonoma. Jordon Martinelli afterwards became a judge in San Rafael. As soon as my father was admitted to the bar,

I think in 1899, my mother and father were married, and he returned to Watsonville to practice law. While he was in Guatemala, he wrote many letters to my mother and sent photographs to her. When my father died in 1936, my mother went down to Guatemala to see this railroad she'd heard so much about all her life. She had to go on a freighter ... there wasn't a passenger vessel and apparently not much of a harbor at Guatemala City. Only an open roadstead, as the sailors say, was in use. So this freighter had to stand offshore and unload cargo on the barges, and then the barges would take it into the docks. My mother was 63 years old. They put her in a boatswain's chair and then wrapped her in a cargo net and picked her off the deck with a winch and dumped her down on the barge and she went into Guatemala with the cargo. This was a sentimental journey for her.

Jarrell: What was the Pajaro Valley like in 1899?

Wyckoff: There were three counties in the Pajaro Valley at that time. The northeastern section, the southeastern section in San Benito County [the county seat of which is Hollister, southeast of San Juan], and Aromas in San Benito County. The boundary between Watsonville in Santa Cruz County and Monterey County is the Pajaro

River which goes roughly down the middle of the Pajaro Valley. Almost half of the southern portion of the Pajaro Valley is situated in Monterey County. The center of the Pajaro River was the boundary line between the two counties. Santa Cruz County built a wooden, covered bridge out halfway into the middle of the stream. Monterey was a more affluent county, and built the rest of the bridge with steel girders. So you'd go through this wooden bridge halfway, then you'd emerge on the Monterey half of the river and go across the rest of the bridge in the open on steel girders.

Watsonville: The Railroad and the Changing Agricultural Economy

Wyckoff: There was no railroad in the Pajaro Valley until the year 1872, the year my father was born. The Valley was a hay and grain center and a good deal of it was consumed locally. The only thing that was sold out of the Valley was this hay and grain, oats and whatnot, which went by boat at the foot of Third Street where Pajaro Dunes is now, to San Francisco or Los Angeles. Up until that time there were no orchards here, no row crops, no berries. But when the railroad came through

in 1872, my Grandfather Wyckoff's brother, Francis Wyckoff, who was an undertaker in Watsonville, was on the Board of Aldermen of the City of Watsonville. He was the chairman of the group that wrote the first city charter, the Watsonville City Charter. He's buried down here in the Pioneer Hill Cemetery with the rest of my tribe. And this is how it happened. The railroad surveying parties and engineers came down the coast to lay out the railroad. They would come to a town and say, "If you want this railroad to go through your town, you'll have to give us a little cumshaw, a little money." The people who'd pay that kind of tribute got the railroad right down the main street of the town. The Southern Pacific Railroad went right through the center of San Mateo, Morgan Hill, Gilroy, San Jose, and so on for years and years. But when it got down here ... you see my great uncle had more probity than brains. He told these engineering and survey boys to go to hell. So they said, "All right, we'll put your goddamn town out of business." They routed the railroad across the Pajaro River two miles from the center of town. The railroad still goes by over there. Another thing they did when they built that railroad, was to put up structures which could be

used afterwards as a hotel. These structures were built for the surveying and engineering crews. When they tried to build a town over there, they used them as a hotel and put up stores with the idea of putting Watsonville out of business altogether.

Jarrell: What was it called?

Wyckoff: Pajaro.

Jarrell: Just Pajaro?

Wyckoff: Yes. The railroad station was called Pajaro, but years and years afterwards when Watsonville grew and Pajaro didn't, they changed the name to Watsonville Junction. That's the name of it now. There was a large railroad community over there. They put a roundhouse there and shops; it was the junction point where they changed engines. In my youth, the railroad community had 3500 people. They were people of substance. They were civic minded and had a good reputation in town. Of course you couldn't get across that bridge and get over to Pajaro to catch the train unless you took a hack. Another thing that the railroad did was to change the farming economy of this valley. It became feasible then to plant orchards. My great-uncle James Waters, who was a horticulturist, was instrumental in

introducing apples to this valley. He sold mainly Newtown Pippin tree stock. The reason he pushed that apple was that it was green; a very firm apple. It would travel all the way to London. Until 1925 all apples went out of this community to the Liverpool market. They went by rail, refrigerator car, to New York ... then were transshipped to refrigerator boats, and then to Liverpool. These green Newtown Pippin apples stood that voyage very well indeed. They didn't raise any red apples here.

Jarrell: Who had established this particular European market?

Wyckoff: Well my great-uncle had a good deal to do with that.

Jarrell: Really?

Wyckoff: Yes. James Waters established the Pajaro Valley Nursery in 1865. He also introduced the strawberry here. All this came after the railroad in '72 you see. He was a highly intelligent man. He not only sold this nursery stock to the farmers, but he would counsel with them, advise them where they should market these crops, how they should market them, and he would get [ahold of] stock that would travel well. He experimented with strawberries and produced the Linda [named after his wife] later known as the Melinda

Strawberry which became the dominant variety [522 acres by 1895]. It was firm, dark crimson with deep red fleck and an excellent flavor. But the apple market, getting back to the apple market, these fellows didn't do any advertising here because they were enjoying this monopoly of the British market. I never understood why eastern orchardists never got around to trying to get into it, but they never did. Then in 1925 some people started dying of arsenic poisoning in England, and finally some wiseacre over there found out that orchardists here were using the sprays containing arsenic. They hung the poisoning on the Watsonville apples and destroyed the whole goddamned English market; the rug was just pulled out from under them. Meanwhile the orchardists in the Northwest had captured the domestic retail market with Red Delicious apples when they advertised extensively. So the local orchardists had an awful rough time. A lot of them pulled their Newtown apples out because green apples didn't have what they call "housewife appeal" and just sat on the shelves in grocery stores. They started planting red apples, but you know, I still think a Newtown Pippin's-a far better apple than these red ones. They're far juicier. But it took these

orchardists here a long time to accommodate themselves to that shock ... the loss of that British market and the stiff competition in the Northwest with a different apple in the domestic market. There was a genius here, a promoter, named E. E. Luther who married a local girl from Aromas. He started a thing called the California Spray Chemical Company right here in this town. Many years later he sold out to Standard Oil which became their Ortho Division.

Jarrell: Pesticides.

Wyckoff: Luther formed an alliance with a chemist. He was an inventor of sorts also ... William H. Volck ... who invented a spray for apple trees and crops. This spray had an oil base instead of a poison base. .When you put a film of oil over an apple tree for example, the oil film would deprive the pests of oxygen; they would suffocate instead of being poisoned. Luther and Volck made a fortune out of this goddamn spray which they advertised as not being poisonous. They also sold it to the orange orchardists down south. Volck lived across the street from the high school in a house which his widow presented to the Pajaro Valley Historical Association. It is now the museum of the Pajaro Valley Historical Association and named the

William H. Volck Museum after him.

WATSONVILLE: TURN OF THE CENTURY

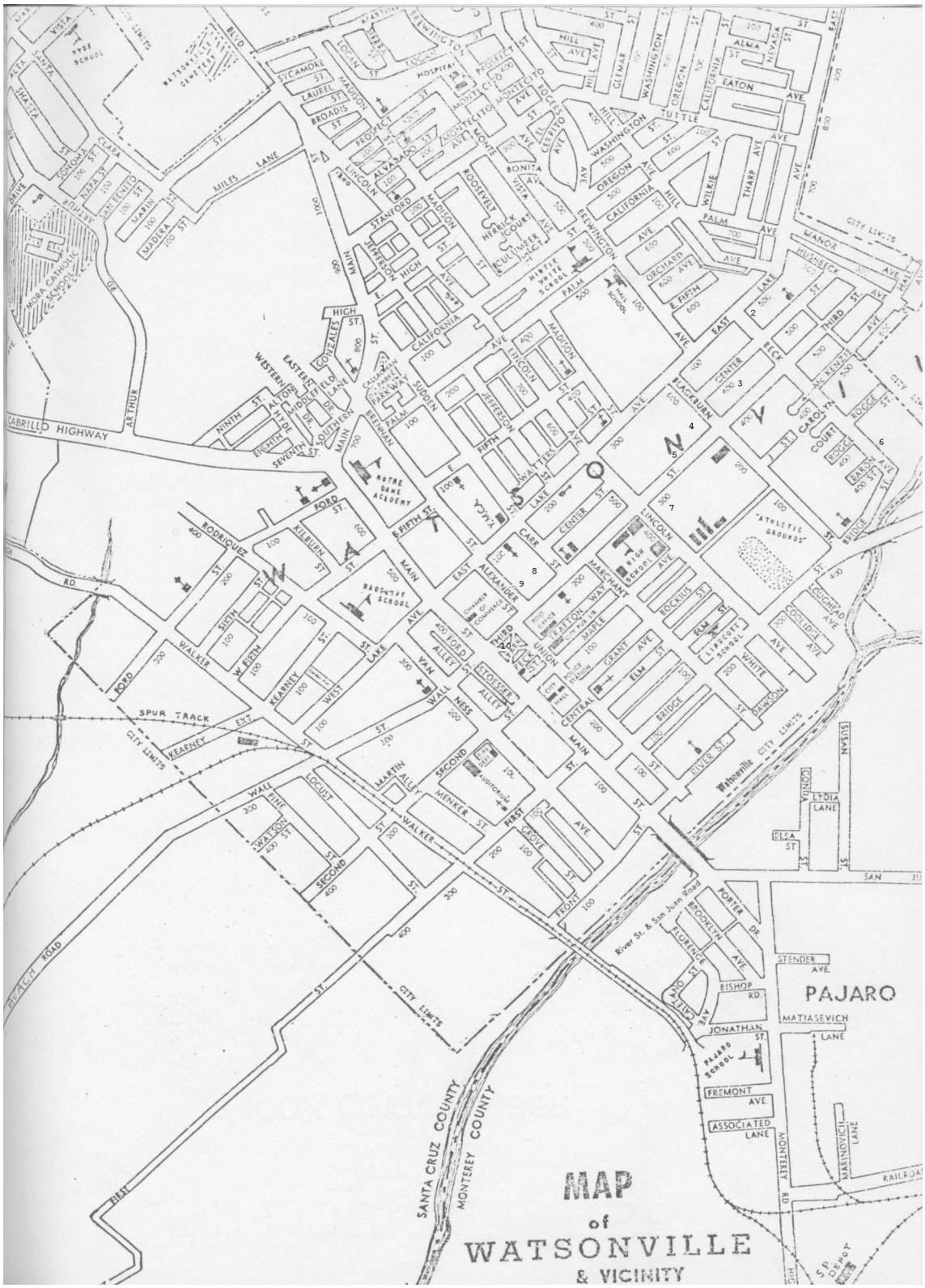
Neighborhood Residences

Jarrell: Could you describe some of your relatives' and friends' neighborhoods and residences?

The Jacob Blackburn Property

Wyckoff: One of the first residences in Watsonville was that of Jacob Blackburn, after whom Blackburn Street was named. He owned all of the property from East Lake Avenue down to Salsipuedes Creek on the south and as far east as what is now known as Beck Street. The Blackburn residence was a large, two-story house. It had a formal parlor in the front, which was quite a convention in those days and which was virtually never used. In the living room, known as the sitting room, was a fireplace. Across the hall was a very large dining room with mahogany furniture and a mahogany sideboard with a large, atrocious oil painting of a Mississippi River steamer ... racing, I would say, because it was belching plenty of smoke. Always on this sideboard were decanters and a large wooden bowl

full of nuts, mainly hazelnuts and Brazil nuts, which were known in those days as "nigger toes." Whenever I went over to that house I always made a pass at those Brazil nuts which I was very fond of and still am.



1) Callaghan Park
2) Beck
3) Roosevelt Addition
(Pope, Gardner, Wyckoff, White)
4) Langley
5) Brewington
6) Stephen Short
7) Bockius
8) Watters
9) Hospital
10) Plaza

Jarrell: What did Jacob Blackburn do for a living?

Wyckoff: Well, Blackburn owned this property I mentioned as well as property on Main Street and he was a farmer. This was farming property.

Jarrell: Did he rent out his land?

Wyckoff: No. He operated it himself; he had a herd of cows and produced milk and butter on a rather large scale. He had a long row of chicken houses and raised a great many chickens and eggs. He had a large barn in the backyard with several carriages and wagons in it. He had two hired men who helped him operate the farm. A lot of the land alongside the house, from the house on the east toward Beck Street, was pastureland where he kept his horses, cows, and bulls. And in front of the house were three very tall, a hundred, hundred and fifty feet, English walnut trees with no limbs on them till you got up twenty-five or thirty feet. You can't crack an English walnut except with an anvil using a sledge hammer. They have a very thick shell. They're called black walnuts. Arminta, his wife, ran an elaborate front garden that had a lot of rare, exotic trees, shrubs, plants, including those big walnut trees I described. For example, there were, in front

of the Blackburn residence, two very large, beautiful, red Japanese plum trees. They had deep red plums and the leaves on the trees were also a deep red. There were some large eucalyptus trees on the Blackburn side of the street as well.

Arminta Blackburn's Subdivision

Wyckoff: Arminta Blackburn lost her husband at the turn of the century. The reason my father built his house in this neighborhood was because of Arminta Blackburn, or Aunt Min as she was known. Since she was a widow, it was difficult for her to manage and operate the large apple orchard behind her house, the pastureland and all the chickens and dairy herd and so forth. Apparently she needed some money, so she sold off her front garden. She extended Third Street to go from the city limits at Blackburn Street, extended Third Street down to Beck Street. This cut right through her front yard, and she sold off her front garden; she sold three -- one, two, three, four lots. The neighborhood in which we lived, where these four houses were built Dr. Pope's house, Mr. John Gardner's house [he was my father's partner], our house, and the Edward White

home -- were all outside the city limits. The four houses were the only houses in the entire block, more than a block. It's a block from Third Street over to Fourth Street down around East Lake Avenue, then on down East Lake Avenue to Beck Street, along Beck Street back to the end of the extension of Third Street; that entire area had only these four houses on it. My father's house was #409; Gardner's was, I think, #405; Dr. Pope's was #401; I'm not sure, but I think that the White house next door to my father was #415. All of these four houses still stand.

Dr. Pope's Home

Wyckoff: The corner lot, that is on the corner of Blackburn and East Third, was sold to Dr. Saxton Temple Pope who had just come down from San Francisco just out of medical school to start the practice of medicine in Watsonville. He built his home on the corner of Blackburn and East Third. This was a 50-foot lot that Dr. Pope built on ... they were rather small lots, but in keeping with the lots as they existed in the town ... most lots were even smaller than that. It was a very beautiful house; it still is. The house was redwood throughout. Redwood panelling ... all the

panelling in the rooms was redwood. Dr. Pope also used, instead of ordinary brick, clinker brick.

Jarrell: What is clinker brick?

Wyckoff: Well, clinker bricks were known as defective bricks ... not shapely, regular, the way a brick is ... they're rejects really; they are not a uniform red color like an ordinary brick. These bricks were black and were what some people called contemptuously "artistic," because they were irregular-shaped, different colors, some red, part red, part black and pink. But they were a beautiful thing to accompany redwood panelling.

Jarrell: Do you think the lumber was locally milled?

Wyckoff: Oh yes. No question about it. It was milled in Eureka Canyon. Right off the back porch of the houses all these establishments had a long building ... not part of the house ... I would say it was 30 or 40 feet long, rectangular-shaped. It was a combination woodshed ... the part nearest the kitchen of course always the woodshed, because you were passing wood into the kitchen stove. All these places had kitchen stoves similar to ours ... so what they call stove pieces, large cuts of wood, were kept in the woodshed.

Jarrell: Stove length?

Wyckoff: Yes, stove length, that's right. Someone must have cut a hell of a lot of oak trees down around this country because they were pretty heavy stuff and this is the way they heated their houses and the way they cooked. Didn't use any coal ... I don't know anybody that used any coal or any other form of heat than this. Nobody had furnaces around here that I ever knew anything about. Well Dr. Pope liked to do things with his hands, so he had a little workroom, carpenter shop, in this shed. He also had quarters for a servant. There was a toilet and a washbasin. The washbasin was in a sort of small bedroom affair; then the toilet was alone, a room all by itself which you got into from the outside.

Jarrell: A kind of a privy?

Wyckoff: No, no. A regular stool. In front of the Pope House was an enormous acacia tree which stood right in the center of the sidewalk area, extending down on into the street. Dr. Pope had four children: Saxton, Elizabeth, Virginia, and Lee. Lee Pope subsequently became a partner of mine.

The John E. Gardner Residence

Wyckoff: Next door to Dr. Pope, John E. Gardner built a home. He was my father's partner in the practice of law. John E. Gardner built a home much like Dr. Pope's home ... with redwood panelling throughout. Lots of people didn't like this redwood panelling because it made for dark-rooms. My mother, for example, didn't go for the redwood panelling. Houses had fireplaces all over the place ... the only means of heat. When you have fireplaces in a redwood house, redwood tends to smoke up; it gets black. I remember we had a friend in San Francisco who had an old Willis Polk redwood house. It was very dark, and she ... it was during the Depression, the 30s ... she hired some people who needed work. She simply gave them some steel wool and they steel-wooled this redwood, which was really quite black. After they rubbed for several days the redwood panelling turned out the most beautiful honey color you ever saw in your life -- smooth like velvet. In front of Mr. Gardner's house on the front lawn were a pear tree and a peach tree. The Gardner House and the Pope House had apple trees in the backyard which hadn't been cut down.

The White Residence

Wyckoff: Now the Whites lived next door on the other side of us. [The Gardners on one side and the Whites on the other.] Edward White married Anna Royce. They had a very large family. Edward, Jr., Ellen, Lucille, Raymond, Roy, Bill, Mildred, and Jimmy ... there were seven of them, seven children. [Roy had died quite young]. Their house had in front, as you went in the hallway, a staircase that went upstairs; there were bedrooms and a bathroom upstairs where all the White children slept. Mr. and Mrs. White had a downstairs bedroom. As you went in the front door there was a kind of what they called a library on the right with a fireplace in it. They sat and did all their talking in there. Then there was a parlor on the left hand side. The shades were always down; nobody ever used it except for funerals and things like that. Then there was a very large dining room with an alcove off it, a very large kitchen and the same type of pantry and back porch that there was in our house. I remember being fascinated by the fact that in the White's downstairs bedroom was a folding bed. It was a tremendous oak affair, and it stood high enough so that you could pick the bed up and fold it up; it

looked like a great big armoire.

Jarrell: I saw one of those in an antique shop.

Wyckoff: My mother was terrified when she heard about it because she'd never been over in that house. I told her about it and she said she'd be afraid to sleep in it. She thought that bed might come down on her, locking her in the bed. Anyhow the Whites were one of the families that lived in the front garden of Jacob Blackburn. Alongside the White house was a thing that we used to call the orchard. It was a large apple orchard. There were some large rose bushes alongside of the White house. And there was a cork oak tree. And that cork oak tree still stands on East Third Street just beyond the White house, which I think is 415 East Third Street, now East Beach Street. You drive along there sometime you can see this cork oak tree. Mr. White's father farmed here before him and owned a good deal of property. Ed White owned a ranch out in Calabasas. There's a road called White Road, used to be Calabasas Road. There's a school district called Calabasas. It is out in back of Henry Mello's on White Road. Ed White also had timber property in a district called Pescadero. You got out past the Granite Rock Quarry until you get to the place where the Southern

Pacific trestle is, you take a left turn, go right up the side of the mountain to his timber holdings there. There was a sawmill there operated by a man called De Hart. There was a soda spring up near that place. Mrs. White used to make up a demijohn of lemonade with lots of sugar in it, and we'd stop at that soda spring and fill the demijohn with soda water, very nice soda water. It was like our club soda. That spring is still there I'm told. I haven't been there for years. At the foot of that grade, before you went up that mountainside, were sulphur springs. They were right near the Southern Pacific Railroad trestle where you cross the Pajaro River. People used to go there and take the waters. I guess they were a mild laxative so people derived something out of it. The doctors tell me that 50 percent of the American people suffer from constipation. People would hold their noses and drink this stuff. It smelled like rotten eggs.

The Wyckoff Family Home

Wyckoff: My family built a home on East Third Street, number 409, about a year or so after I was born, and moved into that home.

Jarrell: When were you born?

Wyckoff: I was born July 2, 1901. At that time my father and mother resided in Watsonville, California, on Carr Street, approximately across the street from the Episcopal Church behind the residence of Dr. P. K. Watters, who also maintained a hospital alongside his residence. I have no recollection of this residence on Carr Street. The home at 409 East Third Street was outside the city limits, which went no further than what is now known as Blackburn Street. Directly in front of my father's house were these three enormous black walnut trees. Also in the front yard of our house was a redwood tree. The house had two large bay windows on either side of the front porch. First you entered a hall, to the right of which was a large dining room and a bay window looking out into the front yard. The house was set back some distance from the street. The dining room was a very gaudy room. It had red plaster, a very deep, positive red.

Jarrell: Burgundy color.

Wyckoff: Yes. Fortunately the 1906 earthquake knocked all the plaster off that room. So we got rid of the red. By that time, my mother was tired of it herself. Red was too much; it was a very striking sort of thing. Then

behind the dining room was a kitchen and a pantry alongside the kitchen. The kitchen contained an iron range or stove with an oven and a firebox in which was burned oak wood. It was a very large stove, a very heavy stove unlike today's stoves. It was solid cast iron, like a restaurant range I suppose you'd call it. It had a stovepipe that went up; around the stovepipe was a large shelf with doors on it where you could keep plates warm before you served dinner. Inside this stove were coils of pipes. The fire in the stove heated all the hot water for the whole house, the bath and the bathroom upstairs; heated by putting hot water in the hot water taps in the house. That stove also gave off a hell of a lot of heat; in fact, enough heat to heat the dining room which had no fireplace, and probably heat the front hall as well. It warmed that general area of the house. The long building off the back porch of our house was all woodshed except the storage place for suitcases and trunks and things of that kind. A chore of mine was taking wood and stacking it in that woodshed. I didn't like this very much, but it was all on account of the big wagon ... it just dumped this wood right in front of the house, out on the street. So I was under pressure to get it

off the street as rapidly as possible. I'd load the wheelbarrow, and take a wheelbarrow load around the side of the house and back to the woodshed. Then I couldn't throw the wood; I'd stack it because you could get more wood in there that way. That woodshed was always kept pretty full of wood, stacked as high as I could get up and stack it. I also had to keep a box full of wood beside the kitchen stove and also for the various fireplaces in the house. That was one of the chores that I have the earliest recollection of. There were two pantries; the back one was alongside a large screened-in back porch; the other was alongside the kitchen. There was no icebox, no refrigeration of any kind. The back porch pantry was open to circulation of air, and there my mother and father always kept several cases of wine. He didn't keep nor did he drink or serve hard liquor. My father was the attorney for this winery over in Santa Cruz, the Ben Lomond Wine Company, which used to win prizes in Paris for its wines in the years at the turn of the century. They kept him supplied with cases of wine which he kept in this outside pantry. Also kept in this outside pantry were boxes of apples, fruits of one kind or another; the things that you would, I suppose,

ordinarily put in an icebox. We kept Edam cheeses, big red ones, out there as well. We cut off the top and then scooped the cheese out from the inside. We also had Monterey Jack cheeses which were kept in a gunnysack soaked with olive oil and then put into a large paper sack. The indoor pantry right alongside the kitchen had a marble slab on a shelf and cupboards in which the crockery was kept. Between that room and the dining room it was possible to let down a whole section so that you could pass things from the pantry onto a shelf for serving in the dining room. This made it very easy to serve a meal and clear the table by not having to go through the swinging door into the kitchen. You could take things from the stove and put them in the pantry and set them there where they could be picked up and taken out. On back of this shelf was a mirror [seen from the dining room] but there was a door that let down the entire length of the shelf. That pantry was also used for preparing cake batters; pies were made there, dough was rolled out; salads were prepared; that sort of thing went on ... all on the large slab of marble that was part of the shelving around the room. I liked to lick the bowl in which cake batter was made, to eat it raw. Also, like Julia

Child, I loved raw pie dough. My mother didn't like this. She had told Kori, our cook, not to hit me, so Kori pinched me. Kori was a Japanese girl. She came to my mother when the house was first built. Kori had very strong, muscular, wiry little fingers; I would much rather have taken a big cuff than to get one of those pinches. They didn't mind so much my licking the cake batter from the bowl, but when I started grabbing small pieces of pie dough, then my mother would get mad and cuff me over the ear. On the left, as you entered the house, was a living room which likewise had a bay window looking out onto the front yard. The living room must have gone back 40 feet and was probably about 20 feet wide. There was a fireplace at the rear end of the living room and a grand piano, a davenport, and easy chairs. I remember a thing called a Morris chair which was a special fad in our days. My father sat in it. [It had bars so that ʸou could elevate or lower the back.] And the arms were goats, carved wooden goats, with long beards and sad eyes. There was a little hallway that paralleled the living room. It had a washbasin and a little room with a toilet in it. And then there was another, quite good-sized room which was nearer to the ground than the

main part of the house. It was down two or three steps almost to ground level. Kori [our Japanese housekeeper] lived there. There was a fireplace in her room which backed the living room fireplace. When you got halfway upstairs, like a mezzanine, you turned at the first landing to the right and there was a library built for my father. There was a desk in it, and also a fireplace which was part of that living room flue. There were a great many books around the house ... things that my mother and father were interested in. There were complete sets-of Shakespeare, Dickens, Tennyson, of Robert Louis Stevenson, and many others. Also we had very beautiful children's books illustrated by famous artists. I had Lamb's Tales from Shakespeare, illustrated by Arthur Rackham. We had a great many large books ... a 10 x 12, illustrated by Maxfield Parrish; The Arabian Nights; Tanglewood Tales by Nathaniel Hawthorne; Hans Christian Andersen's Fairy Tales illustrated by Edmund Dulac. I can still remember a very beautiful illustration of The Princess on the Pea in a four-poster bed with about fifteen mattresses piled up on it complaining about a pea at the bottom of the pile.

Then there was a beautiful illustration in that

book of the king that got swindled by the tailors, who swindled the whole damn town.

Jarrell: The Emperor's New Clothes.

Wyckoff: Yes, that's it. Thinking that he was buying a beautiful new suit of clothes and prancing down the street to show off the new clothes with nothing on but his under-drawers ... it took a child to say that he didn't have anything on. Everybody else had fallen into the routine of saying, "What a wonderful job the tailors have done." A very penetrating commentary on human nature. This library, sometimes called the den, had oak french doors which opened out onto this large sleeping porch which was across the back half of the house. I slept on this sleeping porch, and then when my brother Bud was born five years later, after he got old enough to be taken away from his mother, he came out there and slept too. My father, who was restless at night, used to disturb my mother by turning on the light to read. When he got on one of these restless streaks, he had a bed put out on the sleeping porch. The three of us slept out there a good deal of the time. My brother was a bedwetter. My father would wake up at 2 o'clock in the morning and want to read and would come out back on the porch first to see if he

could get my brother up; get him up so he wouldn't wet the bed. Then he'd stay out there and read and this didn't bother me 'cause I was generally pretty tired when I went to bed at night; I led an active life out-of-doors; but I seem to have got his habit because I do the same thing now. I often wake up in the middle of the night and read for a long time. In addition to this sleeping porch there was, over the front porch, a large bathroom with a toilet in it that had a box of water way up on the ceilin[g] and a long chain to pull it; there was also an ordinary bathtub, a big one. This thing was upstairs and centered over the front of the house. I didn't bathe very often because I guess it was too much work. I remember when I was resistant ... I didn't like to have my ears cleaned out. I used to like to suck on the washrag. My mother didn't like that.

Jarrell: [Laughter]

Wyckoff: When my brother got to be two or three years old, my mother used to throw us both in the bathtub at the same time, always on Saturday night. We used to get into water fights and sit on top of each other and slide down into the tub. It must have been an awful ordeal for my mother. My mother's bedroom was on the

southwest corner of the upstairs floor. It was a large bedroom with windows to the south and to the west. I remember she had bird's-eye maple furniture in that room. In it was my father's chiffonier, my mother's dressing table, and a big dresser. There were two closets on the side of the windows, and a large double bed. The room adjoining that generally had a crib in it. This little room was where babies and small children were kept. An airtight stove which was the only heat upstairs except for that den was also kept there. None of these rooms upstairs had fireplaces in them. My mother used the closets in that room for herself. There was always, it seemed to me, a dressmaker in the baby room there. My mother had a Wilcox & Gibbs sewing machine operated by a treadle, by using the feet. There was a dressmaker called Miss Hansen and she made, I suppose, most of my mother's clothing. I know she made all mine: She used to make Russian blouses and short pants. She also made an abominable thing called a farrus-waist which is like a shirt and a row of buttons around the middle. Your pants were made so they could button on this shirtwaist and then it had garters hanging down from it to fasten onto long black stockings. So you see

this farrus-waist was holding your pants up and holding your stockings up. Then you'd put a shirt on over that. Underneath that you wore a woolen union suit, except in the summertime. With all that clothing on, it was no wonder that you smelled bad. My mother used to say that small boys always smelled like brass doorknobs.

Jarrell: Did Miss Hansen come in and do all of her work in your house?

Wyckoff: Yes, she did it all in the house. She used my mother's sewing machine. I remember watching her. She used to have all kinds of patterns and she'd cut things out on a big table. She worked the sewing machine and earned a great deal making clothes for everybody and mending things.

Jarrell: Even for your father?

Wyckoff: I don't think she ever, made anything for my father. The house fronted on Third Street, and my father's lot, which was 50 feet wide, went all the way through to Center Street. At the rear of the property, fronting on Center Street, my father built a two-story barn where he kept two carriages, a surrey, and what was called a buggy, a two-seater with a leather buck-board which carried just two people. The surrey of

course was bigger. Alongside of the part of the barn which was the carriage house were four stalls for horses. Along with it, right at the door as you went into these series of stalls, there was a tack room where the harnesses, bridles, bit, and so forth were kept. Also kept in that room were curry combs and brushes to curry and brush the horses.

Jarrell: Who took care of the horses?

Wyckoff: I did. It was my job to go upstairs in the barn where there were bales of hay and open places over the stalls which were down below. We'd go up there, and there was an ax which we used to give a tap to the baling wire around the bales of hay -- it was tight -- a tap of the ax would break the baling wire. Then you could take a pitchfork and pitch hay down into each of these stalls.

Jarrell: How old were you when this was your job?

Wyckoff: Eight years old, I guess. My father taught me how to do this and used to help me. Also in this tack room were sacks of oats kept in boxes to keep the rats and mice out. There was a box alongside of the manger into which you put the oats for the horses. Also, outside there was always a bale of so of straw which was put

down underfoot because the horses pissed and crapped all over the stable; beats cleaning it out. There was an open window in the portion of the barn where the stalls were located and you'd shovel or take the pitchfork and pitch this stuff out, the manure and straw. It made a manure heap outside that open window. The window was kept open all the time. That manure pile stood out there and was permitted to rot. I think my mother doctored it with something; I don't know, but it would rot and make compost for the garden. Also, my father had purchased a cider mill which was kept in the barn. It was operated by hand; it was a hopper with a wheel with teeth in it. You'd feed apples into this hopper, turn the wheel, and that would grind up the apples, and they would pass down through the hopper into a oak and cast iron cylinder and from there onto an oak platform. It had a runway around the edge. The runway was shaped like a barrel with hoops around it and had, instead of being solid, openings so that the juice could run off. There was a worm [gear] that you could turn that would press, once it was full of crushed apples, to get apple juice.

Jarrell: You mentioned that your mother had a garden.

Wyckoff: Yes. There was very rich soil -- bottomland -- around

our house. The Pajaro River and the Salsipuedes Creek used to overflow and they'd come right up to our front door. For years this flooding had taken place so there was a deposit of very rich soil. My mother had a large front lawn and a fence along the front. You entered through the fence gate to enter the front yard. The gate had a roof on it and a honeysuckle vine grew over that roof. I used to get up on top of it and lie and suck honeysuckle. One of the first things I can remember was "Where the bee sucks, there sucked I."

Jarrell: You pulled out the little stem and sucked on it?

Wyckoff: That's right. There was honey in the stem. I liked it as much as the bees. Then there was a lawn with flower beds around it. Shortly after I was born, Mother planted a redwood tree in the front yard. On the east side of the house violets were planted and a plant called smilax, which looks somewhat like a fern, was planted. There were dahlias along the west side of the house. The backyard, the yard between the barnyard and the house, oh, I guess must have been 50, 60, 70, 75 feet long. Part of the Blackburn garden was left intact when they built our house. There were apple trees, survivors of the Blackburn front garden, in our backyard. There was a Newtown apple tree, an apple

called a White Astrakhan; there was a black Tartarian cherry tree; a peach tree, a variety which was white ... not yellow as we get out of tin cans. It seems that they called them strawberry peaches 'cause they had a little pink tinge to them. There was also a vegetable garden. It had quite a bit of asparagus in it. There was an herb garden back there too. In the backyard John Kori [our Japanese housekeeper's husband] built my mother what we called the summer house. It was a square platform, open to the air; just beams held the roof up. The roof was thatched and benches ran around the inside edges. I watched John Kori build this summer house. It had no nails in it, and he had no tools except an adze, which looks like a short hoe and was sharp as a razor.

Jarrell: Japanese-style joining.

Wyckoff: Yes. The whole thing was carefully joined together without nails. It had a real thatch roof, too. Alongside of that John made a little pond with some goldfish in it.

Jarrell: About the garden, did your mother ever have garden parties?

Wyckoff: No.

Jarrell: This was just for her own and the family's enjoyment?

Wyckoff: That's right.

The Langley Family

Wyckoff: Now there was one more family to round out this neighborhood in which I passed my youth -- the Langley family. The Langleys lived just west of Dr. Pope across Blackburn Street on the corner of East Third and Blackburn Street. The Langley house still stands there. It's a red house, large frame house, a two-story house. Charlie Langley was the son of a wealthy family in San Francisco. I think it was a wholesale drug house in San Francisco called Langley & Michaels. He was the son of the Langley that founded that highly profitable institution. But Charlie was a little on the wild side. So they sent him down to Watsonville; they bought a horse farm for him out in Prunedale-- it's across the river -- there's still a road out there called Langley Road. They sent Charlie down there to tame him down a little bit. And they bought him a farm there and bought him some horses; he was interested in horses, so he horse-farmed for a while. Then he fell in love with a very beautiful young Irish girl named Annie Sheehy and he married Annie Sheehy

and that completed his subjugation for she presented him promptly with four beautiful daughters. And he sold the horse farm, moved into town, built this home on the corner of East Third and Blackburn Street. Langley had a large barn for horses behind his house. All these people had horses. They ran horses and buggies in those days. Langley settled down to a very quiet life; he became cashier at the Pajaro Valley National Bank where he served all his life; brought up these four daughters, one of whom, the youngest one, was my age ... Helen Louise Langley.

Roosevelt Addition

Wyckoff: Now those were the days when Theodore Roosevelt was President of the United States, and he believed in large families and he did not believe in birth control. The Whites had seven children. My mother and father had four. John Gardner had no children. Pope's had four children and the Langley's had four children. They used to call this group of houses, they called it the Roosevelt Addition. 'Cause there was a jingle going around in those days about Roosevelt which went

as follows: Teddy, Teddy, rough and ready 'Population' was his cry. 'Like the rabbit, Get the habit Get together, multiply.' That's why this was known as the Roosevelt Addition.

The Bockius Property

Wyckoff: Across the street from the Langley house was the Bockius property. Mr. Bockius was the great-grandfather of Frank Orr. Frank Orr still lives in the Bockius house. It was a large house set back from the street. And then an apple orchard went all the way from his house down to Blackburn Street, then Blackburn Street all the way down to what's now Bridge Street. He also made a neat amount of money by growing rhubarb between the apple trees and supplied the fancy hotel and restaurant trade in San Francisco with rhubarb. He was a great quality rhubarb producer on a big scale.

The Brewington Subdivision

Wyckoff: Third Street from Lincoln Street on to Blackburn

Street had sidewalk on the north side which was the side where the Langley house was. Then there was a family named Brewington after which the Brewington subdivision was named. Next door to him was a house and large barn behind. But the other side of the street, the south side of East Third Street, all from Lincoln Street, from the Bockius home all the way down to Blackburn Street, did not have sidewalk, curb, or gutter at all. It was just ground. There was wooden curbing in front of our house and then a little gravel. The sidewalks were just a little gravel through our yard so it would keep you from miring down in the mud in the wintertime. It was mud in the winter and dust the rest of the year.

The Beck Property

Wyckoff: Now down toward the end of Third Street, Thomas Beck had a large home which fronted on East Lake Avenue. His property extended from East Lake Avenue all the way down to the Salsipuedes Creek. Situated on down near the Salsipuedes Creek was a small house in which Stephen Short and his wife lived. They were the father

and mother of Emmeline Short Beck, Arminta Short Blackburn, and Elizabeth Short Wyckoff. Now the Shorts lived on Beck Street. I guess Thomas Beck gave them a little piece of land there; a small cottage with a very large barn in back of it. Alongside of it was an apple drier that was rented out to Chinese. The Chinese lived there, and they cored, peeled, and cut up apples which they put in their hot room to dry; they wouldn't dry it out in the open air. This drier was behind the Beck house and alongside the Short house on Beck Street.

Jarrell: What year would this have been when the Chinese were there?

Wyckoff: 1900. There was an old drier when I came to know it, when I moved into that neighborhood. At the end of that street, on the Beck property, where the large apple drier was, teams went back and forth down that street, large teams of mules ... as many as three pairs of mules, they'd come from up in the hills. They had bells on their harnesses so you could hear all these bells ringing as they came down the winding mountain roads.

But it cut that street up fearfully. The city

James Waters Home (Built 1861)

Wyckoff Family Home (Circa 1902)

maintained water wagons, and they'd go from hydrant to hydrant around the streets ... swishing, settling the dust on the streets. But it was just a big mudhole in the wintertime.

Jarrell: Did you have mail delivery at your home on Third Street?

Wyckoff: Yes. We'd go to the Becks' house for Sunday dinner. The children would go down and look at the [apple] drier and play with the grandchildren of the Becks. Particularly one we admired was a fellow named Fred Boole who afterwards lived in San Francisco and went into the insurance business. Thomas Beck also had a daughter who lived in Paris. And I don't know, but people used to talk in sort of hushed whispers about her. There seemed to be something scandalous about living in Paris and she never came home; she just stayed there. Now the Beck home was torn down. The little cottage that Stephen Short lived in may still stand on Beck Street. I might be able to identify it; I'm not sure.

The James Waters Property

Wyckoff: Arminta Blackburn had another sister named Melinda Short who married James Waters who had come to Watsonville from Baltimore, Maryland. He was a very courtly-looking gentleman and he had a white goatee and white moustaches and long hair after the current fashion. In keeping with his Maryland background, he always had a barrel of Maryland rye whiskey. His very large house extended from East Lake Avenue over all the way to Third Street; the house fronted on East Lake Avenue and the rest of the yard onto Third Street. This yard contained a kind of orchard that you would keep for a home. It had trees of one kind or another walnuts, apricots, peaches, apples, pears, plums; everything that they needed for variety in fruits for their household.

Jarrell: Was James Waters formally trained as a horticulturist?

Wyckoff: I don't know whether he was or not but he was a highly-successful nurseryman. He also started a subdivision known as the Waters' subdivision comprising all the territory on both sides of Sudden Street. He didn't rise to any particular fame as a horticulturist when he first got here because apparently he and Thomas Beck -- they were brothers-

in-law -- did a little contracting work; they got on the public tit and built not the first one, but the courthouse which now stands on Cooper Street in Santa Cruz. Thomas Beck was also quite a politician. For awhile he lived in Sacramento when he was Secretary of State.

WATSONVILLE PHYSICIANS

Peter Kemp Watters

Wyckoff: There was a remarkable doctor in the town named Peter Kemp Watters ... no relation to my great-uncle Waters, who spelled his name with one "t". Dr. Watters lived in Chicago as a boy, had studied at Northwestern [University] to be a veterinarian, and had practiced as a veterinarian for a while. Being ambitious, he got enough money from practicing his veterinary science to put himself through medical school -- this was in the early '90s. He interned at the Mayo Clinic which had just started up. When he came West, and how he stumbled into Watsonville I don't know, but he settled here. He was of German extraction, and his wife was a

little German hausfrau with a big bunch of keys always hanging from her belt. She locked up the pantry and locked all kinds of things all over the house. He had his home on the corner of Carr Street and East Third Street on the corner where there's a print shop now. Behind that was a barnyard and stable; he had to have a horse and buggy to get out to see his patients in the country. Dr. P. K. Watters built a hospital alongside of his residence on East Third Street. This structure still stands, but it has a false front. It's just off the corner of East Third and Carr Street. Doctor's residence stood on the corner of Carr and East Third. As usual in those days ... there were lots of trees all around town ... there was a beautiful pepper tree in Dr. Watters' front yard and a big tall redwood tree in his barnyard. The main floor of the hospital was oh, I should say, 10 or 12 feet above the ground. This was so because the Pajaro River and the Salsipuedes Creek used to overflow; these were the days before levees. Consequently, the water frequently came up to Third Street. So many houses were built in that fashion where the downstairs could be flooded without damage to the furniture and goods of the people who lived in them. Anyway, there was a

staircase that went up to the front door, must have been 10 or 12 steps down to the sidewalk. All across the front of the hospital on the south side was a large veranda where patients who were convalescing were frequently wheeled out in their wheelchairs to take the sun and watch things go by on Third Street. Dr. Watters used to tell a story about a local drunkard, who had got shot in a brawl in a saloon, and was brought into his hospital. This happened at the very same time that President McKinley was shot by an assassin in Buffalo. P. K. Watters read closely about McKinley's treatment because the bullet wound suffered by this Watsonville man was the same wound that had been suffered by McKinley. The finest surgeons in the United States finally operated on McKinley and he subsequently died. P. K. Watters followed McKinley's treatment and surgery with great attention and performed the identical operation on the drunk in Watsonville in his hospital and the man lived. He [the man] was no good. He drank all the time and his wife took care of his six children at home and did all the wash and all the cooking and cleaned the house and chopped the wood. He used to go downtown in the morning and get drunk and sit around in the Plaza and

then go home and fall on his face. The nurses told this patient about the miraculous operation, and when the time came for him to be discharged from the hospital, the doctor went into his room and shook hands with him and told him that he was well enough to leave the hospital and that he was discharged. So he got up and dressed. Now the doctor had a little office near the front door. This drunk who was discharged from the hospital walked out to the office and shook hands with the doctor and said, "That was a miraculous operation that you performed on me the operation that the finest surgeon in the world tried on President McKinley without success. I want to congratulate you and I want to tell you I'm going to pay you a very handsome fee." Of course the doctor knew damn well he'd never get a dime out of this guy because he didn't earn anything to speak of and what he did earn, he rapidly drank up. So the doctor knew he not only wouldn't get paid a fee for performing the operation, but wouldn't even get his hospital bill paid. So he beckoned to the man and said, "Come out here. I want to show you something." So they went out on the front porch and the doctor said, "I maneuvered him onto the top step, and I gave him a kick in the ass that slid

him all the way across the sidewalk out in the gutter." [Laughter]

Jarrell: Oh! [Laughter]

Wyckoff: That was the way this fellow was dismissed from the hospital by Dr. P. K. Watters. Before my father got to know Dr. Saxton Temple Pope [who came to Watsonville at the same time my father went there to practice law] he, of course, used P. K. Watters, who was by all odds the very finest doctor in town. It was quite a privilege for that small community to have a man who had the training that Dr. Watters had. And he always told my father, "The greatest thing that I ever did was to become a veterinarian before I became an M.D. You don't know how to treat the human body until you know how to treat a horse." My mother had conceived a child before me. When the time came to deliver the child, they had to destroy it to save my mother because she couldn't bear the child; it was a question of her life or the child's. Then she became pregnant again and my father talked to P. K. Watters about it [the pregnancy] who said that her pelvis was too small and she'd better go to San Francisco for this one. My mother was taken to San Francisco to the Lane Hospital. The old brick building is still standing out

near what is now the Presbyterian Hospital. Dr. James McCone was an eminent surgeon who had performed a number of caesarean sections and had quite a reputation for this sort of thing and that's why they went up there. My father insisted on taking P. K. Watters with him because he wanted his advice about what to do. My father was by no means pleased about the idea of this caesarean section which was a spectacular kind of an operation in those days. My father had a habit which he rigorously followed all his life in any kind of surgery -- he would scrub up with the doctors and put a cap and mask and gown on, and stand alongside and watch the whole thing. It must have driven the surgeons crazy, but he insisted on it. The word had got around town that Dr. McCone was going to do a caesarean section. They were going to do it in an amphitheater operating room since they were doing teaching there. The operating field was down on the floor and then these seats went up very steeply, and circled around this operating field with tables down there. My father went in and saw that a show was being made out of it; there were a 100 people packed into this amphitheater, students and other doctors, to witness the show. This infuriated my father, who went

back and complained bitterly to P. K. Watters about it; he didn't want a spectacle made out of this thing. They had put my mother on a gurney while my father was expostulating about this, and P. K. Watters just took some high forceps out of his bag and reached in and snaked me out on the gurney on the way down the corridor, on the way down to the operating room. I still have the marks of the forceps on my head. I do not have a round head; my head is oval-shaped; I suppose that's what did it.

Jarrell: She never had the caesarean?

Wyckoff: She never had the caesarean. Dr. McCone was furious that a country bumpkin would pull a trick like this on him, especially on a gurney in the corridor on the way down to the operating room. Dr. McCone got over his sense of outrage and signed my birth certificate. We all went back to Watsonville. Thereafter mother bore four more children in a normal fashion. I broke the way, I guess. So that's how I came to be born in San Francisco. Mother did lose a daughter, Elizabeth, born a year or so after me. My brother James was born in 1906, about a month before the earthquake. There's a legend in the family that my mother was in her bedroom

alongside of which was a bedroom used as a nursery and dressing room. My brother. James was one month old and he was in that bedroom in a crib. My father was in bed across the hall and I was in the same bedroom with him. The earthquake hit about five o'clock in the morning. I can remember because we were all terrified that the chimneys were coming down through the roof. Whatever rooms were plastered, all the plaster came down. At the first shock, my mother and father passed each other running across the hall. They were very much amused by it afterwards because my mother left a newborn child to run over to get me, and my father left me to run over to get the baby [laughter]. It was an instinctive reaction on their part.

Jarrell: Did you all get out of the house?

Wyckoff: Oh yes. We went out of the house and into the street, so there wouldn't be any danger of being hit by falling objects. Why we did his I don't know. There was an enormous acacia tree in front of Dr. Pope's house and we all went out on his lawn. They did some cooking out there as I recall. You couldn't cook in the houses since all the flues were damaged. At that time, my grandmother McDonnell, my mother's mother, had lost her husband and her house and all her

belongings were destroyed in the fire in 1906. She lived out in the Mission alone with her daughter. May. All she succeeded in rescuing was a little silver, including some spoons that had coin heads on them; curiously Florence has the identical spoon that came from her grandmother. It's the same spoon only the heads on the coins are facing in different directions. My grandmother McDonnell came to live with my parents on Third Street after the earthquake. She was of great assistance to my mother as a babysitter and that kind of thing. She freed my mother and father for other things and we saw a great deal of her during our childhood. We loved her dearly. She had a twinkle in her eye and read to us often. My mother had a third child in 1908, my sister Ann; then a fourth child, my brother Stephen, who was born in 1911. Stephen was the youngest. Now of course I was ten years old when my brother Stephen was born. Grandmother McDonnell raised him. Grandmother Mac didn't have any particular resources ... she just took over raising him. He was the baby. I remember [laughter] he stayed on the bottle a long time, longer than he should [have] really. We found out about it because my grandmother McDonnell smuggled a bottle of milk up to him at night

when he went to bed. So we used to sneak up there, and we'd hear the nipple pop out of his mouth. He had it down under the covers, because he was ashamed of it -- or at least we thought he was or hoped so. She was a great champion of his. I guess I used to abuse him a little bit and she used to raise hell with me about that. She didn't like me very much, but she was devoted to Stephen. There were other doctors in the town, too. There was an old doctor named Bixby and one named Miller. The White family used Dr. Miller and the children used to tell me when they had a new baby how Dr. Miller brought it in a valise. This was the way Mrs. White explained the facts of life to her children.

Jarrell: [Laughter]

Saxton Temple Pope

Wyckoff: Of course we got it just the opposite. Dr. Pope believed in telling everybody the truth about things. Dr. Pope looked askance at these other doctors and used to talk about how they performed. He never pulled a punch. Most of them had no education to speak of, but they had a hell of a lot of nerve. No training, but they never hesitated to perform operations, or do

things that Pope thoroughly disapproved of. To give you some idea of the man, when he was a boy he built a big glider, went up on the top of Angel Island, and rode the thing way out into the Bay. [Laughter] They had a hell of a time picking him up. He also was a man who became a firm friend of Ishi* whom I'm sure you've heard about. He went hunting, and visited where Ishi's grandmother had lived. Ishi taught him all kinds of tricks about hunting with bow and arrow. He also taught Pope, who was very handy with his hands, how to make all his own bows and arrows. I can remember once visiting at their home -- 249 Cherry Street in San Francisco -- in the early '20s when I met Ishi. The doctor used to sit around in front of the fire whittling his arrows and making bows before going to bed at night. Pope was a very small man; he was only about 5'5" tall. Dr. Pope, of course, had been to medical school and his wife, Emma, was in the same

[1] Ed. Note: Ishi was one of the last true wilderness Indians, a sole survivor of the Yahi tribe of California. In 1911 the University of California, at the behest of anthropologist Alfred Kroeber, "adopted" Ishi, who lived at the University's Museum of Anthropology in San Francisco. Thus began a unique relationship between Ishi and Kroeber on the one hand, and Ishi and the puzzling phenomena of modern urban life on the other. During his stay in the city, Ishi worked with Kroeber in systematically documenting the social, cultural, and survival practices of his extinct tribe and in conveying his language as well, since Ishi was the last repository of his tribe's way of life.

class with him in San Francisco. It has been said that he married her because she got higher marks than he did. She was number one; he was number two in their class. So he married Emma. He wanted to practice in a small community, and they bought a horse and buggy in San Francisco, and started driving down the coast looking at places and finally decided they were going to live in Watsonville. Emma, who was an M.D., helped him practice. She used to administer anesthetics for him when he operated. She'd get a little fee for doing that. They didn't have a penny when they came down here. They lived in some rooms over a drugstore across the street from the Plaza in a thing called the Stoesser Block which still stands. But rapidly he got himself in a position where he could buy a lot and build a house, alongside of my father's place. He was a spectacularly fine doctor. He was our family doctor until 1912. He was by all means the finest doctor down here both because of his education and because of his native skills. One of the scandals of the neighborhood was when Dr. Pope cut a piece of meat put of his youngest son's nose. Willard Lee Pope, as a small boy, had a large nose, a very prominent nose. It looked like a Jewish nose. Emma gave him a whiff of

chloroform and the Doctor cut the little flap between the nostrils and gave him a beautiful Roman nose. When Mrs. White [a nearby neighbor] heard about this, she started cackling and spreading the word around that the Doctor was experimenting on his children. There was a wave of scandal about that. My mother had a nice aquiline nose, but all of us had snub noses and she used to deride us about this. Both Dr. Pope and Emma Pope had beautiful noses. I remember when Dr. Pope took my tonsils out on the library table. Doctors were very casual about these things. They didn't. pop you into the hospital for an operation for something as simple as this. Once when I had a threatened mastoid, he punctured my eardrum as I was lying in my mother's bed. Their method of anesthesia was very primitive. My mother would get a strainer, large strainer out of the kitchen; they'd put a piece of gauze over the strainer and she'd take a chloroform bottle and drop chloroform in it and put this thing over your face. My mother told me afterwards [laughter] ... I was about eight or nine years old at the time, but I was as big as Pope ... that I wrenched the cone off my face, rose like a tiger out of the bed, knocked the chloroform bottle out of her hand, and knocked Dr. Pope flat on the

floor. They both got down on the floor rassling around with me. Dr. Pope grabbed the piece of gauze and told my mother to put it over my nose and hold it there until I stopped playing around. They finally got me back in bed and punctured my eardrum. To give you an idea of what a very sardonic fellow he was ... I remember when we were children and how he had a fairly good-sized bottle that had a fetus in it with alcohol. The children used to play with this thing because it looked like a little doll in this bottle. It was a fairly good-sized bottle. Pope was hell on quacks. These people would come through a town like Watsonville; they'd have a show of some kind, belly dancers or something of that kind, and then they'd sell patent medicines of one kind or another. They often made all kinds of exaggerated claims for what their potions would do. Dr. Pope would go down to these meetings. He'd allow Lee to go down to these gatherings with him. They charged admission to get it -- and he'd stand up when they started talking about their patent medicines and start cross-examining them and giving them hell and announcing a lot of times that their stuff was no good and that they were quacks -- which emptied the opera house. It's a wonder these

people didn't beat Pope up. Here is another little story about ... I don't know whether you like these stories or not, but you're going to get them. This one is about Pope and Mrs. Measovich. Blackburn Street, as it does now, ran from Fourth Street or East Lake Avenue to the north, then across East Third Street and on down to the foot of Blackburn Street at Bridge Street, which is on Salsipuedes Creek and not too far from the point. where Salsipuedes Creek empties into the Pajaro River. This street was only two blocks long but they were long blocks. At the north end of the street near East Lake Avenue lived a man called Castropelli and his sister, Mrs. Measovich. Mrs. Measovich had a friend who lived the other end of Blackburn Street down near the Salsipuedes Creek, and she used to walk down these two blocks to visit her friend. She walked down Blackburn Street which was not paved -- there were no sidewalks -- she walked right down the middle of the road. In the wintertime this meant she was up to her ankles in mud, but this didn't phase her; she was a mental case. Periodically, Dr. Pope would incarcerate her in a state hospital for the insane in Napa or Agnews. She was a large woman and very strong; it was said that it took Castropelli, her

brother [also a large man], to knock her down; then he and Dr. Pope would hog-tie her and put her in a straitjacket to get her over to Agnews. So she didn't have many pleasant memories of the doctor. When she walked down Blackburn Street to visit her friend, she would pause at Pope's house which was on the corner of East Third and Blackburn to pay her respects to him. She was generally yelling and abusive and you could hear her all over the neighborhood. So we would all troop down there to watch the show. The Langley girls would gather on the front lawn of their house across the street from Dr. Pope's house. Mrs. Measovich would pause and start cursing Dr. Pope, and wherever Dr. Pope was in the house he would come rushing out onto the front steps and curse back at her. She had a very fancy vocabular[y] and the doctor had a vocabulary that had been enhanced by his studies of Gray's anatomy. These passages at arms that went on between these two were very colorful affairs. I can tell you that we all learned a lot of things we never learned on the school lot -- and plenty was learned in the school lot. These encounters were mainly cursing and shaking of fists. Mrs. Langley, who had four daughters, would put her head out the second-story bedroom window and say,

"Come in the house, girls; come in the house."

Jarrell: [Laughter]

Wyckoff: Now there were never any physical encounters. She was so big that Dr. Pope didn't want to go out in the street and take her on and get thrown down in the mud. Mrs. Measovich had been hog-tied by the doctor so many times, she didn't want any physical encounter with him. So they just stood there, she in the middle of the street and he on his front porch, shaking their fists at one another and swearing, much to our delight and edification. Pope was very efficient with his hands as you can imagine. In that shed which I have described, the one in his backyard, he had a full-fledged carpentry shop. He was always making something. If his patients couldn't pay their bills, he'd generally have to drive out to their places in a horse and buggy and pick up an old mahogany or walnut or rosewood dresser or chair or sofa that was really a very beautiful piece of furniture. He'd put this furniture into his buggy, take it home, and give it to his wife. So they had some very beautiful pieces of antique furniture he had acquired in this way. In this way, he ran across an adobe house that was badly damaged by the 1906 earthquake since it sat right on

the San Andreas fault in San Juan [Bautista]. He bought all the adobe bricks and tile from the people that owned it -- these bricks were originally made by the Indians. These tiles on the roof were about the length of a person's thigh. Tile is bigger at one end than the other. It is said that in making tiles for the roofs on the adobes, they were thigh-length because they were shaped around a woman's leg. The upper part of the tiles were bigger and sloped down.

Jarrell: They were tapered ...

Wyckoff: They were tapered, that's correct. It's a very simple way of roofing something because one tile was laid face down and the other was laid face up, and they fitted into one another and the water just ran naturally off the roof. The doctor bought all the tile and adobe and had it transported over to Watsonville where it was set up in his backyard as a rather elaborate playhouse for his children. There were two fairly large rooms and a covered porch. It had a wall along Blackburn Street with tiles on top of the wall. It was all plastered and whitewashed, white in and outside. He hung an olla in the little porch of the adobe. An olla is a more or less porous pot -- not so much that it leaks. You put water in it, then you

splash water on the outside of it, and, as the water evaporates, it cools off the water inside. If you wanted to, you could put a little cloth jacket on it, already wet, and the evaporation would keep the water cold. The Popes used to entertain in that adobe. It had only two rooms, but they'd entertain the Porters and the Wilsons and Langleys and the Gardners. My dad went to the parties and they'd drink red or white wine and have a good time for themselves. Pope also engaged in pyrography. That's the burning of leather and wood with a red-hot electric needle. He made quest books -- one with red silk facing for my mother -- that were triumphs of the art of pyrography. He made bellows; he also did bronze casting. On a Sunday morning in December, if you heard a terrific banging on the front door, it was Dr. Pope installing a bronze knocker for Christmas. He also performed acts of legerdemain. He would go annually out to a Roman Catholic orphanage at the end of East Lake Avenue to give a Christmas performance. He constructed tables that had false drawers, false tops and springs. Oh, it was quite a show. It was a magic show is what it was. And he was very good at making things disappear with his fingers. And it was my privilege and the privilege of Ed

Pfingst, the McCones, and some other small boys in town to go out to assist him in this performance.

Jarrell: You were guinea pigs?

Wyckoff: Yes, and pigeons. We were behind the scenes pulling threads and strings that released wooden eagles and flags, and one fired off a blunderbuss and did all kinds of things to augment the show. I was told that when he finally moved to San Francisco he lived near the Children's Hospital. He would always stop and go through the children's wards taking 25 pieces out of their ears and doing little sleight-of-hand tricks to amuse and cheer up the children. Dr. Pope had a tremendous following here in town, needless to say. When he went to San Francisco, many, many people who had been his patients would go all the way up to San Francisco to see him.

Jarrell: He never came back?

Wyckoff: Never came back, no. Dr. Terry, who was the head of surgery at the University of California Medical School, sent for Pope and made him assistant professor of surgery at the University of California Medical School which enabled him to get into practice in San Francisco. Pope made a conspicuous success of the

practice up there because he was a remarkable man. One day I was in his San Francisco office about noon. He said, "Do you like corned beef hash?" And I said, "Yes, I do." "Well," he said, "so do I. Come on." There used to be ferryboats that went over toward Berkeley. They made a very good corned beef hash on these ferryboats. So we went down to get on the ferryboat, ordered corned beef hash, and didn't get off the ferryboat in time. We went over to the Berkeley side and came back. We just pranced around on the deck, got a little fresh air after lunch. That was one of his favorite lunches. Tom Porter and I went to college together. His family had been patients of Dr. Pope, in Watsonville. During an epidemic of smallpox on the [UC Berkeley] campus early in the 1920s, Tom and I had heard some old wives' tales that a vaccination was only good for seven years. So we went over one Saturday afternoon to see the doctor who kept his office open on Saturdays. Pope was a good-looking little rascal. He always had a lot of women patients. He didn't have a nurse on Saturday afternoons. Tom and I walked into his Butler Building office, which is where Macy's is now, just off Geary and Stockton. We walked into the waiting room which was full of women

and no nurse, and the door into the Doctor's office was closed. Now people are curious about other people in doctors' waiting rooms; they look around and wonder what in hell the other persons are there for. Anyway, we walked into this waiting room and since there was no place to sit down we had to stand along the wall. All these women were reading magazines and the magazines came down so they could take a good look at us [laughter]. I remember I kept wondering if my fly was buttoned or not, but I didn't dare reach down to find out. After we stood there for awhile, very uncomfortable, Dr. Pope opened the door and looked out and saw us and said, "Hello, boys. What's the matter? Syphilis again?" and closed the door.

Jarrell: [Laughter]

Wyckoff: Well you can imagine what that did to the waiting room.

Jarrell: [Laughter]

Wyckoff: To give you another idea of the kind of man he was--I still had bad sore throats when I was 25, and I was up at his house one day and he said, "Well, you're having these sore throats all the time. I'd better take your tonsils out." I said, "Hell, you took my tonsils out

when I was six years old." And he said, "Well, we didn't know how to do it then. All I did was clip your tonsil. I'll go in this time and get the roots." So I went over to Hahneman Hospital next door to Children's Hospital one morning and he took my tonsils out.

CITY SERVICES AND DAILY LIFE

Food, Cooking, and Housekeeping

Jarrell: You mentioned earlier that your mother had a garden. What would she do besides gardening? What did she do to fill her day? What was her daily life like?

Wyckoff: Well, she never did anything in the kitchen. The only thing she knew how to do in the kitchen was to bake an apple pie. [Laughter] She made apple pie and crust that was the envy of all the women in the neighborhood. All the other housewives around there thought mother's pies, especially apple pie, were great. Dr. Pope used to chide his wife because she couldn't make an apple pie the way my mother did. Now Kori [our Japanese housekeeper] did all the cooking. My mother didn't know how to cook when she first got married. And she tried cooking for my father for a

while and he got violent attacks of indigestion and finally got the colic. And they had to go over to Aunt Min's -- Arminta Short Blackburn, my father's great aunt -- and eat meals for a while until mother finally got this Japanese cook [Kori]. I never knew my mother to cook a meal in her entire life, though she made a very good apple pie. She was very skillful at this. But making pies and a birthday cake once in a while was about the limit of anything that I ever recall that she did in the way of cooking. She huddled around the kitchen a good deal. She had a very large cookbook, which I still have, called The White House Cookbook with a picture of Mrs. Ida McKinley in it. It was in that President's time that this book was got out. That's the only cookbook that I ever saw in the place. She used to teach Kori things out of that. Kori knew a good deal about cooking anyway. Kori did all the cooking, dishwashing, made all the beds, swept the house and kept it clean, and did the laundry. Every Monday was laundry day. She would build a big roaring fire at breakfast time, bigger than usual, in order to heat up plenty of water for washing the clothes. There were washtubs on the back porch and a wooden washboard -- you've probably seen them -- it looked like a sled

and it had corrugated iron across it so- that you could scrub the clothes on it by hand. It wasn't until ten years had passed that my mother finally bought a hand-operated washing machine. Kori grabbed the handle on one side and I on the other side, and we pushed back and forth with this thing and flounced the clothes around.

Jarrell: Did you have running water in the house at this time?

Wyckoff: Oh yes. We had running water and regular sewage. On the first of every month my father would give Kori a $20 gold piece and that was it. She used to come in the living room and my father would be sitting there in a chair by the fireplace and there would be a $20 gold piece on the mantelpiece. They'd pass the time of day a little bit, thank one another for this, that and the other, and exchange compliments. She got $20 a month for cooking, doing all the laundry, taking care of all the children, the beds, and sweeping the house ... the whole damn thing for $20. John Kori, Kori's husband, would show up shortly afterwards. The $20 went right out the back door. He was a mystery to me.

Jarrell: Do you know about how old she was when she came to work for your family?

Wyckoff: Very young; in her twenties.

Jarrell: Do you know if she was born here or in Japan?

Wyckoff: She was born in Yokohama.

Jarrell: I see. You say she was married?

Wyckoff: Yes. She was married to a Japanese. I never knew his name. He was known as John Kori. She was called Kori, he was called John Kori.

Jarrell: Did her husband help your mother?

Wyckoff: Yes, yes. He built that summer house I told you about. And he used to come up at regular intervals and work in my mother's garden.

Jarrell: Now did Kori ever live with her husband?

Wyckoff: Yes. She had days off. Her husband had a house downtown in Watsonville. She used to go down there and stay with him once a week.

Jarrell: Did she ever have any children?

Wyckoff: No. I have an idea she was a concubine because he was a fierce guy, and was obviously a higher caste person than she was. I'm not demeaning her, but he was a man of some attainments, a man of some education. He was a very fancy dresser. He wore wing-tip collars and had

tailor-made suits and smoked Melachrino cigarettes. Actually they were both pretty fancy dressers. I've got some pictures of them. Once Kori took the children downtown to a professional photographer to have our pictures taken. I remember Kori had on a tailored suit and buttoned shoes and John Kori was wearing a stiff wing-tipped collar and tailored suit. In 1917 I heard my mother and father talking about them. John Kori decided he was going to send Kori back to Japan. She never came back. She died there.

Jarrell: In your neighborhood and in the vicinity around Third Street, did other families have Japanese or some kind of household help? Was this common?

Wyckoff: Oh yes, help was quite common. John Gardner, who was my father's partner, who lived next door to us, specialized in Japanese high school students. He had one for a long, long time, a fellow named "Y." We never knew him except by this name. "Y" was the first initial of the first name, Y. Amagata. I think he was with them for about ten years. He went to

the 

Kori and the Wyckoff Children

James Hurbert Kori

Anne Stephen

1912

University of California a little ahead of me and took honors in mathematics. He lived in one of those sheds in the Gardner's backyard. The Pope's had nursemaids mostly. They had one for a long, long time named Ida Leoni. She took care of and raised all the Pope children from about 1900 to 1911 or '12, when they left for San Francisco. On Sunday nights when Kori was off, we would eat in the living room in front of the fire. My mother would wheel this chafing dish she had in and make what I always loved and still do, called English Monkey. We all loved this. It's a juvenile Welsh Rarebit: you take a cup of bread crumbs with the crusts and soak them in a cup of milk; beat two or three eggs into this milk mixture; then melt one cup of grated cheese in some butter in the chafing dish and stir the whole thing up quickly. It's a hard recipe to find, but you can find it in a few cookbooks under the name of English Monkey. This was a great favorite of ours on Sunday nights. She cooked other things such as a chicken dish on Sunday night.

Jarrell: I'd like to know what would be a common kind of menu during the week. You ate breakfast all together?

Wyckoff: Yes. At breakfast we always had some kind of fruit ...

maybe cut up an orange or apple. We didn't have juices then. There was always ham or bacon and eggs and toast.

Jarrell: Did you drink coffee as a little boy?

Wyckoff: No, I did not. I drank milk. I don't recall eating very much salad when I was a child.. We had cold asparagus. We had artichokes. We had a lot of baked beans for lunch. My father was a very skillful carver. Sometimes for dinner we'd have two baked chickens on a big platter. He'd stand there carving and the chicken just seemed to fall apart. I still have his carving instruments out here. Not much is left of the knife ... I'll show them to you. Bone-handled. And the fork had a little doodad that came out the neck; it was a guard so that if the knife slipped, you wouldn't cut yourself. It also operated as a thing to set down the fork on so the tines of the fork wouldn't touch the table. I'll show you that too. My father carved turkey ... we frequently had a big fish, at least once a week, generally a salmon. And it was a whole salmon, the whole damn thing.

Jarrell: Baked?

Wyckoff: Yes. Baked with one of those library paste sauces on it. White sauce with hard-boiled eggs chopped up in

it, which is an abominable thing to do to a beautiful salmon. Then there were other fish, but there was generally the entire fish ... it was enough to feed the whole family. Then Kori used to make omelets, what you call a Spanish Omelet which is nothing but a lot of tomato goop on it, but these omelets she made were the fluffy kind. They're beaten then apparently cooked in the oven.

Jarrell: More akin to a souffle?

Wyckoff: Yes. That's right. Then there were legs of lamb, generally two legs of lamb, or racks of lamb, the chops made into a crown with little paper things on them. We had a great deal of steak, porterhouse steak, and often round steak. There was always a lot of fighting among the children about who was going to get the marrow bone. Everybody loved the marrow bone.

Jarrell: Potatoes?

Wyckoff: Yes. Mashed potatoes I think mostly. But also baked potato. Lots of vegetables. My mother never went in very much for desserts. We used to have some ice cream, but it was homemade. I used to have to turn the freezer by hand -- which was quite a chore. They would pack the freezer with salt and ice. It had a paddle inside the container that had the ice cream in it. She

used to like to make strawberry ice cream with fresh strawberries; another good one was fresh peach ice cream from our own peach tree. When she made apple pie, she generally made turnovers, and the children would each get one turnover, along with milk.

Jarrell: So you ate with your parents at dinner?

Wyckoff: Oh yes.

Jarrell: What about table manners?

Wyckoff: Oh, they were very, very strict about this. When all of us ate, when my brothers and sisters ate at the table ... Stephen, I don't recall his eating at the table, but my brother Bud and my sister Ann ... Bud was only five years younger than I, but by the time I was ten, he was eating at the table. One child would be at the table in a highchair with a little tray attached. I can recall if I didn't behave myself, if I talked too much, she'd slap me with the back of her hand across the mouth. It was always a very humiliating thing to me. [Laughter] The punishment followed the offense very swiftly. I would sulk for a long time after getting one of those bad belts with the back of the hand. She had no rings of course on the right hand. All her rings were on her left.

The Charles Ford Company

Wyckoff: There was a store, which still exists, called the Charles Ford Company. It had been established in Watsonville in 1852, down on Main Street. And it was composed of a large building that contained partitions. You could walk from one to the other. There was a dry goods department, then you could walk through a doorway into a grocery store, next to that was a hardware store. Next to that was hay, feed, and grain; next to that you bought shoes... I guess it had about everything that you'd want to buy except lumber and drugs. My mother did all her shopping at the Charles Ford Company. I used to go down to the Charles Ford Company with her occasionally. And in the dry goods department she would buy cloth for the dressmaker. This was a long, tedious experience. Mr. Johnston was the man who sold this cloth and he had large bolts of it, shelves and shelves and shelves. My mother must have driven him crazy, at least I thought so. She'd make the poor man pull down practically everything he had in the store, and she'd look at them. He had a little pair of snub-nosed scissors that he kept in his vest and he'd take a piece of that cloth and go right through it just like a knife

cutting butter. He was a Scotchman and very adept at this sort of thing. That's about all I can remember in the dry goods department. There were articles of clothing there also. As I say my mother would buy cloth and then she had her clothes made by this dressmaker. Then in the next compartment was a grocery store ... but it was different from grocery stores as we know them. Everything was in bulk. There were great sacks of potatoes; there were great sacks, open at the top, of different kinds of coffee beans. Things weren't packaged the way they are nowadays at all. And there was an enormous coffee mill there. It made a hell of a racket. The most beautiful smells in the world came out of that machine. You could pick out your beans and get your own particular grind and then they'd grind it up for you. Mother had a particular blend they knew about. Then there were sacks of such things as dried prunes and dried apricots. I don't particularly remember a produce department such as we see nowadays, but this was the way my mother ran her kitchen and this was the way other people did it too. Every morning in a horse and buggy a man would come down, and tie up in front of my mother's house, and come around the backyard to the kitchen door. Mother

and Kori would talk to him. His name was Empson. His daughter, Margery, still lives in Watsonville; she's about my age, maybe younger. Mr. Empson was an emissary from Charles Ford Company. He always wore a derby hat and always had a pencil over his ear. He had a large order book. [In the mornings] he would take orders from my mother for whatever she wanted, then that afternoon he would come back with the order. A wagon is what he had. It seemed my mother always had surplus asparagus and vegetables, so when she did have [a] surplus of any type he would take it and credit it on the bill. In that way nothing spoiled or had to be stored because she kept moving the crop. When I was five I can remember that Empson was provided by the Charles Ford Company with an automobile. The automobile looked exactly like the buggy that he used to drive. It had a leather dashboard; it had a motor down underneath in the rear end that operated a big chain on a tremendous gear The thing made a hell of a noise, and it had wheels just like a buggy, just like buggy wheels, only motor driven. It was a gasoline-driven rig ... wouldn't go very fast, but it would run ... one of the first automobiles I ever saw. The Charles Ford Company was quite an institution in this

community. And the farmers, all the farmers in this valley shopped there, because you could get almost anything you wanted and needed there. They all had a charge account. None of them were billed until harvest season was over and they had harvested their crops and sold them. They got a bill once a year. They came in and settled it right away. Another thing the Charles Ford Company had was big barrels of whiskey. People would bring demijohns in, which were half-gallon or gallon bottles with wicker around them, that you'd drink out of by slinging over your shoulder and sucking out of ... if you liked whiskey that much. People would bring these jugs in and mark down a gallon, and take it right out of the barrel. Years afterwards I was told a story about these charge accounts. The women shopped at the stores. There was a family named Teawester ... that's the way they pronounced it. Around here it was spelled Thurwachter, pronounced Teawester. You can see the house down on Beach Road. It has a great hedge out in front pruned in a particular way with the American flag on it and things like that. Go down the Beach Road towards Pajaro Dunes; it's on the lefthand side ... you'll see this old house, and that's the old Thurwachter house.

Mrs. Thurwachter lived there with her daughter, Ella. Ella never married. Ella used to go in a horse and buggy to the Charles Ford Company and do the shopping. When Mrs. Thurwachter lay on her deathbed ... she was a Roman Catholic ... they sent for the priest. The priest came and administered the last rites of the church, and then she said to her daughter, Ella, "I want you to get Sid Menasco;" [who was the manager of the Charles Ford Company] "I have something I want to tell him before I die.", Sid told me this story years afterward. He went out to the Thurwachter home and the old lady lay on her deathbed and the priest had just left. She said, "Sid, I've got something been weighing on my mind for 50 years I want to tell you about. Want to get it off my soul." She said, "We've been going down to the Charles Ford Company to get a demijohn of whiskey filled, and you thought that it was a gallon; you were charging me for a gallon, but it contained a gallon plus half a pint; I've been doing that for 50 years and I never told you about it and I've been cheating you out of a half a pint of whiskey every time that you filled it." [Laughter] Sid also told me that a favorite device of the ladies was to go into the Charles Ford Company and buy fripperies, laces and

furbelows, trinkets, little items of jewelry that they knew their husbands would criticize them about, because after all they were farm wives and they weren't supposed to have such things, or have the money to spend on things like that. But they had a deal with Sid ... they'd go to buy this stuff, and then they'd put it down as potatoes or some staple so that when the old man at the end of the year got the bill and started looking through it, he wouldn't find anything to criticize the women, or his wife, about. I am told that there are still some people, a couple of families, not many left in this valley, who don't pay any attention to monthly bills. They come in and make an annual settlement ... that's when the crops are harvested and sold.

The Bakery Wagon

Wyckoff: There was a bakery in town and a bakery wagon. The bakery wagon came down to the back door of our house, and Kori would go out and look everything over. They had large trays of breads, donuts, cookies, and cakes. The wagon was a horse-drawn vehicle. The neighborhood children would get somebody to follow him around to the back door, give a signal, and then everybody would

raid this wagon out in front swipe cookies and donuts ... [laughter] ... and then duck for the orchard.

Jarrell: [Laughter]

Tuttle Market

Wyckoff: Mother always bought her meat from the Tuttle Market. They were the local butchers. I remember when my sister Ann came home from boarding school, and my mother asked her to get some T-Bone steaks and they reached in the counter and wrapped up six T-bone steaks, whatever it was, and put them up on the counter. Ann said, "Charge it to Mrs. H. C. Wyckoff." And the butcher grabbed the package and put it back down under the counter and went out and cut some other steaks. [Laughter] Ann was outraged by this because she said that an ordinary person who came along would be discriminated against; they'd sell him bum meat. My mother was getting all the gravy off the place. She was very exacting as far as tradesmen were concerned. They knew damn well that if they weren't the best T-bones they had, they'd catch holy hell from her. We got fresh things across the street at Aunt Min's. So

there was no particular need for any refrigeration because everything was always fresh. In those days in that neighborhood Aunt Min Blackburn had this large chicken house and big production of eggs. She also had cows and two farmhands to milk the cows. And her house had a long -- must have been 30 feet long -- back porch with tables running all the way back and screened on one side and open to the fresh air. These fellows would come in with these pails of milk. I used to go out sometimes in the barnyard to see them milking the cows. Andrew milked the cows, and was a beautiful shot with the tit. I'd be standing and watching and he would keep milking away, and then he'd hit me right in the eye with a squirt of milk. [Laughter]

Jarrell: [Laughter]

Wyckoff: Both times he shot for my mouth, but it ended in my eye. [Laughter] He would take these buckets of milk into Aunt Min who had large flat pans ... must have been 15 or 20 of them along this back porch ... and they'd pour the milk into those pans. Overnight the milk would settle, the cream would rise to the top and form a solid covering. Then Aunt Min took a large, metal scoop -- it was like a very large seashell with

holes punched in it -- and slipped that under the cream and lifted the whole piece of cream right off the top of that milk. She'd get that thing underneath the cream, pick it up as though it were a blanket, and lift it over into another pan. Apparently the milk was rich enough even with the cream taken off. Maybe she put a little cream back into it, I don't know. It was my chore to go over to Aunt Min's to get the milk. When I got there, the milk was still warm. Aunt Min would give me enough milk to last through the day. We got fresh milk that way every day. We'd also pick up fresh eggs over there. We got our butter from Aunt Min as well. Of course it was sweet butter. It wasn't salted. These were items which would normally require an icebox for storage, but we got them fresh every day. Many people made their own butter. This was quite ordinary for people who had a barnyard, kept horses and buggies and teams, and generally had a cow also. Having a cow, they'd get their own milk, cream, and they'd make their own butter. This was particularly true for a large family like the White family. There were always children to do a lot of chores. One child would take care of the chickens and another one would take care of the horses. And then they would churn

butter which is quite a chore. The churn looked like a big, tall, tin can about 2 1/2 or 3 feet high with a paddle in it. And you'd pound with this paddle up and down and it wasn't [laughter] that much of a job at first ... but it got to be quite a job as the butter formed. It was hard work. But the girls, the older girls, in the White family used to take turns churning butter. My mother never canned or put up things; as I recall she never bought any canned fruits or vegetables.

The Livery Stables

Wyckoff: There were livery stables in town; there was the Johnson Livery Stable on Main Street down near where the City Hall is now. Schoolmates of mine were the Johnson boys. They had chores to do in the stable before they attended school in the morning. They always smelled like horsepiss and horseshit to me. I tried not to get anywhere near them. Well I guess I must have smelled a little bit that way myself because I had to do a little work behind our barn, but not on a large scale like the Johnson boys. There was another livery stable operated by a man named Hansen, who afterwards had a partner named Oksen. He also owned

hacks, prototypes of the modern taxicab, low-slung, only a couple of feet off the ground, drawn by two horses. A hack had a great leather roof and sides on it with windows. It was about a six-seater -- seating three on a seat facing forward, and you rode backwards on the other seat. For example, when my mother was pregnant and wanted to go to the hospital to have a child, they sent for a hack and she'd ride down to the hospital in it although the hospital was only a couple of blocks away. These hacks also took people over to the railroad station.

Draying and Hauling

Wyckoff: On Center Street ... now they call it Center Street, but it was simply a means of access to the barns then ... my father's barnyard looked onto Center Street; so did the White barn. And across the street was a large establishment operated by some people called Pullen, a good name for a man who's in the drayage business. They had all kinds of teams, all kinds of hauling equipment. Yes, I remember they had one big flatbed wagon that had large wheels, but the floor was only one foot off the ground which made it easy to push

heavy things in it like pianos. It was pulled by two big stallions who never went faster than a fast walk. Pullen would go home -- he'd be downtown -- he'd go home for lunch like the school children. And if I was lucky and ran like hell when I got out of school for lunch, I could what we called 'hook a ride' on that dray which took me right down to my house. They also had what they called a spring wagon which had sides on it ... somewhat in the shape of a flatbed truck. It had a big hand brake. Instead of having a cab in front, it had a big high seat way up in the air on springs. Pullen had other kinds of equipment, but he did all the draying and hauling around town.

Railroads and Train Service

Wyckoff: There was a railroad, but [almost] no automobiles until about 1915 or so; there were one or two around town, but they didn't come into prevalent use until 1919. If my father wanted to be in court in Hollister or in Monterey or in Santa Cruz ... these were the county seats where the courthouses were ... he would have to take the choo-choo train the night before.

Each one of these places was 20 miles away. He'd go to Hollister and put up in the hotel in order to be in court at 10 o'clock the next morning; and the same thing with Salinas; he'd go over there and put up in the Hotel Jeffrey in order to be in court at 10 o'clock in the morning; go over to Santa Cruz and stay in the St. George Hotel in order to be in court there at 10 o'clock in the morning. Today, I can get to any one of those three places in less than 15 minutes in an automobile on the freeway. But my father never owned an automobile until the concrete pavements were built in 1918. And the main highway, Highway 101, was built I think in about 1912 or 1914. It went down through Salinas. Then there was a concrete road going over to Hollister. The hack service took you to the train.

Jarrell: About how much did it cost?

Wyckoff: I can't remember; not much, two bits, or something like that. Maybe that was quite a bit of money in those days; I don't know.

The Eureka Telephone Company

Wyckoff: When my father came out here in 1919 to his house at 243 Corralitos Road where I'm now living, he formed a

telephone company called the Eureka Telephone Company. There were 12 subscribers. He was one and the man who ran the store up Corralitos was another. Then the other 10 were people sprinkled around Corralitos and up the Eureka Canyon. These were people whose acquaintanceship my father had cultivated, and they were all original subscribers to the Eureka Telephone Company. The Eureka Telephone Company was nothing but poles and wires. Then they made a contract with the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company in town to supply a worldwide connection, and they ran a line out here to Corralitos.

Jarrell: And it was tied into the city?

Wyckoff: Yes, it was tied into the big telephone system. But it was an independent telephone company. For many years we had on the wall one of these large telephones with a shelf and crank.

Jarrell: Made of oak wood?

Wyckoff: Yes, oak wood. It had a long mouthpiece on it ... gooseneck sticking out from the wall. And of course these people were lonesome up this canyon and whenever the telephone rang, if you got there first, you'd hear eleven receivers click. When there are eleven people hanging on that line, you didn't hear much ... it

diminished the volume of the sound that you'd get. My father spent most of his time yelling on this phone to these people to hang up. He had an office for many years on the fourth floor of the Lettunich Building in Watsonville, and he had got an idea in his head that when you were talking long distance you had to yell. So whenever he got a long distance call, he'd start yelling, and you could hear him all through all four stories of the building there if his window happened to be open. All telephones were like that I recall. We had a telephone like that downtown. There were always several people on the line. You'd have one long ring and two short, or two long and three short. It was quite a problem to find out who the call was for because there were a lot of people who wouldn't pay much attention to these rings, whether they were two or three ... they'd just go and answer the damn thing and then stay on eavesdropping.

The Watsonville-Santa Cruz Highway

Jarrell: When did your parents buy this property here in Corralitos?

Wyckoff: 1919.

Jarrell: 1919. But they continued living in town?

Wyckoff: No. What triggered this move to Corralitos was the construction in 1919 of a concrete highway. It was the first concrete pavement in this county -- a highway running from Watsonville to Santa Cruz. This so-called Glenwood Highway or Road is the predecessor of Highway 17. Now the old road, I recommend it to you, it's quite a trip because it followed-the old stagecoach road and it wound like a snake all over them hills. I remember the contractor who first worked on that Glenwood Highway pavement did all his subgrading with mules. He had a 100 mules up there and Fresno Scrapers. There was very little grading done on the road between Watsonville and Santa Cruz. They put down a 4-inch thick, 14-foot wide concrete pavement. This is what the original highway was. It was kind of a tight squeeze to drive it; you didn't have much leeway.

SOCIAL LIFE

H. C. Wyckoff, Sr.: Social Activities

Wyckoff: My mother knew nobody when she came down here. My father did know people however, because his father and his grandfather both had lived here. His mother, my father's mother, had lived here. She was left an orphan at the age of 14 in 1864 when her father, Thomas B. Poole, was hanged for murder in the jail yard at Placerville. My father was known in the community; he'd gone to high school here. He wasn't a very gregarious man; he was more interested in reading books. His pursuits were on the intellectual side; my mother was the same way. The local people considered them to be a little what they call "stuck-up" because they had a college education and the others didn't.

Jarrell: A little strange, maybe?

Wyckoff: Yes. I suppose my father and mother were what you might call "intellectual snobs" to some extent. They didn't take part in the ordinary social pursuits of the town. My father didn't drink for example. He drank wine at home, but he didn't go out drinking

with the boys, that type of thing.

Picnics

Wyckoff: Symptomatic of what I've been talking about here. [about my parents] ... in 1917 some of the doctors and lawyers of Santa Cruz County gave a picnic in an apple orchard up in the Valencia district. Harry Parker, a young man who was in my father's office at the time, and I attended this picnic. Dr. Pope came down from San Francisco to attend it specially. It was a big turnout. Everybody was drunk except my father and Dr. Pope. Dr. Pope was amusing himself by shooting arrows at a target. And my father was amusing himself by reading guess what? He was sitting under a redwood tree reading Kant's Critique of Pure Reason.

Jarrell: [Laughter]

Wyckoff: This didn't endear him at all to the various doctors and lawyers who were there all full of whiskey. They kept coming over to get him away from the book. Finally they poured whiskey on the book and they poured whiskey on him. They just had a hell of a time with him. It was a pretty bad party from the standpoint of everybody getting drunk. But here was

my father trying to read Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, and here was Dr. Pope practicing with his bow and arrow. This type of thing led people in the community to thinking Pope was queer and my father was an intellectual snob. They didn't call it that; they said he was "stuck-up," thought he was better than other people around here. Particularly upset were people who hadn't had a college education. There were very few people who had a college education in Watsonville when my father came down here in 1900. This made life a little difficult, I suppose, for my mother also.

School Trustee

Wyckoff: My father belonged to some of the social organizations in town, but he never attended them or went to meetings or worked at them. My father became a trustee of the schools. He made many, many friends among the schoolteachers because they were all University people, you see. The school teachers were frequent guests in our house for dinner. Esther Steinbeck* for one, who was John Steinbeck's sister, taught domestic science in the local high school. She

was entertained frequently in our home; Myra Harris; Helen Phelan, who was the daughter of the Irish widow who wanted her daughter to marry a fellow named Hopkins across the road. Helen was ambitious and wanted to go to college. My father induced Mrs. Phelan to let Helen go to the University of California instead of getting married. Helen remained a maiden lady; she's still alive; she comes out here occasionally on Sundays for dinner. She was here last week. She became a social worker and for a full 30 or 40 years ran a large settlement house, like Hull House, in Cleveland, Ohio, for the Roman Catholic Church.

Jarrell: But she ended up coming back here?

Wyckoff: When she retired, she came back. She owned property here. The old family ranch, the Phelan Ranch, is located on Freedom Boulevard where Lucky Market is now approximately.

Jarrell: I know that the kids in your family all went away to school. Was there any ill feeling about your father being on the school board or the trustees when he didn't even send his children to the public schools?

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* Ed. Note: Esther Steinbeck Rodgers

Wyckoff: Yes, there was a lot of uproar about that.

Jarrell: Kind of a provincial reaction?

Wyckoff: I have a feeling that life would have been made a little uncomfortable if I hadn't gone to the University of California at Berkeley as soon as I got out of boarding school. As soon as I got through college though, I went East to Harvard Law School. Most of my life was away from here.

Church Activities

Wyckoff: My father had his fingers out in ecclesiastical circles. He became very active in the Episcopal Church, and very soon was appointed to an important committee who were lay advisors to the Bishop of the Diocese of Northern California. There were some famous bishops in that Diocese. The original one was Bishop Kip. My father served on this layman's advisory committee to Bishop Nichols and then Bishop Parsons who were two other famous Bishops and famous men. This standing lay committee was mainly composed of people of importance in San Francisco; for example, William H. Crocker was on that committee and other wealthy people, whereas my father was somebody

from the country. Church conventions took him to the East, to Washington, D.C., to New Orleans, Chicago, New York. My mother always went with him. So I would say that by and large, he led a rather cosmopolitan life. I seem to recall for some reason or other a great deal of talk about G. K. Chesterfield whose work my father was very fond of. My father loved to talk philosophy. He always had a firm friendship with whoever happened to be the parson of the Episcopal Church. He would sometimes walk downtown after dinner to the post office to look at his mail and to get a little exercise, and I would stroll with him sometimes. He would stop at the rectory to talk with the parson. The parson had a residence there, a two-story place, with a large front porch. It was alongside of the Episcopal Church on the corner of Carr and East Third. And opening off the front porch was a book-lined study, and the two of them would sit in this study and talk. Of course, I was itchy and I didn't pay much attention to what was going on, because I didn't understand what the hell they were talking about for one thing.

Jarrell: [Laughter]

Wyckoff: My father had an outgoing personality. He was a curious, simple man. Sometimes when you reach adolescence, you get to be ashamed of your parents. I remember being ashamed of him in San Francisco. He'd walk down Market Street and he'd stop somebody, walk up to him and he'd say, "I know you, but what's your name? I don't remember your name." [Laughter] I'd keep right on walking when he'd do something like this. [Laughter]

Jarrell: Did he embarrass you?

Wyckoff: Embarrassed me, but didn't embarrass him. [Laughter] My mother was the same way. I remember being in New York with her when I was 19 years old. I was just graduated from boarding school and we went down to New York. We were walking along 5th Avenue and she said, "By the way, I need some money." I said, "What are you going to do?" Well there was Tiffany's ... "I'm going in here and cash a check," she said. "They've got to have some money in this place." She went in. I was ashamed. I wouldn't go in. I stayed out on the curb. I was sure she was going to get the bum's rush.

Jarrell: To cash a check?

Wyckoff: Cash a check on the Pajaro Valley National Bank of Watsonville, California. She came out in about two minutes and she had the money.

Jarrell: What nerve! [Laughter)

Wyckoff: I said, "Did you have any trouble?" And she said, "What trouble would I have? They were utterly oblivious about it."

Jarrell: That's great.

Friends of Anabel Wyckoff

Wyckoff: My mother had a few close friends, and she made friends, when she came down here. Emma Pope was a great friend of my mother's. Alice Wilson, a very dear friend of my mother's, married Arthur Wilson who was the manager of the Grand Rock Company. She came down here from Piedmont. She was university-trained. Then she had another friend -- Mrs. Pardee. I remember she was very skillful with her hands; she taught my mother how to make crockery things. They bought white dishes; then using a process which I still don't understand, my mother made herself a complete set of china by putting a gold rim around the dishes and cups and what not. My mother also did

embroidery and tatting. Matter of fact the dining room chairs which are out here in the cottage have tapestry seats which she embroidered. My mother was also a friend of John Gardner's wife, Charlotte, who was a daughter of a Superior Court Judge in San Francisco named Sanderson. My folks weren't particularly close to the Whites, who lived next door to us. They were Catholic. My mother also was a very close friend of Charlie Langley who married Annie Sheehy. That tie came about from the fact that my mother was passionately interested in gardening; she was a horticulturist. Charlie Langley had a beautiful garden, and they used to compare notes about their gardens. Charlie Langley also was a great gourmet. He used to spend all day Sunday cooking. He had a closet in back of the house near the kitchen where he used to keep epicurean tidbits. It was locked so the girls or his wife couldn't get at it. He used to go up periodically to San Francisco to Goldberg Bowen which was a very fancy grocery store and buy things like caviar and truffles. He had all these things in this closet. I used to go over on Sunday nights during the summers which was a great treat. He gave me my first martini. I've never tasted one that tasted as good

since; it was gin, some kind of a British gin, and Noilley Prat vermouth mixed four to one. He made a great dish he called "Beef à la mode" which is a beef stew and which took him all Sunday to make. Sometimes he would make it on Saturday and you could eat it cold or hot the following day.

Jarrell: Did he have French cookbooks?

Wyckoff: I don't think he had any cookbooks. I don't know any cookbooks that were around much in those days. I have 300 to 400 cookbooks in my library that I've been collecting ever since the '20s. The first book I ever got was an Escoffier, but I don't think that damn thing is published anymore. Well, I guess it was last published in 1910.

The Watsonville Women's Club

Wyckoff: My mother was instrumental in forming the Watsonville Women's Club along with one of her closest friends, a woman named Florilla Wickersham. Florilla was a high school teacher who taught English in the local high school. My mother would never accept any office in the club; she was never president of this club, but she was influential. She wanted them to engage in

intellectual pursuits; to get people down here [to lecture] who were from the faculty of the University of California [at Berkeley]. She did get people down here like Henry Morse Stevens, who taught history at the University of California, and Charles Mills Gayley, and other people that she and my father had got to know. They would get them down here to talk at the women's club. But the bulk of the women wanted entertainment; they didn't want anything of that kind; they were bored with it; they wanted to be amused. An interesting sidelight on my mother's women's club involvement was the result of Dr. Pope's generosity. When you cross the Pajaro River, on the north end of the bridge is a large boulder about eight feet high with a bronze plaque on it. There's a concrete bench underneath the boulder. The bronze plaque was executed by Dr. Pope. He made it himself and the printing on it is in his very distinguished hand. The women's club really had nothing to do with this damn thing; the plaque said, "Here came the first white man." Pope did this to commemorate the spot where Portola was supposed to have crossed the Pajaro River and entered the Pajaro Valley. There's been a lot of controversy since about whether that's

the spot or not. There're all kinds of schools of thought about this; they're at one another's throats about it. If I live long enough, I'm going to write a little article about it. I have some ideas of my own about where he crossed the river. But this was Pope's own idea and if you read that plaque, you'll see at the bottom of it, it says, "placed here by the women of the city of Watsonville." Well, the women of the city of Watsonville didn't have anymore to do with it than a jackrabbit, but Pope didn't want to say he'd done it, so that's the way he did it. Nobody could challenge it because he didn't say who the women were. He didn't like clubs very much.

City Parks and Conservation

Wyckoff: The other thing that my mother wanted the club to busy itself about was gardening and saving trees. She was opposed to anybody chopping down a tree anywhere; she would start raising hell about it. Anytime anybody did chop down a tree, she'd get after them to plant another one. She was instrumental in the formation of the first park in Watsonville which became known as Callaghan Park, because Callaghan owned the land and gave it to the city as a park. She

was instrumental in the planting of that park. It's at the triangle at the junction of Main Street and Sudden Street. There's a little schoolhouse there for kindergarten-age children whose mothers and older children take turns caring for them. There are swings and slides and some tennis courts there. Apart from the Plaza it's the first park in Watsonville. Some of the trees that my mother planted are still there at the extreme northern point of the triangle. Previously that park was bare land. Below us here, as you come in on the Corralitos Road, you'll see a large clump of redwoods. They're second-growth redwoods, but they're 200 feet high I guess. They are a phenomenon around here. This Corralitos Valley was all standing redwood at one time, and they lumbered through here in the 1860s cutting all the trees down including the redwoods on either side of the hills. A lot of the logs were used as railroad ties for the Southern Pacific Railroad in the 1870s. It was a little tough for the Corralitos Valley. The hill where this house stands was once covered with redwoods. When this hill was denuded of its trees, it lost all of its topsoil. It just washed off the top of the hill down into the valley below which made the

land down below extremely rich. It's some of the best land in the valley. A neighbor of mine once drilled a well for water down on the flat in the Corralitos Valley. When he got 200 to 300 feet down, his drill tied into a redwood tree. It was a stump standing straight up. So the story goes. A man named Franich, father of Superior [Court] Judge Charles S. Franich, owned an orchard where a large clump of redwoods now stands. These trees are second growth after the big trees were cut down. The little ones grew around the mother tree and formed a grove. They made a circle and when you go inside it's like being in a church; the trees are spaced so closely together it looks like a big room. Martin Franich used to store his apple props in that circle of trees which is about 50 feet in diameter, I should think. Those old Slays were wonderful people for taking care of an orchard. Old man Franich knew every tree in that orchard; he would come out at six o'clock in the morning and walk through his orchard examining every tree to see if anything was wrong with any of them. He raised his trees as a mother raises her children. He's still alive. My mother used to stop when she was driving down the Corralitos Road and talk to Mr. Franich in

his orchard. She used to wag her finger at him and tell him, "Don't you ever cut those redwood trees down." She wanted him to deed them to the county as a historical monument, but he laughed and wouldn't do it. He never did do it. But he said, "Don't you worry. I'll never cut those trees down. I'm not a tree cutter."

Jarrell: So that kind of consciousness was already abroad among some people back then.

The Watsonville Public Library

Wyckoff: The women's club was instrumental in getting funds from the Andrew Carnegie Foundation to build the first library in Watsonville. The old building still stands on the corner of Union Street and what is now called Trafton Alley. I believe it was built in 1906.

Jarrell: Do you happen to know what sort of general procedures were necessary in order to get these funds, in any town of course, to have a Carnegie Library? Did you have to prove that there was a considerable segment of the population who were interested?

Wyckoff: This I don't know. I spent a great deal of time in that library. I think I read every damn thing I laid

my hands on. I would be severely cross-examined by my mother whenever I came home as to what I had been reading. She was very severe about reading habits and didn't want any of us reading anything that she called "trash."

Jarrell: What would be trash?

Wyckoff: Well, trash would be ... there were some books for boys called 'The Motor Boys." When the automobile first came into vogue, a full series of cheap books were published called the "Motor Boys" here and the "Motor Boys" there.

Jarrell: [Laughter]

Wyckoff: There was a bad boy called Noddie Nixon ... and then there were the good boys. My mother considered these books trash and told me I shouldn't be reading them. Another series that she didn't like was Horatio Alger. I read a lot of that. The librarian was Belle Jenkins, a wonderful old lady. She looked like a little, old, withered-up spider. There was a grandfather's clock which is still there. A big rocking chair stood under the grandfather's clock. I used to sit and read in that big rocking chair under that clock which struck some gongs every 15 minutes.

Jarrell: What kind of magazines or newspapers were available?

Wyckoff: The San Francisco newspapers and local newspapers. Local newspapers were of a very spritely quality; they always had a picturesque editor. Then for years when I was a boy the editor was a man named J. G. Piratsky. He was the grandfather of Lorraine Scott, the wife of H. B. Scott who owns the Granite Construction Company here in town. They live on a hillside right near my house here, across the canyon. Piratsky was a very colorful man. He'd been on the stage. He was what they called a "hoofer" which was a soft-shoe man on a vaudeville team. In the old days, they had the Orpheum circuit in San Francisco and in the East it was known as the Keith. I saw, as a child, many vaudeville shows that came down to what was called the Opera House in Watsonville. A vaudeville show consisted of, oh, a whole bunch of acts. One act would be a trained dog act or trained horses sometimes; and there would be some tap dancing; there was always an orchestra in the pit and there were song and dance people who sang songs. There were some clowns with comic skits of one kind or another. Then another type of show that came down here occasionally were the comics, a fairly low order

of thing ... nothing like Shakespeare. There was a famous comedy team called Kolb and Dill. Kolb was about 6'2" tall, and Dill was a little, short, fat fellow and they were German. They had a collection of all the bum jokes that all the vaudeville artists operated on. For example, Kolb would say to Dill, pointing to his stomach, "What is under dere?" And Dill would reply, "Under vhere?" [Meaning "underwear"]

Jarrell: [Laughter]

Wyckoff: They'd just keep this up for five or ten minutes. "Under vhere?" "Under dere." "Under vhere?" "Under dere." Then finally they'd start hitting one another and everybody'd get a big laugh. These vaudeville troopers would always get a good horselaugh from an audience at the expense of some other community that was supposed to be full of rustics. The town that would always get a horselaugh in the Orpheum in San Francisco was Milpitas. Down here in Watsonville, if you wanted to get a good laugh from the local people, you said that somebody came from Aromas. That would always bring a big horselaugh, because everybody who came from Aromas was supposed to be backward, stupid, with hayseeds coming out of their ears. So they used

rather heavy-handed stuff.

Theatre and Bookstores in San Francisco

Wyckoff: My mother was keenly interested in the theatre. Very early she had a complete library of George Bernard Shaw's plays and a lot of the Irish dramatists. I read a great deal of Shaw before I was 14 years old. I was taken to San Francisco to see plays -- Shaw and others. I also went to the Orpheum in San Francisco which was vaudeville and the Reed vaudeville show house. It lasted until the early '20s. My mother would buy season tickets for the opera. Sari Francisco was always a great opera town. Since she was a great believer in preparing for things, she wouldn't simply go and see an opera ... but would go to see a whole string of operas, a series of them. You'd have to study each one of these operas before-hand, so you'd know the whole libretto. She had a victrola and a book called the Victor Book of the Opera. She would buy a lot of the records of these operas. She had quite a collection. We would put up in a hotel and just see one opera after another, afternoon and evening, matinees and performances.

Jarrell: What did you think of that?

Wyckoff: Oh, I enjoyed it tremendously. I really did. I heard Tetrazzini and Schumann-Heink and Caruso; two baritones named Titta Rufo and Scotti; a bass named Pol. Plancon. Then there were other operatic parts that escape me at the moment. But I had a thorough education in opera that went on for several years. Later on it became my brother's turn to go to this sort of thing, and then my sister Ann was taken along.

Jarrell: Did your father ever go on these operatic forays?

Wyckoff: I don't recall his ever going. It involved staying up there for a week or more.. We'd go for the whole business, buy a season ticket, do nothing else but that and eat.

Jarrell: Did your mother ever frequent bookstores in San Francisco?

Wyckoff: Yes. There was a famous store out there run by a man named Paul Elder. He published a lot of books. I have some Elder books in my library. That company did very beautiful jobs. The Elder boys went to school with Florence; it was Paul who ran the shop I guess. Then

there was another famous bookstore on Stockton Street run by a fellow named Robertson. They were both good bookstores, far better than anything you'll find nowadays. Of course there are a lot more books nowadays than there were then. But they always had a good stock of books which can't be found now.

Entertaining

Jarrell: Did your parents entertain very much?

Wyckoff: Yes. My mother didn't serve tea; they had coffee. Often there would be a large gathering of women in the house when I came home from school. I could tell that something was going on because I could smell the coffee the minute I came in the front gate. I liked that because it meant I could steal black olives and little sandwiches and little cakes.

Jarrell: [Laughter]

Wyckoff: These were afternoon affairs. They occurred quite regularly. The ladies would come to my mother's house; then she'd go to their house. They'd go around from house to house. I suppose these [get-togethers] occurred at least once a week. My mother and father used to go over to Del Monte and stay in the Del

Monte Hotel. They'd do some entertaining over there. My mother and father had a very close friend, Carolyn Hollis, who was a classmate of theirs at the University. Her maiden name was Carrie White. She had lost her husband quite early in life and was left with some small children, but fortunately he left her fairly well-to-do. She lived down below Highland Inn when there was hardly anything down there at all. This was 1900. They used to go over and visit with her. She never remarried, but she brought up two girls, and took up woodcarving. There's a chest out there that she carved for my mother.

Jarrell: I'll have to look at it.

Wyckoff: I'll show it to you. There're some other things of hers around here. I remember my mother and father and the Popes did belong to a dancing club called Los Amigos, Spanish for friends. There was another club called the Dodekas, the Greek word for 12. It was a whist club; they'd go around from one house to another.

Jarrell: Did your mother or father ever go into Santa Cruz for any reason except when your father had to go to court?

Wyckoff: Yes. They went to call on people over there. We didn't go along on those ventures and they generally would stay overnight.

Jarrell: They were going to eat dinner at someone's house?

Wyckoff: Yes.

The Sierra Club

Wyckoff: So, as you can imagine, my mother and father lived very simple lives. Most people in the community had no particular outside interest that I was aware of; the men were hunters and fishermen. They liked to go fishing; they fished in the lakes here for black bass, fished up the creeks for steelhead and trout; they did surf fishing for striped bass. There was a great deal of clamming that went on. Then there was deer hunting; dove hunting, quail hunting, duck hunting. My father dabbled at fishing and hunting because he was exposed to it. He was expected to do a certain amount of this sort of thing, but his heart was never really in it. My father wasn't much of a sportsman. He went regularly on Sierra Club trips in the high Sierra. This gave him acquaintanceships outside of the locale here. My father had many close

friends who were members of the Sierra Club and who came from all over the state and elsewhere. One of the leading lights in the Sierra Club was Will Colby. He was a classmate of my mother and father at the University of California, class of '96. Now I wish I had become a member of the Sierra Club. My youngest brother, Stephen, was a great devotee of the Sierra Club. He went every year on the outings and worked in the commissary. That was a great privilege because in Stephen's time, while he was taking these trips, the commissary was run by the head chef at the Fairmont Hotel in San Francisco. This chef took his vacation going on these trips and doing the cooking.

Jarrell: Where was this commissary?

Wyckoff: At the base camp. They had what they called base camps.

Jarrell: Would this be like at Tuolumne Meadows?

Wyckoff: Well further back into the high country than that. The way they operated was to establish a base camp. Then people would take side trips out from the base camp.

Jarrell: Day hikes?

Wyckoff: Well, overnight trips too. My brother Stephen is an excellent cook as a result of this apprenticeship with that old French chef.

Jarrell: Would your mother go on these outings?

Wyckoff: For a while she did. When she started having babies she quit. It didn't suit her temperament at all. She hated camping or "roughing it."

Jarrell: Were the Sierra Club outings up in the Sierra pretty civilized affairs or were they spartan?

Wyckoff: No. They were pretty civilized affairs. The last trip that my father took in the Sierras was when he turned 57. Several friends who had been college classmates of his went along. A man named Jackson Reynolds, who was President of the First National Bank in New York City and George F. Baker, who was a classmate of my father's at Columbia Law School [he was in the class of 1896 at Stanford and my father was the same class at Berkeley]. Reynolds had a couple of friends, a doctor from Los Angeles, and John W. Davis, who ran for the Presidency in the '20s, and who was then a lawyer in a large firm on Wall Street which he'd entered after having served as Ambassador to England under Wilson. They were attorneys among other things

for the Morgan interests. These old cronies, there were six of them, planned a big, final trip when they were 57 years old; they thought they'd never take another one and wouldn't live beyond that, although they all did. But this was their last trip. My father prevailed upon me to go along because it was going to be a great trip, and these were interesting people to meet and be with. I was engaged to Florence at the time and she was in Europe because it was her father's sabbatical year. I think this was about 1930. I was supposed to go and meet her, and we were planning to be married in Westminster Abbey. I had been saving money; I was working in the United States Attorney office at the time and had about $1500 saved up so that I could go on this wedding trip. But I went on the Sierra trip anyway. I was a damn fool though for not asking him how much it was going to cost. It turned out that they had 30 pack mules and 10 packers and cooks and a string of saddle horses; everybody had a horse. We started down at Mineral King and rode the crest of the Sierra; we were 10,000 feet all the way from Mineral King to Yosemite. We were out 30 days. The packers took the mule train and all the horses and rode back to Mineral King and were

under pay all the time going back. This was a hell of a thing to get into. They'd pick a place to camp near a stream and these fellows would unload the mules, put up a stove and set out tables and chairs. We lived pretty high, I'll tell you.

Jarrell: [Laughter]

Wyckoff: There was a lot of good whiskey and wine brought along. It was during Prohibition. I went to a doctor and got three or four pints of prescription bourbon whiskey which you'd have to get through a drugstore with a doctor's prescription.

Jarrell: Was that easy to do?

Wyckoff: Get on the right side of a doctor, and it was easy to do. They had a book you know. They'd write out these prescriptions in it. I saw the finest of the Sierra country. I have a diary and some pictures. It was quite a sight to see 45 saddle horses and pack mules turned loose. The head packer was a fellow named Phil Davis. He had a white mare who would respond to his whistle. They just turned all this stock loose at night. Sometimes they'd get way up a canyon someplace and Phil Davis would whistle and all the mules would follow that white mare anywhere she went. She had a

good nose for pasture.

Jarrell: Didn't they put bells on the mules?

Wyckoff: No, it wasn't necessary. We never lost a horse or a mule the whole trip. I remember we had one mule that carried a collapsible rubber boat with oars so we could get out on some of those big lakes and fish. They were long oars with the blades on both ends, and they were packed on the mule thwartships because otherwise going up and down the trails they'd slide out, you see. The oars stuck out so much, once in a while a mule would come to two trees where he couldn't go through. So he would turn his ass around and put one oar through first and then sidle around and get the other oar through.

Jarrell: Really?

Wyckoff: Yes. They were smart as hell.

Jarrell: Smart enough to do that?

Wyckoff: Sometimes they'd get lazy though and just pretend they couldn't get through; they'd lean up against the trees with the oars caught, and they wouldn't bend their ass to get through. They'd just stand there, so they could rest. Somebody'd have to come back and

kick them in the ass and they'd sidle around and go on through. Well, when the bill came for that trip, that bill wiped me out. I never did get back to Westminster Abbey.

Jarrell: [Laughter]

Wyckoff: Of course Florence was highly indignant, but we were finally married in Berkeley in St. Clement's Chapel --a far cry from the Abbey. My father compensated for this by giving Florence a check for a wedding present which was exactly the amount it cost me to take the pack trip (laughter), and he gave it to her, not to me. So I lost out all around. It was his last trip and they had a big splurge. It was a warm, wonderful experience for me.

H. C. WYCKOFF, SR.: LEGAL PRACTICE

The Partnership

Jarrell: Can we talk a bit about your father's law practice?

Wyckoff: When you talk about my father's law practice, you're talking about two men. My father and John Gardner, his partner. They formed a partnership close to the

turn of the century. My father came down here in 1899 and he first worked with a man named Rodgers and terminated that partnership very soon. He then formed another partnership with a courtly old southern gentleman named Julius Lee, whose house still stands on Third Street. It's a Victorian house near Carr Street, just around the corner from where my office is now. He was known as Judge Lee. I suppose it was an honorary title because all southerners are either judges or colonels.

Jarrell: [Laughter]

Wyckoff: I'd like to tell a story about a colored boy that met the trains in a small town, down south. The hotel in this small town was too poor to have a surrey to go down and meet the train which is what they customarily did. They had this boy go down and he'd solicit trade for the hotel and carry a man's suit-cases back to the hotel for him. They'd walk down the street together. The boy kept saying, "Howdy, major." "Howdy, colonel." "Howdy, general." "Howdy, captain." "Howdy, doctor." Everybody had a title. And this victim that he'd picked up at the station finally said to him, "Does everybody around here have a title of some kind?" He said, "What do you call a plain,

old, ordinary son-of-a-bitch?" And the boy said, "Oh, we call them 'Judge'." I like to tell that story when I get around some judges. They don't like it very much.

Jarrell: [Laughter]

Wyckoff: Finally John Gardner and my father formed a partnership. The firm still goes on today. Gardner lived to be 72 or 73 years old. My father died at the age of 63. But they were very close. Each one thought the other was a better lawyer than he, and they complemented one another very neatly.

Jarrell: So they really worked well then?

Wyckoff: My father didn't like to try cases very much but John loved trying cases. My father would prepare the law and sit with John through the trial so they could consult together. My father was more of a book lawyer than John was, but John was very good with the jury. He was a great orator. John belonged to the local Elks Club and played poker with the boys around town and went drinking with them. My father didn't care anything about that kind of thing at all. And so, as I say, they did complement one another. Gardner had a lot of local ties here, a lot of local clients.

Clients and Cases

Wyckoff: My father had a type of practice where he had clients out of town. He was the attorney for the Ben Lomond Winery that had been founded by a man named Frederick Billings who had come out here from New York. He was a retired stockbroker and built a very large residence on the property now known as Pasatiempo in Santa Cruz. He bought a lot of land there long before it was built up. His was the first residence there. He was a man of great means. He had children and grandchildren who lived in San Francisco. These children would come down to see Mr. Billings. My father often entertained them. Lucas Smith used to decide cases against my father with distressing regularity. Here was my father, a young man just started in his late twenties or early thirties, trying to establish a practice here, and it was a bad thing for him to get a reputation of losing all his cases in court. [Laughter] But my father was a rugged character and when he lost a case he'd take an appeal to the Supreme Court of the State of California since there were no intermediate courts of appeal in those

days. So my father was constantly taking appeals to the Supreme Court and going up to the Supreme Court for writs of one kind or another. All this was part of his jousting and contesting with this Superior Court Judge. He told me once that he took 22 appeals to the Supreme Court from judgments of the Superior Court in the County of Santa Cruz and secured a favorable ruling from the Supreme Court in 19 out of 22 cases. So this gives you an idea of what that judge was up to. This also had the highly beneficial effect upon my father of getting him into the Supreme Court all the time. He was in the Supreme Court more than the average practitioner in San Francisco. In this way, he became known to members of the Supreme Court and to people who practiced before the Supreme Court. I can remember for years there was an informal place where judges of the Supreme Court ate lunch together; certain members of the bar would eat there too, but they were predominately judges. When he was in San Francisco, my father always ate at this big, round table, mainly with justices of the Supreme Court. He used to take me there once in a while, so I saw the thing in action. To give you an idea of what people thought of Judge Smith ... there was a

distinguished lawyer in Santa Cruz named Charles B. Younger, the grandfather of the present Donald Younger who practices law here now.* Younger rose in the Supreme Court and began his argument saying: "This is an appeal from a judgment of the Superior Court of the County of Santa Cruz, but there are other reasons why the judgment should be reversed."

Jarrell: [Laughter]

The Election Campaign for Judgeship

Wyckoff: In 1902 my father decided to run for Superior Court Judge. The incumbent, Lucas Smith, had, I suppose, been using my father not to my father's liking; my father had lost cases that he thought he shouldn't lose and came to the conviction that the county judge was corrupt. So my father ran against him. There were political factions in the county as there are everywhere. My father made the mistake, as it turned out, of going to W. R. Radcliffe, the cashier at the Bank of Watsonville, to ask him to become his campaign manager. This affronted Warren R. Porter who had substantial ownership in the rival bank, the Pajaro Valley National Bank, and who had political

* Ed. Note: Since this interview, Mr. Younger has died.

aspirations of his own. Of course this campaigning took my father all over Santa Cruz County. He put on a strong campaign, particularly in the northern end of the county, because he figured he had the Watsonville area sewed up. All his family had lived here -- his parents, his grandparents, his great grandfather, Stephen Short, were well-known here in the community. He had many ties. So he got to know people all through the northern end of the county and in Santa Cruz as a result of this political campaign. My father lost this election by a very close margin. It was a bitter campaign. Mr. and Mrs. Warren Porter felt umbrage to such an extent that they wouldn't speak to my father and mother, and they all went to the same church. I can recall going to church with my mother and father and as we walked out of church, Mr. and Mrs. Porter would avert their faces; they wouldn't even notice my mother and father. It was the first time I'd ever seen anything like that; it troubled me. And this went on for a few years until Dr. Pope gave a party in his adobe one night. He invited my father and mother, Warren Porter and his wife, Mary, and they all drank a lot of red wine and shook hands all around. The Porters and my family

were very firm friends ever after that. Warren Porter went on to become Lieutenant Governor of the State of California in 1909 under Gillette who was then Governor; Warren Porter built a home and lived in Berkeley while he was Lieutenant Governor; reared his family in that house, including his youngest son, Tom, who has always been a lifelong friend of mine and still is; he lives here now.

The Watsonville Water & Light Company

Wyckoff: Another story I have to tell you about concerns W. W. Montague. Now, as I understand it, there was very little cooking in homes until the Victorian era, because there were no cooking facilities in houses. People went out to the bakery shop and bought bread; if they wanted to cook a roast, they'd take it to the baker and the baker would cook it for them. There weren't facilities for this sort of thing in the house. There was a man named Alex Sawyer ... I have some of his books ... he was a charming little man, a famous chef, and the author of some famous cookbooks. He invented what he called "paperbag cookery" -- cooking things in greased paperbags to contain all

the juices and aromas and whatnot. He also decided that the soldiers were being ill-used in the Crimean War, so he took a vast army of cooks and waiters and a big cookwagon down into the Crimea and put into effect the first real good commissary for soldiers. When he came back to London he decided he was going to put cookery into every home. He wrote a cookbook to enable housewives to do their own home cooking which was the advent of the kitchen stove. W. W. Montague, riding on that thought, formed the W. W. Montague Stove Company in San Francisco. Most kitchen stoves were manufactured by W. W. Montague as was the kitchen range in my mother's house on Third Street -- and very beautiful stoves they were. They were like what we call a modern restaurant stove, made from very heavy cast iron. They were wood-burning stoves. They had coiled pipe in them to heat the hot water for the house, two large ovens and a big stovepipe, and an oven over the top of the range where you kept plates warm. W. W. Montague, together with Francis Smith, a wealthy San Francisco man, started the Watsonville Water & Light Company which is now the water system of the city of Watsonville. The source of the water was up Eureka Canyon. The water was

conveyed down Corralitos Road to Freedom to the waterworks which is still there with two large reservoirs. The pipe interestingly enough was not iron pipe, but 12-inchdiameter redwood tubing. My father, who was their attorney, got a job for me one summer at the water company -- working with an old man who lived out here in Corralitos named Carl Schraeder. We used to go up and down the Corralitos Road looking for wet spots on the ground; when you found a wet spot, you knew the big main was leaking. We'd dig down to the main to mend the leak. The old man spoke with a German accent. He kept cursing the "vedges." We drove wedges in the damn pipe, redwood wedges, then covered it up again with dirt. Then we'd go along the road looking for another wet spot. Francis Smith got into some litigation with a farmer named Duckworth over the waters in Pinto Lake. It was known as the Watsonville Water & Light Company and Duckworth Case. A so-called water law case ... the litigation did involve some fancy questions of water law. My father tried that case. It was appealed to the Supreme Court, reversed, sent back for another trial ... it was reversed and sent back for a new trial three times. There were three successive

appeals and each time it was sent back, Smith would decide against the water company; my father would take another appeal and get reversal. Finally on the fourth appeal, the court got tired of sending it back and they gave Judge Smith a peremptory order to enter judgment for the water company. Well this case became, and still is, a landmark case in water law. My father got quite a reputation around the state for being a water lawyer, but he wasn't any such thing really. He was nothing but a competent country lawyer who happened to latch onto a water case, persevered, and had a good deal of success with it. It was a very dramatic case.

Jarrell: Was it some basic issue related to water rights?

Wyckoff: Yes, it was. The rights of riparian owners and the right to appropriate water were at issue. It created an important precedent in the law of waters in the State. There was a little byproduct from this thing for my father. Francis Smith had a daughter, Elizabeth, who married an Australian and went to live in Sydney. When Francis Smith died, my father handled his estate, and one of the main assets of the estate was all of the stock in the Watsonville Water & Light Company. My father had recommended that they sell the

water system to the city of Watsonville. My father didn't think it was a good idea for it to be in foreign hands; he thought the city ought to own it. This involved bond elections and the first one lost because they were very bitter elections. Somebody claimed that he'd found a dead horse in the Corralitos Creek which was the headwaters of the water system. This story leaked out to the press the night before the election; they lost the first election, but finally succeeded in selling the water system to the city of Watsonville. The proceeds of that sale were a couple of hundred thousand dollars, cash distributable to Mrs. Elizabeth Hinson, Francis Smith's daughter, who, as I said, lived in Sydney, Australia. Her husband, Hinson, was a man of considerable means, so she didn't particularly need this fund of money and left it with my father and told him to invest it for her and pay the income over to her. In that way he had to do a good deal of studying and talking to stockbrokers and whatnot about how to invest this fund. He invested that fund for 25 years. When my father died, my brother was then in the law office; he took over the management of the Hinson account and handled the investments for

her. On her death, of course, everything was sold and passed to her children who were Australians. This got my father into the business of handling investment of what was then a large sum of money. $200,000 in that day was about equivalent to a million dollars today. Mr. and Mrs. Hinson used to come to the States every few years. When they did, they always came down to Watsonville and had dinner at our house and passed the night. Mrs. Hinson was the first woman I ever saw who wore a hat at dinner. She was dripping with diamonds and she had a lorgnette. She wore a hat that looked like a nest with a chicken sitting in it. She didn't take it off; she sat and ate her dinner with the hat on in our house. Kori, our Japanese maid, thought the Hinsons were the greatest people in the world because they were the only people who ever gave her a tip. [Laughter] She always got a $5 gold piece whenever they came to town, which was really a good shot in the arm for her because my father paid her only $20 a month. She thought the Hinsons were great and so they were. I don't know; it [tipping] might be resented by somebody nowadays. I remember later on when I went East to school and visited families back there, it was understood that you would tip the

servants if they did something special for you, or if you liked the way they treated you. It seemed strange, but it seemed to be a customary practice 75 years ago.

Carmel, California, Litigation

Wyckoff: Once my father got involved in some litigation that almost took the town of Carmel apart. There was a wholesale plumber from Chicago who came out and bought some property which he named Hatton Gardens; it's on the eastern edge of Carmel. At that time--this was about the turn of the century, maybe 1910 or so -- Carmel was largely full of artists living in humble, little, redwood cottages. None of the streets were paved. The roots of the trees grew out into the street, and it was a bumpy job driving around town. There were always some tradesmen in the community who wanted to pave the streets and do things that the artists wouldn't approve of. So everybody who owned shops up and down the main street in Carmel, Ocean Avenue I think it's called, was in favor of putting in concrete pavement and paving the whole goddamned town. They wanted to put in sidewalks and gutters and

storm drains. This fellow, Hatton, blew in from Chicago. He had covered the city of Chicago with concrete, and he was looking for new virgin worlds to pave. He was going to put the first subdivision in over there in Carmel on Ocean Avenue. The artists finally got lawyers involved in the damn thing with my father representing the artists against the tradesmen. This sort of thing is common in nearly all university towns. There's a whole community in Berkeley which has experienced this sort of tussle.

Jarrell: Telegraph Avenue.

Wyckoff: Telegraph and Bancroft merchants are always at outs with the university community. First thing that happened with the University of California at Santa Cruz was for the University to get into a row with the "townies." Of course the "townies" were looking for trouble and at the first sign of intellectual arrogance the uproar started. Well, anyhow, those involved finally compromised on that Carmel lawsuit. I suppose that's the best thing to do with things of that kind. The "townies" got their way on Ocean Avenue. It's concrete pavement.

Jarrell: Right.

Wyckoff: But all those lateral streets that go off into the residential areas are not paved; maybe one or two where there are shops. But you get off a little bit, and all those streets in Carmel are just plain dirt road -- no curbs, no gutters, no cement sidewalks. [Laughter] Well, my father got a lot of advertising and a lot of clients out of Carmel as a result.

Traveling to County Seats

Jarrell: Did he often go to Salinas to the county seat?

Wyckoff: No. That was a stamping ground of John Gardner's.

Jarrell: [Laughter]

Wyckoff: John always attended all the rodeos over there and whooped it up with the boys.

Jarrell: What about Hollister?

Wyckoff: Yes, my father went to Hollister. But Hollister was a very tiny town, still is, off the main current of affairs. It was off the Southern Pacific Railroad route. The main arterial highway, Highway 101, misses Hollister; so it's a little back eddy of sorts.

Jarrell: Right.

Wyckoff: It never had more than one judge. I remember some of the judges. They were famous. One was named Maurice T. Dooling who was appointed by Woodrow Wilson to be a Federal District Judge in San Francisco during Wilson's first term in office. His successor in Hollister was his partner, a man named John L. Hudner. They were both very able lawyers and excellent judges. My father told me once that he asked Hudner how he liked being a judge and sitting on the bench, and Hudner replied, "This is easy work. I don't practice law anymore; I don't look up any law. I know everybody in San Benito County, everybody, and I know the history of all their families. I just sit up here and skin skunks is what I do."

Jarrell: [Laughter]

Wyckoff: In other words, he knew who the sons of bitches were, and who were the guys on the level, and that's the way he operated. He was a great trial judge and so was Dooling. You can see that my father didn't lead the ordinary humdrum life of the country practitioner. Other activities took my father out of Watsonville. He was very active and traveled around a

great deal. My father also was an active member of the State Bar Association. For many, many years he was its treasurer. He and my mother always attended its conventions. Twice he was President of the State Bar Association, once in the '20s and again in the '30s. So, although he was a country lawyer, he was well-known and highly respected by all of the justices of the California Supreme Court, whom he knew in a personal way, and many, many other lawyers throughout the State of California.

H. C. WYCKOFF, JR.: CHILDHOOD ACTIVITIES AND EDUCATION

Playmates and Games

Jarrell: What was your childhood like? What activities were you involved in?

Wyckoff: There were plenty of playmates in this neighborhood. We had elaborate games of run-sheep-run, which is a form of hide-and-go-seek; we also played hide-and-go-seek. I played baseball in a lot of these streets alongside of the Blackburn fields. I used to go down to the Salsipuedes Creek -- it was down at the end of

Blackburn Street -- the Salsipuedes Creek empties into the Pajaro River approximately at the foot of Blackburn and Bridge Streets. I used to go down and dabble around in the Salsipuedes Creek ... bring home jars full of polliwogs which would turn into frogs. I used to fish down there ... not with very much luck. Then I used to walk down the Salsipuedes Creek into the Pajaro River where there were big swimming holes. It was there that I learned to swim. I learned to swim the hard way by being thrown into the river by a group of boys older than me. I grew up with a large group of children. I did a great deal of playing. I roamed out into the orchard, climbing trees. It was a very happy childhood.

Attendance at Local Schools

Wyckoff: I attended local schools. There was a primary school with first, second, third, and fourth grades. Then there was a grammar school with grades five, six, and seven. I guess there must have been 30 or 40 of us in a class. Our first grade teacher was Minty White who was an elderly widow, a very kindly person. In later years an elementary school here was built and named

in her honor.

Jarrell: Were these two schools one-room schools?

Wyckoff: No. These classes all met in separate rooms. Each of us in the first grade did drawings, wrote little stories, and did arithmetic. She graded these papers which were bound in books. My first grade book is in the local historical museum. Now I had sort of an edge on these children at school, because my mother had taught and encouraged me to read before I ever went to school. I didn't go to school till I was six years old, but I could read and do arithmetic. Mother encouraged us to paint and draw with crayons and watercolors. There were A's in my book with little golden stars pasted after the A's. We had to take a report card home for the various subjects that we'd take -- arithmetic, writing, spelling, reading, deportment, absences and tardies. Once a month you'd get your parents' signatures on it, then take it back to the school. In my family if any of us ever got less than an A, my mother would raise hell about it. I can remember my younger brother had to take his report card into my mother. And he was nervous and frightened because he had one A-; he was frightened

because he knew he was going to get hell for it. She was very exacting about this kind of thing.

Jarrell: Do you remember what time you walked to school in the morning?

Wyckoff: Oh, yes. I think it was 8 o'clock. Then we got out at 12. We had a long play period in the middle of the day, then took up again at 1 o'clock, and finally came home at 3 in the afternoon.

Jarrell: Did you bring a lunch pail?

Wyckoff: No. My mother insisted that we come home for lunch. Once in a great while she would give me ten cents and I would go down to Main Street to Mrs. Soto's Tamale Parlor or to Steve Jarrett's Beanery, the first cafeteria in Watsonville. I'd give them ten cents and I could get a plate of beans and a donut. When I ate that kind of lunch my mother let me eat out very seldom. When we got home at 3 o'clock, Kori, the Japanese cook, would have a raw beef sandwich ready. Mother would buy a very thin cut of top round steak, and Kori would scrap it with a silver knife and put these scrapings of beef spread like butter on bread, and we'd get that and a glass of milk at 3 o'clock to keep things going. My mother was death on cookies and cake and candies. She didn't approve of them. And so I didn't get very much of that kind of thing. When I left the primary school I was

promoted, so to speak, to the grammar school which stood on the corner of Sudden and East Lake Avenue. There's a shopping center there now. A two-and-one-half story structure, it was an old, old building. As a matter of fact my grandmother Wyckoff, who was a native of Watsonville, was born in 1850, and attended that school as a young girl; so the damn thing was built in the '50s sometime. There were the fifth, sixth, and seventh grades before you went to high school. They were large classes; there were large rooms. In the fifth grade the teacher was Miss Ellen Cox; I think she must have had 50 pupils in that class. And there was a principal of that high school named J. D. Boggs ... he was quite a character. He had a piece of harness, a tug, a leather strap like a big belt. We'd line up on the playground ... there were segregation sections ... girls all played on west side of the building; there was a big fence, and the boys were on the east side. We'd line up at the flagpole in front of the building, and Boggs would get up on the porch and slap his hand with the strap, and we were supposed to turn and salute the flag, pledge allegiance to the flag. And to this day I feel rebellious about the pledge of allegiance to the flag. As Boggs used to say, in a very strident voice, slapping his hand with the strap, "I'll thrash the boy who won't salute Old Glory." This was regular practice every day. Got me so angry I used to put my left hand in my pocket; put my right hand over my heart,

and I put my left hand in my pocket with my fingers crossed. [Laughter] And I find myself often doing it when I stand and pledge allegiance to the flag ... seared my soul.

Jarrell: Was corporal punishment common?

Wyckoff: Oh yes. He used to flog boys with the strap. Minor discipline would be when we were called up in the classroom to the teacher and she had a ruler and you'd go put your hand out and she'd slap you with the ruler. It'd sting, but that was about all there was to it. The toilets were out in the backyard, out of the building, with water running through them all the time. And if during class you had to go to the toilet, you had to signal. Had to specify what you were up to.

Jarrell: Had to put your finger up?

Wyckoff: Put one finger if you had to pee and two fingers if the other. [Laughter] And you weren't supposed to move out of there unless the teacher nodded and said you could go. I'll never forget a little girl; she was an ugly looking thing. She looked like a frog, and she had an ugly name too. Her name was Irma Schwaub. She sat across the aisle from me. This old floor had cracks between the boards and at about five minutes to twelve, Irma put one finger up, and Miss

Cox looked up at the clock and shook her head meaning that she would have to wait five minutes. Well the little girl couldn't wait five minutes, put her hand up again. Miss Cox again shook her head. Finally she put her head down on the desk and let go. I looked down at the floor and here was the stream coming over my way [laughter]. I am still amazed that a child would respect authority so much as to do that. I remember thinking at the time, if she'd said 'no' to me and I was in danger of pissing in my pants, I would get up and walk out; to hell with her trying to stop me. Or I'd have peed under her desk instead of under mine. But it never occurred to that little girl to do that. Very sad. I guess many human beings are like that, obedient like sheep. You hear a lot about it, but you don't know how much of it goes on.

Jarrell: Were there any Chinese or Japanese children in the school?

Wyckoff: Oh, I was going to get around to that. My father had an old friend who went through grade school and high school with him named Sol Alexander, who was Jewish. Now quite prevalent in small towns in California in those days was when one Jew would come to town and open a store of some kind, generally a department

store. A man named D. D. Alexander had a department store. When I say department store, he sold clothes and suits and dresses and such. He had three sons. His eldest son was Sol, and Sol was a classmate of my father's. He had other children; they were not in school with me, but I knew the Alexander family. Mrs. Alexander was a friend of my mother's. I was never conscious of any feeling about Jews at all. There were also Chinese; not a great many though because they were very clannish and they had their own schools. There was a big Chinatown here; there were 3500 Chinamen; second biggest Chinatown in California at that time. And they wouldn't let their children go to the public school; they believed in segregation ... didn't want any part of the white school. Very few of the families wanted their children to become Americanized, or wanted them to go to public school. One such family who did want this for their children was the Dong family; they were ambitious for their children. They were really a distinguished family. They went not only through the local schools, white schools as distinguished from yellow schools, but went on to the University of California. There's a doctor in San Francisco, Dr. Collin Dong, who is a

product of this local Chinatown. I went to school with him. Other members of that Dong family distinguished themselves; there were several dentists, accountants ... well a far cry from the local Chinatown. There were also quite a few Slavonians and Japanese. I never had any sensations about race at all; it never occurred to me. In fact nothing done in the schoolyard reflected any such attitude even on the part of parents. Nobody was reluctant to have their children go to the public school. Children of other races were there.

Jarrell: After school you played mostly with the children in your neighborhood, right?

Wyckoff: Yes.

Jarrell: Which seems natural enough.

Wyckoff: Did I tell you about Carol?

Jarrell: No.

Wyckoff: My youngest brother, Stephen, went to some kind of a special kindergarten. My mother kept asking him when he came home if he had made any friends and he said, "Yes, I have a friend." He kept saying, "I have a friend." And it seemed a little strange. Finally my mother said, "Well, if you have a friend, why don't

you bring him home to play sometime." And so finally he did. He kept saying his friend was Carol. And he showed up with Carol and Carol was a Chinaman, a Chinese boy. [Laughter] You asked how I got to school. We walked to school. It was a pretty good walk from Third Street all the way down to Main Street, quite a walk. In the summertime we wore no shoes; most of the children were barefoot. Some of the families were so large and so poor that they couldn't afford shoes. I knew some boys that wore no shoes at all till they were about ready to go to high school. They wore no shoes even in the wintertime. My father always walked to his office which was on Main Street. Of course my father had a horse and buggy, but this was used mainly for going outside of the Pajaro Valley. My father's office was in Watsonville, and the county seat was in Santa Cruz 20 miles to the north.

Church Attendance

Wyckoff: My mother and father walked to church on Sunday. Before church we went to Sunday School.

Jarrell: What church did your folks attend?

Wyckoff: The Episcopal Church. My mother and father were Episcopalians. The Gardners, John Gardner, didn't belong to any church; nor did the Popes. Dr. Pope was not a church-going person. The Langley family ... well, they were all Roman Catholics. My mother was very alert about not having me absorb Roman Catholic doctrine. I guess you could say that she had a prejudice against Roman Catholics; it was the only prejudice she had except against bad grammar, sloppy writing, and snub noses. I remember Willie White who was my age and lived next door. He wore a scapular, which was a cloth with a holy picture, on a ribbon around his neck. He told me I couldn't go swimming because if I fell in the water I'd sink, but his scapular would save him. I told my mother this; I said, "I want a scapular." She was very indignant. She told me that this was rank superstition and not true ... not to pay any attention to it.

Vacations and Summer Camping Expeditions

Wyckoff: When I was about six years old, my mother and Dr.

Emma Pope set out for Tassajara Hot Springs with me and the two Pope boys ... Saxton was about my age. They got a hack over to Pajaro, and took the train to Salinas. When they got to Salinas, they put up overnight at Hotel Jeffrey because in the morning the stagecoaches went up the Carmel Valley and then on into Tassajara. Have you ever been to Tassajara?

Jarrell: Yes.

Wyckoff: Well then they caught the stage early in the morning because it took all day.

Jarrell: That road is still treacherous.

Wyckoff: Yes. Well, I'll tell you about it. When you got to the top of the grade, they would telephone down; wouldn't let anybody start up, because it was quite a steep grade going down. They'd take two by fours and put them in the spokes to lock the wheels so it went down like a sled.

Jarrell: Slid down?

Wyckoff: Yes. The carriage slid down. Well you see what an undertaking this was. When we got there ... I guess Saxton and I were about five or six years old ... I remember [laughter] there were big, hot, swimming pools; one was for women, one was for men. Saxton and

I went into the men's swimming pool, but there was a man there who had a hydrocele; well this thing horrified me. The scrotum fills with water. Your testicles hang down below your knees.

Jarrell: I never knew that.

Wyckoff: They were suffering from edema. Gibbon, who wrote The Fall and Decline of the Roman Empire, suffered from hydrocele. They had to take a syringe and draw the water off his scrotum. It was a horrible looking sight.

Jarrell: So there this man was in the pool with this hydrocele?

Wyckoff: Yes. And I told my mother about this, and she was horrified, and she wouldn't let me go in with that man, but insisted on my using the women's pool. [Laughter] Of course Emma laughed about it. She knew what it was, but my mother thought it was some loathsome communicable disease. But in any event when we jumped in the women's pool, Saxton and I, we came up speckled. We had the chickenpox. They took us out fast because of that. So we'd taken this long journey to get down there and had to go right back on the

goddamn bus and get the hell out of there and go back to Watsonville.

Jarrell: Was that the only time you spent there?

Wyckoff: We took one, probably one, dip in the hot pool, and we came back home. That was it. Ruined the vacation. Another perilous part of that trip was staying in the Hotel Jeffrey. My mother said that the beds ... there were bedbugs and cockroaches, and the legs on the bed stood in coffee cans filled with kerosene so the bugs couldn't crawl up the leg of the bed and get in the bed. But the bugs beat that by crawling up the wall and getting on the ceiling and then dropping onto the bed. My mother spent most of the night fighting bedbugs. [Laughter] So it was not a very successful trip.

Jarrell: Did she often take one of you children and just go to someplace for a little visit?

Wyckoff: Well the family would often go as well. I remember in my early youth, we used to go up to Fallen Leaf Lake near Lake Tahoe. I remember for a couple of summers we stayed at a place called Glen Alpine which is above Fallen Leaf Lake. There's a string of lakes up there. My father used to go fishing, break a hole in

the ice, catch trout. There were lots of fish to be caught that way. I used to do a good deal of traveling around the Pajaro Valley with Ed White also. We used to visit my father's ranch at Grizzly Flat. Diablo Creek emptied into the Corralitos Creek which in turn emptied into the Salsipuedes Creek which in turn emptied into the Pajaro River. Diablo Creek had its headwaters on my father's ranch at Grizzly Flat up Eureka Canyon Road. And the water was very cold in Diablo Creek. It was almost like ice water because the creek was covered with trees and full of big boulders and not exposed to the sunshine at all. But we'd run a pipe down to this big box which was a cooler in which was kept butter and milk and things like that. My father would come up there only on weekends you see. In fact he'd come up in a horse and buggy. I suppose he was attracted to that neighborhood up there because his father came to this valley with his father. He liked to go around and hobnob with all these people that lived in these houses and places, because he had done so himself when he was a boy.

Jarrell: Who went up there?

Wyckoff: My mother and all her children; Dr. Pope and his children.

Jarrell: Now when you say camping ... was there a house or a cabin there?

Wyckoff: There was neither. There were two tents that we slept in. My mother and father had a tent, then the rest of us had one. I slept outdoors by redwood trees on the bank of Diablo Creek. At that time it was 160 acres, and the campsite that we stayed in was on Diablo Creek in a canyon. There was a big hillside, a half a mile or so away, which we planted to wine grapes. There was an old man named Mitchell Secundo who lived in a house on the place there and worked for my father. He was the maternal grandfather of Mary Ann and June Borina who were well-known people in Watsonville -- a third generation Slavonian family. The old gentleman wore a big black sombrero hat and had tremendous mustachios like handlebars that came way out to a point. Underneath the house he made wine from the grapes he raised up on the hillside -- an ideal spot for grapes. It was mainly slate, the soil very porous, and it drained well. Some of my vivid recollections of childhood are smells -- I remember

his breath which both fascinated and repelled me at the same time. My mother described to me that it was a combination of garlic and red wine. It was a terrific smell. Another smell that always fascinated me was my great-uncle Ed Poole's breath which was a combination of Havana cigars and bourbon whiskey.

Jarrell: Was your family unusual in going camping?

Wyckoff: No. It was quite common. There was a great deal of camping going on.

Jarrell: Would people go hiking or on daywalks?

Wyckoff: The whole family would go on camping trips. There was a lot of camping done down in a place called Camp Goodall at the foot of East Third Street which is the present location of Pajaro Dunes. People used to go down there and camp because they could collect clams, and fish in the surf for striped bass. They could get salmon and steelhead at the mouth of the Pajaro River. There were trout in Diablo Creek -- trout all along there. Eureka Canyon, down which the Corralitos Creek runs, is still the main source of water for the city of Watsonville. And there's a purification pumping station at Corralitos now, diagonally across the road from the general store. People also used to

go camping down to Arroyo Grande which is south of Salinas, and it still is a popular place though nowadays it's built up. In those days people didn't have summer homes; they took spring wagons and tents and lived out-of-doors; did their cooking out-of-doors.

Jarrell: Did Kori come with you?

Wyckoff: No. She stayed in town and took care of my father. My mother, with the help of the children, did all the cooking. We took the water directly out of the stream, had a big pool there. The clothes were washed on these big boulders and soaped the way this has been done traditionally. I've seen them in Spain and Portugal going down to the river bottom and beating clothing on the rocks and then spreading them out to dry. People still fish up Corralitos Creek, but it's become a fashionable place now, filled with cabins. And everybody's crapping in the creek and then it goes into the reservoir down here. We used to be told an old wives' tale that if you piss in a stream, the water purifies itself every 100 yards. I suppose this area up Eureka Canyon is heavily populated now ... full of Cadillac automobiles and fancy little houses on the banks of the stream ... the natives call it

"Cultura Gulch." But in my day, people camped up there, and the only people that lived there were people who had a streak of the hermit in their systems. It took all day to get up that canyon. You started from town in a spring wagon. Mr. Pearson, Thelma Kirkham's father [she's a clerk in our law office; been with us for 50 years] used to take us and all our gear up. My mother'd go up in a horse and buggy, but we would ride up in the spring wagon with Mr. Pearson. He'd start off at 6 o'clock in the morning and take all day till 6 o'clock at night to get up to where our ranch was. I suppose that's a distance of about 10, 15 miles maybe. Horses had to walk; it was uphill all the way, except to get to Corralitos, which was 8 miles. There was a lot of what they call corduroy road ... there were places in the road where it was so wet that you would be bogged down in the wintertime. They'd cut down trees and lay them a thwartships across the road and then fill it in with dirt. We'd ride over these things, just riding over lengths of trees. This was called a corduroy road. There was quite a bit of corduroy road in that canyon and lots of beautiful ferns there; still are. It's a very beautiful ride even today,

populous as it may be. As I say, people who lived up there had a streak of the hermit in them. I remember one family who lived way up Brown's Canyon, which is a canyon right alongside Eureka Canyon. A man named Neil O'Neil ... he had been a very successful jeweler in San Francisco ... his wife whom he dearly loved had died, leaving him with two small daughters. He was so upset by his wife's death that he sold out everything in San Francisco and came down here and bought himself a place on a mountaintop. He had horses there and he raised these two daughters. My father enjoyed all these hermits, and there were quite a few of them up there in those two canyons. My father cultivated the acquaintance of these people. He liked to go and talk to them. He was a firm friend of Neil O'Neil and a lot of the other ones up there. Another thing that my family did quite often was to have picnics. I remember going up to Buzzard's Lagoon north of here.

Jarrell: On these picnics, would the whole family go?

Wyckoff: Oh yes. They were very fancy picnics. There were bottles of wine and stuffed eggs; Kori would put together beautiful things -- cold chicken, olives,

pickles, apple turnovers.

Jarrell: You're making me hungry.

Wyckoff: They were really very fancy picnics. Another place that we'd go picnicking would be over in the Hall district, a place called Sills Ranch. A grove of beautiful oak trees was there. There were also numerous picnics at the beaches here.

Jarrell: What about clamming?

Wyckoff: My father used to clam, but that's a heroic sort of business, and as a child we never did any clamming.

Boarding School in New York State

Wyckoff: When I was 14 years old, I was taken East to boarding school in New York where I spent four years. My father decided on this because, having gone to Columbia Law School, he thought that it was good for us to have a change ... get out of here and see what the other part of the country looked like; what other people thought about. The experience would improve our attitude toward life he thought. He took advice and had a vast collection of catalogues of different boarding schools in the East which was typical of him

... he was consultative. He had me read all these catalogues so that I had a pretty good idea of what all these boarding schools were like ... Groton, St. Paul's, Saint Mark's, St. George's, Lawrenceville, Cathedral School at the National Cathedral in Washington, D. C.

Jarrell: Exeter?

Wyckoff: Exeter. So I read all these things, and then we started out for the East in the fall of 1915, not knowing where I was going to go to school. We talked about it at some length, and when we got to New York, we established headquarters at the McAlpin Hotel in New York City. My father had a firm friend there who'd counseled with him a little bit about this -- a man named Jackson Reynolds who'd been a classmate of his at Columbia Law School. Then we traveled. We went all the way down into Maryland to look at a school called Donaldson, to the Cathedral School in Washington, D. C., to Lawrenceville School in New Jersey; we then went up to St. George's, I think it was, and Kent School which was run by a fellow named Father Sill of the Order of the Holy Cross which is an Episcopalian monastic order. They had a wonderful

crew there. The school was run on somewhat monastic principles. All the boys did their own housework. They worked in the gardens around the school, and did a lot of the work around the place. Then we went on up to St. Paul's in New Hampshire and to Exeter. Finally we went back to New York where the Reverend Edward Dudley Tibbits ran a school called Hoosac, which is 12 miles from Williamstown, Massachusetts, 21 miles from Troy, New York, and about 5 miles from Bennington, Vermont. His grandfather, General Tibbits, had been a general in the Civil War and had a brownstone, four-story townhouse in Troy which was a magnificent place ... I'll never forget it. It had a walnut, parabolic staircase that started on the ground floor and went four flights up, this damn thing did Its proportions were beautiful, a lovely thing to look at. It had dark blue carpet on it. This was the General's townhouse; then he had a country seat in Hoosick called "The Mansion." It was a large, stone, Tudor house. In 1915 the General of course was dead. The General had two sons; one named Dudley, who inherited the townhouse in Troy. I used to go down there occasionally with the rector and have lunch with Uncle Dudley. Uncle Dudley by that time was

about 90 years old. The General's other son had become an Episcopalian priest who'd built the village church in the town of Hoosick, which had a population of about 500 people. It was a very beautiful, little, stone, Gothic church like the kind of thing you see in the English countryside. He built a rectory alongside of it. His son, Edward Dudley, became the rector of that parish in the '90s. Then he started adding onto the rectory and building school buildings around it and soon had a boarding school for boys there. The rector's brother, Le Grand Cannon Tibbits, was the General's grandson. He lived in old General Tibbits' mansion. The place still stands and is the nucleus of the present Hoosac School built around that mansion now. Le Grand left the mansion and the large estate all around it to the school. So they abandoned the school down on the flat, alongside the little village church. The school is still there. But getting back to my story ... the great moment for decision came, and we met the Rector Edward Dudley

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Ed. Note: The variety of spellings used for the town of Hoosick Falls, the Hoosic River, and Hoosac School does not indicate carelessness on our part. The school directory and atlases we have consulted list different spellings for the town, the river, and the school.

Tibbits who was down in New York [City] interviewing people who wanted to place their children in his school. We met and had dinner with him one night and talked to him at some length. My father counseled with me after that dinner and said, "Where do you want to go to school?" He was very permissive about this. He said, "I want you to give me a good reason for it." "Well," I said, "I'd just as soon go to a smaller school as go to a large one." St. Paul's and places like Lawrenceville are very, very large schools. I suppose they had ... well Hoosac had about 100 kids and these other places had 400, or 500, or 600 kids. I told my father, "I think I like Dr. Tibbits better than all the other people we've talked to." "Well," he said, "I think that is an excellent reason; about as good a reason as you can think of. That's certainly more important than buildings or the size of the place." The school was not in session ... it would not be in session for a week ... but my father talked to Tibbits before the time came for him [my father] to go home. Tibbits had to go back to Hoosac anyhow. The arrangement was made that my father was to leave me with Tibbits at the school before it opened. He was going on into Vermont to

visit a summer home on a lake there with the parents of some students at the school. So my father took the train up to Troy, New York, and the Rector met us there, and then my father went back to Albany and went on home, which was 3000 miles away and about a four-day trip by train. I remember. I cried when he left. I was 14 years old at the time. The Rector sat beside me in the train. I cried for quite a bit. I always admired the fact that he never did try to comfort me. He just ignored me completely, went on talking about this, that, and the other thing until I got myself straightened out. I had had a little emotional outburst, but I was very happy with the whole experience. I never felt that way again thereafter at that school.

Jarrell: You felt at home?

Wyckoff: I did. Well, I can't say I felt at home, since I was in the company of 50 other adolescent barbarians, who lived together through all kinds of nefarious doings, raised a lot of hell, and got punished a lot.

Jarrell: Once school started, did you feel that you were adquately prepared academically, coming from Watsonville?

Wyckoff: Well, yes. I had skipped a grade in grammar school and had done some tutoring in Latin. I was to enter the third form which is the same as the first year of high school. These boarding schools took people before high school age. There were little guys in that school when I went there. I entered the third form, but there were little guys there in the first form who were 10 and 12 years old, who lived in a little dormitory up near the infirmary called "The Squealery." They were alongside the school nurse. They had just been weaned; that's about the best you can say for them ... a difficult life; hard to live with. Edward Dudley Tibbits had gone to school at St. Paul's, to Williams College, then to Christ Church at Oxford. He was a dreadful snob, and so was his brother. They owned practically all the property in the Hoosick Valley. Most of the people that lived there were tenants of the Tibbits. You could say that you knew a certain piece of property belonged to the Tibbits if the barn was painted a certain color of red -- there were nothing but red barns. But he was really a terrific snob. I remember the Rector used to boast about the fact that the Vanderbilts were nouveaux riches, and that General Tibbits, his

grandfather, had pushed Commodore Vanderbilt off into the Hudson River at Albany. During the last year in the sixth form, I used to sit at the head table which was on a dais in the dining room. There sat the rector of the school and also the headmaster, a man named Elmer Ellsworth Wentworth. Wentworth was a Democrat, a strong Woodrow Wilson man, and Rector Edward Dudley Tibbits was a Republican, and a strong Roosevelt man. There used to be terrible arguments on political subjects between these two men during meals. They'd get so intense about it that they'd lose their tempers. We discussed that kind of thing, and we had debates on the subject. We had debating teams then. The Rector had a couple of old crones that took care of him and the rectory -- he had a separate kitchen and dining room over there. He ate a great many of his meals in the school dining room, but these two old crones did the cooking and took care of him in the rectory. They were Irish. I remember he was always twitting them about the Roman Catholic priest over in Hoosick Falls; he was always intimating that the priest was fleecing them out of money and teaching them all kinds of superstition -- all in a very good-natured kind of way. But, there it

was.

Jarrell: [Laughter]

Wyckoff: We couldn't wear brown shoes to dinner at Hoosac. You had to wear stiff collars. When I first went there I wore an Eton collar. It was a big collar that comes out over an Eton jacket. At night you had to dress for dinner with black socks and black shoes. You couldn't wear a brown coat -- had to be a dark coat with dark trousers. On Saturday nights you had to wear a tuxedo. We all had derby hats. When we went away from school on a vacation -- as I was once invited to do, because it was too much of a trip to come West -- the Rector insisted that you wear your Eton collar and derby hat to travel. I was invited by a friend in the school, and by his parents, to visit them over the holidays in Cincinnati, Ohio. We got into Buffalo, New York, where we had to change trains to get to Cincinnati. There would be a little wait, so we thought we'd take a walk. The railroad station in Buffalo was in a tough part of town. We got a block or two away from the station, and suddenly we became aware of the fact [laughter] that the small boys of the neighborhood were after us, throwing rocks at us and jeering because we had on these derby

hats and Eton collars. So we tucked the collars under our coats, put the derby hats under our coats, and ran for the station.

Jarrell: [Laughter]

Wyckoff: All the servants in the school were Irish Roman Catholics ... every one of them ... the gardeners and all the maids, who were known as "biddies." There was even an old fellow named Riley who ran a horse and a wagon around the thing. He'd go down to the railroad station and get your trunks off the train. See, when you traveled in those days, you traveled with a big wardrobe trunk. I've still got it out here under my mother's cottage. It stood about 5 feet high. You could hang suits and things in it on one side; then the other side had drawers just like drawers in a bureau. You packed all your things in that. And it was enormously heavy. It took two people to pick it up. You checked it on your ticket. Well, Riley went down to the station to pick up these trunks. This Irish business I suppose was a spillover from Boston, and a spillover from the potato famines. They were <u>definitely</u> a servant class, and they also worked in the spinning mills. All the domestic servants were Irish in the many houses I went into when the Rector

took me visiting places. The General in the mansion had a body servant, a black man, and his son was the butler in that house. He'd never been anywhere except in that house, and his father before him. His name was Dudley, which was a Tibbits family name curiously enough. The Rector's name was Edward Dudley Tibbits. And this colored man named Dudley was Le Grand's butler in the mansion ... that's the only name he had was Dudley, I think. This was also the first time that I got any feeling about Jews. There was one boy whose mother was a Jew ... I found out afterwards. This was very carefully concealed from everybody.

Jarrell: Do you have any idea what the tuition was like in those days?

Wyckoff: I think it was around $1500; but you see my father also had to pay for the railroad ticket to get me back and forth.

Jarrell: Right.

Wyckoff: There were extras of course of all kinds.

Jarrell: Did you have pocket money or allowance?

Wyckoff: I had a small allowance, yes. There wasn't anyplace to spend it at school. But the family couldn't send

us the allowance directly; they had to send it through the school. The bursar of the school doled it out to you once a week, and it increased as you went along; the sixth form got more money than the third form did.

Jarrell: Did you write home regularly?

Wyckoff: Oh, I had to.

Jarrell: How did they enforce that?

Wyckoff: We were all herded into the study hall on Sundays after church to write our letter home. Thursdays and Saturdays were half-holidays, the afternoons were off. You couldn't stay on the school grounds; they'd chase you out. They'd go around looking under the beds and in the closets to see if you were hiding; to see that you were out getting some exercise. We'd go for long walks all over the Hoosick Valley. In the wintertime we skied, skated, and snowshoed. Skis in those days were a very primitive affair; no tackle ... they were nothing but a strap over your foot; if you fell down, the skis went on down the hill.

Jarrell: [Laughter]

Wyckoff: They were very hard to manipulate. You couldn't steer

with them very much the way you can with tackle nowadays. What we had to do if we wanted to ski was take the skis and a toboggan and go to a hill and make a track with the toboggan, then go down that track on the skis. Now also there were textile mills in Hoosick Falls, which is three miles away from the school on the Hoosic River. It must have been slave labor in those days, because I remember every once in a while there'd be a strike in those textile mills. There were two roads to Hoosick Falls -- the River Road and the Hill Road. During a strike, the girls who worked in those mills were out soliciting; we were told they were offering their bodies for sale and the two roads to Hoosick Falls were "out of bounds" because we might get into trouble. There was a whole flock of these babes waving at people, and we used to sneak down and look at them. It gives you an idea of the kind of conditions they lived in. They were probably paid little or nothing. Now the Rector had gone to Williams College, and we saw a good deal of Williams College. It was a small college and it was only 12 miles away. We used to get over there quite a bit to see plays and participate in the college life to some extent. So most of the boys that

went to Hoosac School wanted to go to Williams College. Of course I wanted to go too because all my friends were going. But my father said, "No, you haven't got the idea. The idea now is that you come back to California and go to the University of California. And then when you get through with that, if you wish, you can go East again to law school, wherever you want to go." I had always had the idea I was going to law school. I think it was a great boon to my family that none of us passed our adolescence in the family home. I think by reason of that fact we were always on very good terms with our parents. I went to that boarding school, and I had two brothers who followed me; as soon as I left, my next younger brother who was five years younger than I entered; when he left, my youngest brother, Stephen, who was ten years younger than I, entered so that for a period of about 12 years there was always one of us there at that school. Then my father and mother did the same thing with my sister. They sent her away to boarding school; she went to Miss Ransom & Miss Bridges School in Piedmont. So all of us were packed away like that. This is in keeping with the idea of both my father and mother of wanting to get rid of us

during our adolescence ... let us rub up against other adolescents and work it off that way. I think it was also my father's idea that it would broaden your outlook if you went East and got away from the narrow parochial point of view that you get in a high school in a small town. This boarding school routine didn't endear you to the people in your hometown. My. brother Stephen found that out because he likewise sent his children away to boarding schools. When he was running for trustee in the school district over in Santa Cruz, the hecklers damn near ran him off the platform when he was up there with the other candidates. "Where'd your oldest daughter go to school?" "Well, she went away, went to The Bishop's Schools in La Jolla." "Well, where did your next daughter go?" "Well, she went to finishing school." "Where did they go to college?" "One of them went to Smith and one of them went to Mount Holyoke." He scattered his children all over the country.

Jarrell: When your father sent you and your brothers and sister away, was this thought rather odd? Was there ever a feeling of, well, that the schools around here weren't good enough for the Wyckoffs?

Wyckoff: Oh yes, sure. That's what I mean ... Steve lost his

shirt in that election. It's hard to credit him for sending his children away. They said to him if you want to get yourself in a position where you can dictate to us how our children should be educated, you should put your own children in school here. We don't want you telling us what to do if you don't want to send your own children to school here. So he suffered for that.

'Cross Country Train Traveling

Jarrell: How did you travel when you were in boarding school back East?

Wyckoff: I rode the trains across the continent twice a year for four years between 1915 and 1919, which was quite an undertaking.

Jarrell: Alone?

Wyckoff: Yes. First off I was given a ticket ... which was at least a yard long ... because in crossing the country, you traveled on four different railroads -- the Southern Pacific ran to Ogden, Utah; then the Union Pacific picked up and ran from Ogden, Utah, to

Omaha, Nebraska; then we rode from Omaha, Nebraska, into Chicago on the Chicago Northwestern Railroad. There were three different railroads to get you into Chicago. It was the same train, but the engines and train crews would change, so when you got to Ogden they'd take the Southern Pacific diner off, the Southern Pacific train crews, arid you'd get a Union Pacific train crew with a Union Pacific engine. But you'd ride on the same train all the way through except it'd be a new diner, engine, and train crew. The only crew that rode all the way through were the porters.

Jarrell: Black?

Wyckoff: Yes. And they were wonderful, wonderful men. My father would have a talk with the porter, give him a silver dollar, and tell him about me. And then the porter would walk down to me and tell me what to do and what not to do. The food and service on these dining cars were marvelous; they had faultless linen napkins, and what looked like silverware, and there were vases with fresh flowers in them. They had charcoal grills; if you ordered ham and eggs for breakfast, you could smell the ham cooking and it had the marks of the grill on it. The waiters were

trained to be very expert. I never saw one of those waiters ever drop anything. The train had a mail coach ahead and a baggage coach and a Railway Express car. Railway Express was a separate corporation, a separate entity. If you wanted to ship household furniture or something of that kind, it went by American Railway Express. Ahead of the diner, near the baggage coaches, was what was called a tourist car; it had wicker seats and no rug, no carpet on the floor. It was a second-class coach is what it was. It had a stove in one end and people cooked.

Jarrell: They brought their own provisions?

Wyckoff: Brought their own provisions, yes. It smelled pretty bad in there. I rode this tourist car once in 1918. My father suggested to me that, since people were making sacrifices during the war, I should make a sacrifice and ride the tourist car accommodation from Chicago to San Francisco on the Overland Limited. It was a grueling experience, I can tell you. They wouldn't permit you to go into the diner, so I had had to buy things to eat in a grocery store in Chicago near the railroad station -- chocolate bars, bananas; the things a boy would buy. It was rugged;

it was summertime, and the car was overloaded with passengers. My father said I could buy a lower berth, but in the upper berth was an entire family -- a man and his wife and a little girl; three of them sleeping together over me. And I was terrified for fear this whole gang would come down on me in the middle of the night. [Laughter] When they went to bed at night they'd hang their legs over the side of the berth to undress. There was a big curtain that came down and covered them ... and here were this man's feet, whose white socks kept getting dirtier and dirtier as we went West; then the mother's legs and then the little girl's.

Jarrell: [Laughter]

Wyckoff: It took, three days to get from Chicago to San Francisco. Everyone cooked on an iron, potbellied, coal-burning stove at the end of the car. The upholstery was wicker, and the floors were not carpeted. Behind were the regular pullman cars with upper and lower berths. When the porters made up this berth, the bedding would all go into the upper berth that would fold up into the wall; you'd then be seated on two-seater, upholstered benches ... one on

each side of the aisle which went down the center. The floors were carpeted. At the end of each of these cars were accommodations called compartments which were two berths, one over the other, an upper berth and a lower berth, which when made up became two upholstered benches to sit on, and you had your own private bathroom. The drawing rooms were bigger; they had accommodations for three; there were three berths, two lowers and one upper berth in this drawing room, which included also a private toilet. The other cars that had upper and lower berths, but not compartments, just had curtains that came down at night. At the end of each car was a washroom and toilet for men and at the other end one for women; when you'd get up in the morning, you'd put on a bathrobe and go down there. There were several metal washbasins with hot and cold water, and there was one little round basin with a faucet that came up with a kind of a gooseneck where you'd brush your teeth. You wouldn't brush your teeth in the other basins because, when you washed up, you filled the basin with water; you didn't want people spitting in the basin where you washed your hands and face or shaved. On the end of this train was the observation car with

easy, overstuffed chairs in it facing the windows; and on the very rear end was an observation platform. It was covered and had folding chairs with accommodations for about eight people. It was outdoors and what you were looking at was the track going away from you. [Laughter] You'd get a little fresh air out there as well as a lot of cinders. It was from this platform that politicians made speeches or waved at crowds. The locomotives were steam-propelled. The segment [of the cross-country trip] that was operated by the Southern Pacific from San Francisco to Ogden used oil-burning locomotives which were clean; but there were coal-burners from there on except down the Hudson River into New York ... this area was partly electrified. In the summertime, there wasn't any air conditioning, the car windows were open. They were double windows open about two or three inches, and there were screens, but the coal-burning engines threw cinders and coal dust. They'd put a sheet instead of a counterpane over your bed in the lower berths with these screened windows alongside of you. This coal dust would sift in and by morning the white sheet on your bed would be covered with coal dust; a very dirty kind of a trip. It took

72 hours for that train to get from the Oakland Mole, which is where it originated, to Chicago.

Jarrell: Oakland what? Mole?

Wyckoff: Pier ... they used to call it the Oakland Mole. You'd take a ferryboat from the Ferry Building in San Francisco, go over to the Oakland side because you couldn't get out of San Francisco to go East.

Jarrell: Yes.

Wyckoff: You had to go from Oakland. The train had to cross the Sacramento River at the north end of the Bay; they used to break up the train and put it on an enormous ferryboat; the whole train would be broken into sections and put on this ferryboat and the ferry would cross the Sacramento River; then we went on up to Sacramento and so on. At Chicago you had to get off the Overland Limited because Chicago was the terminal where the train turned around and went back. You'd have to go across Chicago from the Union Station, which is where the Overland Limited arrived, and go across town to the LaSalle Street Station to catch the Twentieth Century Limited which was the New York Central train into New York City. It took 24 hours to get to New York. The Twentieth Century Limited was a very fancy train.

Jarrell: Yes.

Wyckoff: Red plush carpets, very fancy. I always liked it because they boasted that the train was never late; but if it was late, they'd pay all the passengers $10 an hour for every hour that they were late. I cashed in one time, got $20 ... two hours late. Anyway this trip across the continent took four railroads and 94 hours. Some guy once said that this was not true of freight trains. Freight trains went right through. Some wiseacre once said that a hog could travel across the United States without changing trains, but a human being couldn't.

Jarrell: [Laughter]

Wyckoff: This was true. There was no way of doing that in this country; no western railroad, Southern Pacific, Santa Fe, none of them went east of Chicago; none of the eastern roads, New York Central, Pennsylvania, came west of Chicago. When I first started traveling, I traveled from one railroad station in Chicago to another on a horse-drawn Parmalee bus. They still transfer you from one station to another in Chicago on a Parmalee bus. It's a motor bus now, but in those days there were horses. They were big surreys and they'd throw the suitcases up on the roof, and you

sat on long benches. Now there were other ways of crossing the continent and I used them. I once went the Santa Fe, the southern route, out of Chicago to Los Angeles, then on into Oakland. Once I came on the Northern Pacific on the Oriental Limited, which leaves Chicago and goes up through Wisconsin, across the Dakotas, past Glacier National Park, then on into Spokane, then on down the shores of the Columbia River into Portland. Another way of crossing the continent was to go up into Canada, on the Canadian Pacific, which was a beautiful ride. I did that once with Mother in 1919. We went to Toronto, took a British boat, went through Lake Erie, across Lake Michigan, then all the way across Lake Superior to the western end where you picked up a Canadian Pacific train which went through Banff and Lake Louise and on into Victoria. They put on a flatcar, observation car, when they got into the Canadian Rockies ... a regular freight flatcar with benches on it.

Jarrell: Kind of windy.

Wyckoff: Yes. They did that only in the summertime of course. The service was excellent on these trains,

particularly the food. The railroads I think lost imagination and sat still. They got spoiled during World War II because they got rich hauling freight for the Army and the Navy and whatnot. And the airlines started up then and began stealing the passenger business. I was in Washington, D. C., during World War II. I had to come out to San Francisco, and I frequently used the train even to go overnight to New York. By that time they'd put diesel power on trains and made lighter equipment, but they hadn't done anything to the roadbeds. It was an intolerable kind of a trip. They cut the running time with the diesel equipment from Chicago to San Francisco from 72 hours to 36 hours. So they were going twice as fast on the same roadbed. It was difficult to walk around or even to stay in bed on the damn thing. It'd roll you around terribly; an awfully rough ride.

Jarrell: Did your parents ever travel on trains?

Wyckoff: Oh yes. They always took the train to San Francisco. We had a very good train called the Del Monte Express that originated in Monterey and came through Watsonville Junction at about 8 o'clock in the morning; got into San Francisco about 10 o'clock;

then came back in the afternoon at 5 o'clock. We rode that train too, a few years ago, till the Southern Pacific succeeded in taking it off. Then another train that we used to ride was the Lark, the overnight pullman train between San Francisco and Los Angeles. It went down every night; one left San Francisco and another Lark left Los Angeles. They were both night trains. The Lark left San Francisco at 8 o'clock at night. All these trains stopped at Watsonville Junction. Up until a few years ago, before they took the Lark off, I used to go out of Watsonville in the '40s and '50s. I could take the Lark at 6:30 in the morning at the Junction. It had one of these beautiful diners on it. You could get an excellent breakfast, grapefruit and grilled ham and eggs, and be in San Francisco a little after 8 o'clock. Then I'd work all day in San Francisco, and if I'd finish by 5 o'clock, I'd come home on the Del Monte which had a club car on it, where you could get a drink and a sandwich if you wanted one. If I couldn't catch that train, I'd catch the Lark going south which left San Francisco at 8 o'clock and got down here about 10:30. And I could get dinner on that train. When I came back here to Watsonville in '46, I

didn't like to drive between here and San Francisco -- I like it less now -- I used the train all the time; either the one or the other of those two trains, and they were a great convenience. Now there's no more passenger train service between here and San Francisco; nothing like it will ever be around here again, which is too bad. I certainly don't like to drive an automobile on the highways now. It's sort of hard on the central nervous system; all kinds of people killed on highways. It's dangerous; more dangerous than flying. Now you can see that I lived through a period when you walked, or went in a horse and buggy. Horse and buggy were in predominant use until 1918 or so when my father started buying and using automobiles. Then automobiles, trains, and then aircraft came into vogue. This is what has happened to transportation in the course of my life. Of course when I was about ten years old, I used to ride bicycles all over this valley including up to Mt. Madonna ... I knew all these country roads, and explored everything with other boys on bicycles.

WATSONVILLE AND SANTA CRUZ-- A COMMENTARY

Jarrell: Could we talk about the relationship between Santa Cruz and Watsonville? And that rivalry, or ...

Wyckoff: Yes. This is easy to understand; they're utterly different types of communities. Watsonville is a sound, economic unit. The town of Watsonville has always had about 12,000 inhabitants ... but the valley, the Pajaro Valley, has always had around 30,000. It's extremely rich agricultural land ... so it's very healthy economically. Everybody's moderately well-to-do here in town. Of course we get a lot of migratory agricultural labor now that we didn't have in the early days. I was never aware of any poverty around town when I was a child, the way we see people today on relief. Watsonville passed through the bad Depression in 1929 absolutely unaffected. They never felt it here at all. In times like that the price of food goes up, and farmers get along pretty well. I never heard of any farmer going bankrupt in this community. They'd have bad years for apples, but they'd borrow money at the bank by mortgaging their orchards. In the good years they'd pay everything off. So that's the way the cycle went.

They were able to take cycles and depressions in their stride. Santa Cruz, on the other hand, is primarily a resort place, as are the communities up north of Santa Cruz, Boulder Creek, Felton, and Ben Lomond. They're shabby resort places at that. Places where junior-grade businessmen in San Francisco bring stenographers down for a weekend. Then they have that honky-tonk casino in Santa Cruz selling spun sugar and scenic railway rides and a whole bunch of claptrap boarding houses which shut down for the winter. .It's a pretty shabby community ... it was. But the money was down here in Watsonville; the real sound money was down here. This is a wealthy community compared to Santa Cruz.

Jarrell: You mean in terms of economic stability?

Wyckoff: Yes. Pajaro Valley agriculture used to produce about $30 million a year: $10 million from strawberries, $10 million from row crops, $10 million from orchards. By reason of this fact the land was more valuable than it was in Santa Cruz because it was highly productive. It was assessed much higher; it was uniformly assessed in such a way that this end of the county, with its agricultural land, was paying more in the way of taxes per capita than they were in

Santa Cruz. The bad thing about that whole situation was that for years, up until a few years ago, there was only one supervisor representing Pajaro Valley, and four supervisors at the other end because they outnumbered us in population. There were a couple of supervisors from Santa Cruz and Aptos and two for the northern areas so that the people down here felt like outcasts since they were outvoted 4 to 1. Then they were arrogant about it up there. I remember years ago when they had to decide where they were going to put the County Fair; they wanted it up in Santa Cruz of course. There was a tremendous hassle about that ... a lot of very bad feeling about it. Finally, by reason of the fact that it was an agricultural affair, it was established down here ... southern county ... but it's been boycotted ever since at the northern end of the county; they don't pay any attention to it, you know. They don't bake pies or enter produce or participate in it really at all. I found this particularly true when I was made co-chairman of the commission to arrange the bicentennial celebration of the Portola Expedition. They weasled on it. They had two chairmen ... I represented this end and Margaret Koch -- God bless

her -- the other end of the county. Fortunately she's a sweet person and I enjoyed working with her ... but she was at the Santa Cruz end and was under compulsion from a man who was supposed to do the publicity work for us. He kept saying that we didn't understand "Show Biz." They wanted to do the same goddamn things like selling spun sugar, having parades, crowning a "Miss Portola," and all sorts of claptrap. I fought this thing. What I wanted to do was different. I succeeded in doing it by trading with them ... I interested the Santa Cruz County Horsemen's Association in my plans. I think the organization is a kind of half-assed sheriff's posse so they can carry pistols. The horsemen got their wives interested. I went to Cabrillo College and got costumes researched. The wives made costumes for all these people, and we simulated Portola's march through the county. They started across the bridge at Pajaro where we thought they crossed the river. Then we paused at the city hall where I'd had a plaque made by a little fellow ... I tried to use local people, but the closest I could get was a fellow over in Pacific Grove who does very nice bronze work. What I did on each of these plaques was to take excerpts

from Father Crespi's diary -- he was the priest who was with Portola on the expedition. I attempted to trace the course of the expedition; there's a plaque at the city hall in Watsonville; the next plaque is out at Pinto Lake where they first saw a redwood tree. These plaques have got these quotes from the diary as to what happened and why they stopped at each particular place. Then they came along from Pinto Lake which is over to the east of us and came by my house; then went on up close to where Cabrillo College is now. Instead of having a plaque at Cabrillo, we did something different. I had a hell of a fight with these fellows at the northern end of the county about this. The Cabrillo Music Festival wanted to bring a Mexican composer here, Carlos Chavez. Our commission had $25,000 at our disposal. I talked to a couple of the supervisors about spending $3500 to commission Carlos Chavez to write a symphony to have its premiere performance at the Cabrillo Music Festival, to be the focal point of the Festival. One of them said to me, "My God, Wyckoff, you're not going to pay a Mexican $3500 just to write a song, are you?" He said that people would get this thing mixed up with Cesar Chavez and they'd think we were

paying him the $3500, and we'd have a hell of a lot of trouble about it. Well, I talked them all out of that, and it worked out very nicely. I took $3500 and gave it to Carlos Chavez to induce him to come out here.

Jarrell: And that work was commissioned?

Wyckoff: Yes. He wrote a symphony called "Discovery" to commemorate the Portola celebration. The Mexican community in Pajaro Valley is highly organized; they've got all kinds of clubs and this, that, and the other. I [laughter] don't like to tell people how to do things, but I told them what I was up to. I said, "I think it would be very nice if you would have a little reception for Chavez down here in Watsonville sponsored by the Mexican community. I will advance several hundred dollars to rent the Veterans Memorial Hall on Third Street." [It's a large hall ... they expected to have quite a turnout.] And I said, "I'll pay the rent for the ball, but you have to do all the rest of it ... whatever you want in the way of refreshments and a program ... I'll leave that entirely up to you." Well, I shouldn't have done that. I should have counseled them a little more. [Laughter] It was the

silliest thing I ever saw. They had two or three mariachi bands there that made enough noise so you could hear them all the way down to the beach; it was a noisy, goddamn thing. Then they had the old gentleman ... Chavez came over from Santa Cruz with his daughter [laughter] and ...

Jarrell: Do you think he was pleased?

Wyckoff: Oh, he was pleased, sure. But I was not pleased. I'll tell you why really, why I was not pleased ... because they had long tables set with, I give you my word, two or three hundred bottles of champagne. It was their idea ... they just blew their tops on this damn thing. They had all this champagne there, and there weren't that many people to drink it. There were twice as many bottles of champagne as there were people ... I mean as place settings, you see. [Laughter]

Jarrell: Yes.

Wyckoff: There you are ... I mean that's what happened ... you let simple people plan, and they do something extravagant like that. They went out of their way. But the old man enjoyed it. It was awfully noisy ... I couldn't stand it. I guess he's used to noise.

Jarrell: Yes. [Laughter]

Wyckoff: Then I had a ceramic artist up in Davenport make two beautiful little ceramic plaques, and they're in the foyer of the theater at Cabrillo College.

Jarrell: I've seen them.

Wyckoff: Very nice.

Jarrell: Yes. I didn't know you had anything to do with that.

Wyckoff: Yes. My wife and her sister were with me when I commissioned the guy to make the plaques. I wrote out the inscription. Then I said, "How much will you charge for this?" And Florence and her sister were there ... they've got a lot of their father's blood in their veins ... they're terrible tightwads. I said to this little man, "How much?" He said, "$250." Well I said, "If you'll put your soul into it, I'll give you $500." Florence and her sister were shocked at that.

Jarrell: [Laughter]

Wyckoff: But he did a beautiful job. I'm kind of proud of it, because that foyer [at the Cabrillo College Theater] had a whole bunch of these abominable trophies that they give a fellow when he wins a golf course

tournament ... it was kind of a trophy room. Bob Swenson, the College President, was so ashamed of that wall [laughter], he told me he took them all out of there. They've improved the foyer ... put in some pictures now and have art exhibits.

Jarrell: Student art also.

Wyckoff: Yes. Yes. These horsemen [Santa Cruz County Horsemen's Association] got into costumes and they ...

Jarrell: Reenacted ...

Wyckoff: ... I got the city schools involved, and all the school children came out to meet the horsemen. They came along past the city hall and drove past all the schools here in town ... E. A. Hall School and McQuiddy School. All the elementary school children came out to see the march. I've got some pictures of it; I'm going to make a scrapbook and give it to the County Historical Society. Then the ride went on up to the Courthouse, with another plaque there with another quotation from Crespi. Then they went on up to Waddell Creek and then on into San Mateo County.

Jarrell: Now was there anything at Waddell Creek?

Wyckoff: Well there ... somebody had already put a plaque there.

Jarrell: I see.

Wyckoff: I'm going to write up this thing sometime. The horsemen did make the complete ride, following as closely as they could. I've got it all marked out on a big map, which we had up in the little museum down here in Watsonville for a while. The schoolchildren all knew about it and what it was all about. After that was over, then they had the big splash up in the Santa Cruz area. They had a fair with wine-tasting and brass bands from all over hell's half acre. Other counties sent bands down here, and they had a big to-do over in Santa Cruz. But they were vaudeville shows and merry-go-rounds and spun sugar ... the whole works. So the celebration was a kind of a straddle.

Jarrell: [Laughter] American-style then.

Wyckoff: I had a hell of a hard time preventing them from spending the entire $25,000 ... but I succeeded by being awfully rough and sitting on, watching, the expenses. We spent a hell of a lot less on it than they did up at the other end, because that thing that

they had was an expensive thing to do. But I had $3500 left and I let it sit for a long time in the County Treasurer's hands. I was afraid somebody would put it back in the general fund. Finally when that Octagon Museum ... the Santa Cruz County Museum ... came along, I went over quietly and talked to the supervisors and got that $3500 put into a special fund for the Octagon.

Jarrell: Now that's appropriate, yes.

Wyckoff: I didn't want it to get back in the general fund we had so I just got it earmarked for historical purposes; we perpetuated it. Now this is an example of the kind of pulling and hauling that went on about where that county fairgrounds was to be. I got into the same difficulty trying to operate the Portola Bicentennial thing. I may have been a little extreme in my direction, and I was conscious of that, so I would sort of let them have their head. We really had two monkeyshines going on about Portola at the same time; one originated down here and the other one originated up in Santa Cruz, each done in a different style. But now they've done some gerrymandering with these district supervisoral districts so that they run in strips. They tried to run a strip in here so

that a supervisor at the northern end has got a little piece of the thing down here too ... but I don't think it has really altered the old-time rivalry between the two communities.

Jarrell: So you think that the conflict is based on the differences in their economic base?

Wyckoff: That ... plus their interests. I think the Cabrillo College and the University at Santa Cruz have been a tremendous influence for a better community all around. I think Cabrillo's done wonderful things there ... at a different level than the University at Santa Cruz. I think Swenson is a genius; he's a great man who's done a magnificent thing there. He has nursing programs where they train girls to become what they call LVNs as well as RNs; they train dental technicians and paralegal and paramedical people. I suppose they're people who just get out of high school and don't feel they want four years of formal education. They want to learn some useful occupation.

Jarrell: Some skill.

Wyckoff: That's right. That has been a great contribution by Cabrillo. Swenson is a real genius, a master at handling difficult situations. For example, some

Mexican-American students took over his office for a while there. He avoided a confrontation and worked his way out of that mess beautifully. He got a lot of opposition from a lot of brass hats who thought he should get the cops in there, or the militia, and shoot people ... hut not Swenson. He's very good at that sort of thing. Then of course the University up at the other end of Santa Cruz has brought something to this entire county the likes of which they never had before. As I say, I felt there was some prejudice against me, and I know my mother and father felt prejudice against them by the very fact they were university people. The University is going to break that up in another generation.

Jarrell: The anti-intellectual feeling.

Wyckoff: The University is doing great things for the whole community. I hope in time that it'll result in burning down the casino over there in Santa Cruz which is a monument to everything that I think is cheap and tacky ... tacky, yes. Marian Hollins, who made a $1,000,000 on Kettleman Hills, bought Pasatiempo. I knew Marian; she was a great person. She put the golf course in, and she sent her

architect back to St. Andrews to look over the famous golf course there. She had him lay out the course, and then Bill Wooster built some homes in Pasatiempo. There's a beautiful kind of a subdivision. Marian had a dream -- she was going to buy the casino from the Seaside Company, knock the whole thing down and make cabanas and a beach club for people who lived in Pasatiempo. Then she had options to buy Scotts Valley; she was going to buy that and put in a horse-racing track and stables ... this was her dream. But after she built Pasatiempo she got caught in the 1929 crash and lost her entire fortune; she lost everything, went home to Long Island, and at the age of 50 destroyed herself. Too bad her dreams couldn't have been realized. It would have altered that beach and taken all the cheap, vulgar stuff out of there and also would have saved Scotts Valley.

Jarrell: Do you know who owns the land on which the whole boardwalk and ...

Wyckoff: Yes. Seaside Company.

Jarrell: They own the beach itself ... the land?

Wyckoff: I don't know.

Jarrell: Or is that leased? I've heard some controversy.

Wyckoff: Well, you can't own beach, but you can own land before all this, this new ... I've forgot what they call it.

Jarrell: Coastal Commission?

Wyckoff: Yes. Coastal Commission. Before that went into effect, you could own beach down to the mean high tide watermark. There's a survey of that's been made; people own beach and pay taxes on it. The Coastal Commission has raised a lot of hell because it'll confiscate property, you know, that the owner had been paying taxes on ... on beach down to the mean high tide line. They were actually paying taxes on it. You make a fellow pay taxes on it and then tell him he can't us it anyway he wants, he gets a little indignant about it, so ... that's what they did though. The Seaside Company, I think, has been a very bad influence on Santa Cruz. They're powerful; they have had that power politically. The County had an advertising committee and a $100,000 worth of county revenue was given to the committee to spend for advertising in any way they wanted.

Jarrell: To bring in visitors.

Wyckoff: Yes. They advertised the goddamn Casino is what they

did ... in glossy magazines. I made the initial attack by asking the supervisor when they asked if I'd serve on that Portola Commission. I said, "Yes, but I want $25,000 appropriated." They said, "Well, we can't put up that much." I said, "Well, you can. This is the greatest piece of advertising you'll ever get ... to have this Portola festival. Get this Mexican [Chavez] to do the concert, and you'll get your advertising all over the world -- a decent kind of advertising. People will come here who love music, and recognize good things." I said, "You've got a $100,000 advertising fund here ... just take $25,000 away from that and give it to us." And they did, but it caused all kinds of trouble [laughter] and uproar in the Santa Cruz end of the county. That fund's successfully been whittled away now; they've lost control of it. I think there's still some such fund, but it's ...

Jarrell: Miniscule.

Wyckoff: They had a $100,000 to play with for years and years and years. Now that's the kind of thing that rankles people down here, you see.

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