

Barbara J.H. Cannon

Tape No. 36-5-1-97

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Barbara Jane Hughes Cannon (BC)

Kula, Maui

February 21, 1997

BY: Susan G. Tissot (ST) and Jeanne Johnston (JJ)

ST: In Kula, Maui.

Okay. Can you tell me what your full name is?

BC: Yes it's Barbara Jane Hughes Cannon.

ST: And where were you born?

BC: I was born in Pu'unēnē at home. All of my brothers and sisters were born at home in—do you know the [Alexander & Baldwin] Sugar Museum?

ST: Yes.

BC: Yes. It's the house that Mr. [Gaylord] Kubota lives in. He's the curator.

ST: Right next door?

BC: Yes, next door to (the museum). We were all born in that bay window bedroom. It's kind of nice to have your birthplace saved for all time hopefully.

(Laughter)

ST: Wow. How long did you live in that house?

BC: I think I was twelve when we moved to Spreckelsville. The house was built for my family by the plantation. My dad worked for HC&S [Hawaiian Commercial & Sugar Company], and he was an engineer, electrical engineer.

ST: And, can I ask you what---do you mind telling me what year you were born?

BC: Nineteen twenty-one, August 20. Just had my seventy-fifth birthday last year.

ST: Congratulations.

BC: Yes, well. My grandmother lived to be 101, so I've told the kids they better plan on it.

(Laughter)

ST: Can you tell me the name of your parents?

BC: My mother's name was Alice Thayer Walker Hughes. And my father's name was Robert Edwin Hughes.

ST: And do you have any brothers and sisters?

BC: Yes I have. My older brother is Bob Hughes, and the next oldest is Donald Hughes, I was the third child, and I have a younger brother Richard Hughes, and a younger sister Maybelle Hughes (Helfrich). Our mother died, when I was eleven, of an accident in surgery and left my dad with the five children. About four and a half years later, he married again and I have one half sister, Nevis Marie Hughes. Nevis lives here on Maui. Her last name is de Laveaga.

ST: Where did you grow up?

BC: Well, (before) my mother's death, they were building a home in Spreckelsville for our family. Mr. Baldwin insisted that my father move to the house because it was planned for my mother and father. It had six bedrooms and it's what you saw in the tidal wave pictures that I showed you.

ST: What year was this?

BC: That would have been 1933 that we moved. My mother died in June of 1933.

ST: And so did you spend the rest of your childhood there?

BC: Yes.

ST: So, tell me what happened April 1, 1946.

BC: Well, My husband and I had just returned (home after) the war. And on February 1, 1946 we rented my grandmother's home on the beach in Spreckelsville. We moved in on February 1st and we moved out on April 1st 1946, which was the day of the tidal wave.

(Laughter)

BC: To start about the tidal wave, my husband's mother phoned us. She called a few minutes before 7:00 AM. My husband answered the phone and she told him there was going to be a tidal wave because the harbor was emptying. There was a recession before, which does happen. And the only reason she knew that is (because) there were people running to the harbor and from the harbor. And out of her kitchen window, she noticed all this activity that was near the Bulk Sugar (building) so she went outside and spoke to a Japanese man who was running away from the harbor. [She said,] "What's the matter, somebody get hurt at the Bulk Sugar?"

(He said,) "No, no, Mrs., going to be tidal wave coming. The harbor is emptying," And so she ran to the phone. We believe that she saved our lives, because our house was totally destroyed. And we would have possibly still been in bed. Was it Sunday?

ST: No, it was Monday.

BC: It was a Monday. And anyway, she woke us. And, so, after answering the phone (Wilson said,) “Mom says there might be a tidal wave because the harbor is emptying.” This home (we lived in) was kind of behind a sand dune, lower than the sand dune. It was a windy area so the sand would build up. There was a wooden embankment (made) of railroad ties that held the sand in the front of the (dune) down on the beach itself. The sand dune was higher than the (embankment). When we looked out (from the living room window) we saw water from the top of the sand dune straight out (to the horizon. It was as if the island had sunk.) The water had already come in about a foot (deep) under our home and it had just gone around the house and under the house. It was a wooden floor home and it was off the ground. And so, Willie said, “I’ll go get the car out, you get something on.” I was in my pajamas. So I grabbed my green coat, which I just brought back from the Mainland with me. Dress length, it was, and I grabbed my watch and my jewelry case. It’s a funny thing but that’s what I grabbed. (Chuckles) He went out to the car and had to pull a railroad tie out from under the car. It had floated (from the beach) around the house into the garage. Later we thought if we hadn’t had to stop and move that tie to get the car out of the garage, we might have made it away from the beach. But we got caught in our car by the next wave between our home and the next-door neighbor’s home, which was a beach house for the nurses of HC&S Company’s Pu‘unēnē Hospital. That home—I (think) was gone already. There was no one in it. The house next to them was the Ben Williams home. We ended up swimming (to the Williams home). We swam from the car because I was scared that we would be pulled out to sea in the recession before the (next wave). Just prior to going to the car, we had looked again from the living room (windows and) the scene we saw was big coral heads and puddles. (The dune was gone) and on the horizon it was like a big wall of water, because the receding had happened between the wave that had come in first (over the sand dune) and the next one. Or it could have been the third one. We didn’t count. We left.

We (had to drive) parallel to the shoreline behind people’s homes (towards) where the Kaunoa School, which is now a seniors’ place, before we could drive away from the ocean. So, we were caught between our home and the nurses’ cottage. When the car began to float, I said, “Willie, let’s leave, let’s get out, let’s get out,” and he tried to open the door and he couldn’t because the water was up to the windows. And we were just kind of bobbing along.

He said, “I can’t open the door.” But as he said that he opened the window, and it released the pressure, so he was able to open the door.

It was a funny thing, he just didn’t think about it till he opened the window and afterwards we thought, “Well that was kind of funny we’re trying to push the whole ocean away.” But we swam from the car to the Ben Williams home.

JJ: This was right behind your home, then?

BC: No, it was two doors (up). Two doors towards Pā‘ia, from our home. There were other homes beyond us that were on the Kahului side of Spreckelsville. One of them was the Jacksons. The Van Eisens was another one. At any rate, I swam to the Ben Williams home and so did Willie. I skinned my knee on a picket fence that was four feet high. So I can say the water had to have been, maybe seven feet (deep) . . . Maybe six feet. I didn’t see the fence. When we reached the Ben Williams, the next wave hit. In the interim of a few minutes, my husband and a fellow by the name of Ward Russell—he was renting the room above the garage of the Ben Williams home and the garage and room were gone. ‘Cause I don’t remember seeing it. So it was gone—and (Ward Russell) also swam to the Ben Williams home. So my husband and Ward Russell decided they would make a raft out of a piece of fence that floated by. It was a bamboo fence. And they tied

some cord (on it). I was very upset because I thought they'd be pulled out to sea. But they kept going and within a few minutes they decided it was ready. And they both stood on it and it sank.

(Laughter)

BC: That solved my problem. In the meantime, the next wave went through the Ben Williams home. The lady's home) across the street did not get the force of the wave. The Ben Williams home broke that. But that's where the picket fence was. Nina Kirk was a teacher at Kaunoa School. She was screaming her head off and she was standing on the back stoop—back steps—of her home, which faced Kahului direction. And she was, of course, very frightened and I said to my husband, "Let's go. Let's get away. Let's go out to the road," because the next wave came through, right through the Ben Williams home. It had French doors. I can remember seeing the French doors muddy right up (to the ceiling) so you couldn't see anything but water. Then when they broke, it came through in a big rush and I said, "Come on! Let's go!"

In the meantime, the next-door neighbor (on the Pā'ia side of) the Ben Williams home was Doctor Cowan. He and his wife and two children were being swept through their home. It didn't knock those two homes down, but it went through them. My husband picked Nina Kirk off her back porch, that had now circled around to be at the front door, where the front door used to be. Instead of being washed away (her house) was lifted, it floated, and it made a clockwise turn, and that brought the back stoop to the front by the road. So, he just plucked her off that. And while he was doing that, the Cowans were coming out of their home. Mrs. Cowan was dressed in her undies. She had on her head the family silver (box). She was a funny sight. Her husband had a kid under each arm. And each kid had a puppy. And he was saying, "Let go of those goddamned dogs!"

And the kids were saying, "No, Daddy! No, Daddy! They'll drown." He was up to his chest in water so he could hardly touch, and he was trying to keep his children away from the water. The puppies added weight to the whole situation but (finally) he reached where he could really stand.

We all met at the turn where the road comes in next to Kaunoa School. It goes this way, like a T. So that's where we all ended up, including Nina Kirk. I guess the Ben Williamses weren't there, because I don't remember seeing them. (The waves) just went through their house. Just about this time, when Tom and his wife, Christine, reached the road, we were in about two feet of water.

JJ: What was Tom's last name?

BC: Cowan. C-O-W-A-N. He was a doctor. An ear, nose, and throat specialist, and I think they later moved to Honolulu and lived there. They may still be there, I don't know. But, just about the time we all gathered, saying hello, and so forth, down the road came Mr. Kam (driving his Model-T truck). He was our garbage man. In those days we didn't have disposals. And Mr. Kam had pigs, so we kept our wet garbage separate, and our paper goods separate for Mr. Kam to pick up. Mr. Kam had no idea why we were all standing there. He just drove up and stopped. It was cool in the early morning and he had on a very old, kind of tired-looking sport coat. He'd probably gotten it from the Salvation Army or something. But anyway, he stopped, got out of his car, and offered Mrs. Cowan his coat. And she said, "I'm not cold." She had no idea (why she was offered) this grubby, dirty-looking coat. . . . She said, "I'm not cold." But then she realized she didn't have any clothes on so she accepted the coat.

(Laughter)

BC: We all laughed later about it, you know, because those things happened and they were funny. You know, like Tom asking (his kids) to let go of those darn dogs. I don't know who gave us a ride. Someone gave us a ride to my Aunt Mary and Uncle Ward's home.

JJ: Where's that?

BC: Up above Pu'unēnē Hospital. The house is no longer there. He was assistant manager of the plantation. And he lived in a big home that's now gone. It's now all in cane field. But, Aunt Mary is where—when someone said, "Where do you want to go?" I thought of Aunt Mary, 'cause she was a haven for me. She was my mother's best friend, and close sister-in-law. We didn't think to go to Kahului (where) Willie's folks were. . . . We wondered about them. Were they okay? And of course we didn't know until later. And they didn't know if we were okay. So we did touch base.

JJ: And you were pregnant at that time?

BC: Yes, I was two and a half months [pregnant]. Peter was born in October and it was a grand announcement because, first thing I told my aunt, you know, was that I was worried about losing my baby, but that didn't happen. I was okay. She put me in bed.

(Laughter)

BC: But, you start shaking later, you know, you kind of go into a bit of shock, as we did. My husband ended up in the hospital because when he was making the raft, he stepped on a nail that went through the instep of his foot.

JJ and ST: Oh!

BC: And in those days infection was serious because we didn't have penicillin. I think they gave him sulfa drugs. They put him in the hospital for a couple days. He worked for the Bank of Hawai'i as a teller. At that time he might not have been a teller yet, he worked for Peter Ross who was in the insurance department. In those days they had an insurance department in the bank. Mr. [William] Balthis was the head of the Bank of Hawai'i for this island. He was the top man for Maui and my husband's boss. He came to the hospital and asked Wilson—how much in value did he think we had lost in our home 'cause we had, you know, just unpacked all our wedding gifts. People had waited till after the war to give us wedding gifts, because we weren't married at home. But, being Maui people, oh, lots and lots of people—that probably would have been invited to the wedding if I'd been married here—gave us gifts. And they were all lost, of course. I sometimes want to go down and sift in the sand and see if I can't find a few things in that area. There are homes there now. But, in those days, it was the stables, that's why it is called Old Stable Road.

JJ: It was a horse stable?

BC: Yes. It was a horse stable. Our home was an H plan, bedrooms on one end of the H and the kitchen and dining area on the other end of the H. And in the middle was the living room. So when the house was picked up (by the tsunami) and thrown against two high coconut trees, (the trees) broke the home. The trees cut the house, and our kitchen must have gone toward the stables (because our refrigerator was found there). The middle part of the home went straight back. The bedroom part of the home went towards Kaunoa School. Our stuff was scattered all over the place. I showed you yesterday, the toilet was in one of those big ponds. The fish were jumping in

those ponds, big fish were jumping. People came to get the fish the next day, and they took things, too, from people's homes.

ST: You mean they were looting?

BC: Yeah. There was a certain amount of looting. My father had sent (some men) to help me collect things. Because Willie was in the hospital, I was alone so my dad sent a crew of men down to help me. Not too much was taken except my husband's boots. He really was upset about somebody stealing (his new) boots.

ST: How soon did you go back to the house?

BC: The next day. The waves continued after the initial maybe six or seven big ones. The tide---if you went back to the beach to look, as we did the next day, the ocean would look like an ebb tide for a little while. And then like Mazie described, you felt like the island was sinking 'cause the water was rising and it didn't look like waves.

JJ: This was the next day?

BC: Yes. That was like her experience because that particular tidal wave was not as big in 1952. I think she was talking about '52, wasn't she? Yes it wasn't as big. So being on the beach they saw just exactly what I remember seeing. And that was that you felt like the island had sunk. Well when we looked out the first wave had come in and it looked like the water was at the top of the sand dune. All the way out. Then the next time we looked, there wasn't any water. But it was like a big bulldozer at the horizon. What seemed like the horizon, was where the ocean was.

ST: What did it sound like? Do you remember the sound?

BC: It's one of the most difficult things to describe, that I know, because there are trees breaking, there are houses breaking, there are people yelling, screaming. The water is swishing all around, like you would hear when a wave comes in, you know, that kind of sound. So (it was) all of that combined.

My husband and Ward Russell were worried about the Jacksons. They were friends of ours, so they wanted to get on their raft and go down there. And that didn't happen. Later on, when we saw them, they were caught in their car, just as we were. When the tidal wave hit them, it picked up their car. It was a convertible, soft top—and it picked them up and took them through the woods, the *kiawe* trees, to where the stables were. They went out (through) the roof of the car. Their baby, their oldest child, was six months old and (Herb) just remembered hanging on to her diapers, to her clothes. We didn't have Pampers in those days; diapers were cloth. (Laughs) And he said all he could think of was to keep his arm up to keep the baby out of the water. He and Mary Liz Jackson ended up out on the main highway just as we ended up. Somebody gave us a ride from the main highway to where we went. And they went to the Maui Grand Hotel, because they didn't have any place else to go.

ST: Were there any lives lost along there in Spreckelsville?

BC: No, amazingly not. I think my brother counted the houses. There were about forty that were damaged. Not all destroyed but damaged. Yeah. My dad's house was damaged but it wasn't thrown off its foundations like other homes were, like ours was. Ours was just like a scrambled

egg, because the roof and everything was all tied in with wood all over the place, with our clothes (and furniture). I found my wedding dress, and I found some clothes. Everything was sent to the [Maui] Snow White Laundry [& Dry Cleaners]. What I didn't know at the time and later found out, is that if your clothes ever get on a (wet) *kiawe* tree, the *kiawe* tree stains it, and it's a permanent stain. So they weren't able to save much of our clothing. (The laundry) lost my wedding dress. They never found it. But, you know they had hundreds of items coming in, so I could understand that it got lost in some way. It got sent to somebody else and they didn't know what it was and probably just threw it away. I didn't have a long dress, I had a short dress because (we were) married during the war and not at home. So, I had a little white dress and I was so happy that I found it. And then I lost it at Snow White Laundry. (Laughs) But, that's just one of the things.

And then my husband I remember him saying, "Somebody came to the bank today and didn't say who they were and left clothes for me." We had no clothes. We had what we had on our backs. I had my night pajamas on and my green coat. (Laughs) That was it. And people were so kind. My cousin's wife had a baby about six months before mine was due. And so she gave me all her *hāpai* clothes, as we called them. So, I was very nicely outfitted in Sue's clothing. It was a grand announcement because I hadn't told my folks I was pregnant. (Laughs)

ST: So where did everybody go? I mean, it took a while, didn't it to. . . .

BC: Yes, yes. I know the Jackson's went to the hotel and lived there until they were resituated. I think their house went. I don't think it was saveable. I remember they stayed at the hotel for quite a while 'cause they were people we knew, you know. They were thrown right through the top of their car. That was what Herb told me.

JJ: So who, in terms of helping folks out, though, people. . . .

BC: The [American] Red Cross. I still have a blanket that the Red Cross gave me.

ST: Would you be willing to part with that?

BC: Well, I can see if I can find it. It's back in Honolulu.

JJ: That would be wonderful.

BC: For the museum?

ST: For the exhibits.

BC: It's pretty tattered.

ST: It doesn't matter. That doesn't matter. How did they do that? How did they issue. . . .

BC: They brought it to us. From my aunt's and my Uncle Ward's home, we went to stay with my husband's family. 'Cause their home was okay. The water went around their house, but it didn't float the house.

ST: In Kahului?

BC: In Kahului, yeah. There were some homes damaged on the front row. Do you know where the

present restaurant is, the Chart House restaurant? Well there was a very big home there. Mr. (Walsh) was head of the Kahului Railroad Company. Anyway Mr. Walsh (and his family) lived in that big home, and it was damaged. The Calmes lived nearby and their home was damaged. Those homes were directly in line with the opening of the harbor, where the breakwaters meet. They were kind of in line with the ocean there. The street still goes down to the restaurant. If you went straight instead of turning into the restaurant, that's where the road ended. And on the right, my Uncle Sanford lived in the first house. The next house was the Wicke's, I think, and the Pattersons. There were homes in there that were damaged. But, where my folks lived—where Willie's family, mother and father lived, the Bulk Sugar and the wharf protected them. So, they got water under their house and in their yard (the home was not) hurt at all.

- JJ: Was that down near Donald Dease's house?
- BC: Yes. Don and Peggy Dease were their next-door neighbors And I think Patty was probably around ten. There was a little boy—what was his name?
- ST: Bill. Bill Dease.
- BC: Bill? Was he younger than Patty? I think he was younger. I don't remember whether they even left their home.
- ST: I'll have to find out.
- BC: Ask Patty. She would remember. She was old enough to remember. There were just those two homes there. Kahului had kind of sprung up around the houses that were on the beach and the harbor. I don't know when the breakwaters were built. Do you know?
- ST: No, I don't. They've been there for quite a while, though.
- BC: Oh, yes. They were there for as long as I can remember.
- ST: Was it built the same time the one Hilo was built? 'Cause that's before. . . .
- BC: Well, I think it was—it's a guess but—I think they were probably built in the [19]20s.
- JJ: That's what I would say, too. I think all of that work was—there was a lot of work done in the [19]20s. A lot of buildings were built and. . . . Do you remember if any of the boulders ended up in town, by chance, like it did in Hilo?
- BC: No, I don't think so. But I know the water went as far as the fairgrounds. And the fairgrounds are gone now. I guess even the main gate. I don't think it's there anymore.
- ST: That's way far in.
- BC: Yes. The fairgrounds (main gate) was across from (the Christ the King [Church]), Catholic church.
- ST: That's way into Kahului.
- BC: The water went back. And the fairgrounds was kind of like Kanahā Pond. Now people I notice, pronounce it Kanahā (BC emphasizes “na”). We were taught when I was a kid that it was

pronounced Kanahā (emphasizes “hā”).

JJ: This was the bird refuge?

BC: Yes.

ST: Do you know, was there loss of life elsewhere, anywhere?

BC: In Hāna. You really should go to Hāna.

ST: And Ke‘anae, too.

BC: And Ke‘anae, oh yes, I’m not sure if they had loss of life at Ke‘anae, but boy, it went right over that peninsula. Not too much in Kīhei. Kīhei is on lee side of the island so I don’t think they had much. But, wait a minute. . . . Nineteen fifty-two, no, 1960 is when it hit Kīhei.

ST: In ’46. . . .

BC: My folks were in that. Willie’s parents were—the house was completely gutted by the 1960 tidal wave (that came from an earthquake in South America).

ST: If we can just back up . . .

BC: All right. (Laughs)

ST: In ’46, now, how soon did the Red Cross come in for relief? Do you remember how that worked?

BC: I just remember them coming and giving the blankets to me.

ST: Did they distribute blankets and clothing, or what did they do?

BC: They just gave us a couple of blankets. That was it. I don’t remember them giving me clothing. You see, my cousin’s wife gave me her clothing.

ST: So you didn’t really need . . .

BC: She’d had her baby, and so that’s how I survived. And then people brought things to us. Friends. And in my husband’s story, he said, “Somebody came to the bank and left some clothes and they didn’t leave their name. I have no idea who to thank.” They wouldn’t leave their name. You know you feel like it’s charity or something . . . and we never knew who brought the clothing for my husband. But, people did that. It was just a very nice thing to do. They knew we were kind of down and out. We hadn’t been married that long, you know. From the timing we’d been married almost three years but we’d only been together four months (because of the war).

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

ST: You moved back to Spreckelsville?

BC: No. We lived with Willie's parents, Wilson and Margit Cannon, for, let's see, from April 1 till the following May. Almost a year, we lived with his folks. But during that summer, Asa Baldwin's home at Spreckelsville, had the water go through it. It was further up from the Ben Williams home.

ST: That's Johnny's father.

BC: Johnny's father, yes, lived there. And he and Peggy May—his mother's name was Peggy May—were going to be on vacation for three months during the summer. They called and they offered (and asked if we) would like to stay there and house-sit for them. So that's basically where we spent the summer. It was hard for me because of the surf, and hearing the surf.

(Pounding noise in background.)

BC: That's my son-in-law.

(Laughter)

BC: Anyway, we stayed there and then after that we went back to Willie's folks. Anyway, (later we) moved to Mā'alaea Bay and we lived there.

ST: Where's Mā'alaea Bay?

BC: Where the harbor is now.

JJ: We went by there.

BC: On your way to Lahaina, there's a little boat harbor?

ST: Oh, okay.

BC: That's Mā'alaea. That's where our home was.

ST: Now, did that area get any damage?

BC: No, I don't think so. Not in the 1946 wave. Because it came from the Aleutians. At least that's what they told us.

JJ: It hit the north side of the island.

BC: There was a big earthquake, under the sea in the Aleutians.

JJ: So, you stayed on Maui, though?

BC: Yes, and moved a year later to Ma'alaea Bay. Lived there 'till 1958.

ST: So you were there during '52 and '57?

BC: Yes. The 1952---what month was that, do you know?

JJ: November.

BC: Was in November? I remember getting the word that there was a tidal wave. So we were warned. By then they had sirens and so forth. So I got in the car with my kids—I had two boys and a dachshund and a cat—and I put them all in the car and headed towards Kahului. And when I got to the Sand Hills, I was afraid to go any farther. So I parked my car and sat in the car and worried about my husband who was at the Bank of Hawai‘i in Kahului. You know, I didn’t know whether it was going to be as bad as ‘46. It wasn’t. The water went back where the bank was but it didn’t destroy anything.

JJ: In Kahului there was no destruction.

BC: Not that I remember. I don’t know for sure about the ones on the water near the harbor. I’m not too sure.

JJ: So ‘52, would you say that was a minor?

BC: It came from a different direction. And so it just wasn’t as big, that’s all. In my memory, I think the water came into Kahului. And I’m trying to remember if Willie’s folks had moved by then. ‘Cause his dad, when he retired, took the job of taking care of the fairgrounds and there was a home there that they lived in. Right on the fairgrounds. So I’m not too sure whether they had moved. But I was afraid to come to Kahului for fear that I’d be in it again.

ST: How about in ‘57? What do you remember—do you remember much?

BC: Was there one in ‘57?

ST: There was one in ‘57, but I’m not sure how it affected Maui.

BC: Well, we’d have been at Mā‘alaea. We moved in February of ‘58 to Honolulu.

ST: So, in 1960, where were you?

BC: We were in Kailua, on the canal. It’s bigger now than it was when we lived on the shoreline of the canal. So we weren’t near the beach, but we were on the canal.

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

BC: The next day, the water was still going in and out like it does, for a while after a tidal wave. It’s still a change in the tide. My son was probably—let’s see, this was 1960, and he was born in ‘46. He was in his teens. And when I got home from the store (that next) morning, he was sailing up the canal with the tide pushing them. The tide going down and going back up. The little ten-foot boat would sail him up to the Kawainui Swamp. And then when the water began going down again, he rode it all the way back past our house out to the ocean. I had a fit, because anything like that seemed dangerous to me. But he was having a wonderful time (laughs), sailing up and down the canal with the motion of the water taking him up and then bringing him back down again as it receded.

ST: If you had the chance to live in Spreckelsville again, would you do it?

BC: I don’t think so.

ST: You said today, you still—the sound of the ocean. . . .

- BC: I don't sleep well when I can hear the sound of the ocean. I just seem to be restless. But I know now that we have warning systems. We do know ahead of time. We didn't have that in '46.
- JJ: Do any feelings come back when you hear the sirens go off? Are any of these warnings, these recent warnings, you know in '94, in '86. . . .
- BC: I always turn my radio on, you know. Even on the first Monday of the month when all the sirens are tested, I always turn my radio on. (Laughs)
- ST: Civil Defense would be very happy with you.
- (Laughter)
- BC: I think so. It's usually a test and they say so, but you know. I remember saying to Willie, one time, "I think if we ever got attacked, they'd do it on the first Monday of the month at noon." 'Cause that's usually when it (is tested).
- ST: Did anybody take---I know your brother took film footage of the Spreckelsville house.
- BC: Yes, eight millimeter.
- ST: Did anybody take photographs, also?
- BC: I don't remember that we did. It's kind of strange, isn't it, that we didn't go back and take pictures of everything?
- ST: Do you have a picture. . . .
- BC: 'Cause we didn't have any insurance, you know, we were just kids.
- ST: Do you have a picture of the house before the '46 tsunami?
- BC: That's a possibility. My brother might have those. He has the family pictures. I'll ask him. I haven't looked at them for a long time. It might be fun to look at them.
- ST: Okay. And then, do you by chance have a photograph of you and Willie at the house right before the '46 tsunami? Or around that time of the two of you?
- BC: Well, I have our wedding pictures.
- ST: Yes, that would even work.
- BC: I could get some kind of a picture of us.
- JJ: 'Cause that would be wonderful, photograph of the two of you.
- BC: I'll look around.
- JJ: Okay. Do you think that kids today really know what a tsunami is?
- BC: Not really. No I don't think so. Unless you've seen one you really don't know what it's like. I

enjoyed hearing Mazie yesterday because her description of the water just going up like it wasn't a wave. That's really typical of it.

JJ: If you were to go and have a talk story session, at a school, maybe like your grandchild's school, what would you tell the kids about tsunamis?

BC: Yes I think, the usual motherly comment of "Don't go to the beach, go away from it." (Laughs) "Make sure you don't think you can watch a tidal wave." At Ho'okipa Park, I think you could stay up on the cliff and look down on one. You know, 'cause it's a real cliff there. You ever been there?

JJ: No I don't think I have, no.

BC: It was in the movie. Speaking of the movie, I think you can take a single picture from a video.

JJ: Yes they can stop it.

BC: And make a picture? I asked the *Maui News* last year when they talked to me about the tidal wave for their article. And he said he couldn't do it. But I think I've seen ads that say that you can take a picture from videotape. So you may want to do that with that video.

ST: Yes there's a good guy in Hilo, actually. Stomper Video, he does that.

BC: I'll get it copied for you.

JJ: (To ST) Is there anything else you want to ask?

ST: I don't think so, I think I'm going to just stop.

BC: Okay.

END OF INTERVIEW

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Social Science Research Institute
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