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**INTERVIEW WITH ALICE CODONI HALL**

by Carla Ehat & Anne Kent  
February 17, 1981

**INTERVIEWEE:** Alice Codoni Hall (AH)  
**INTERVIEWERS:** Carla Ehat (CE) and Anne Kent (AK)  
**ALSO PRESENT:** Ruth Stahl (RS) and Vivian Hall (VH)  
**DATE OF INTERVIEW:** February 17, 1981

CE: Today is Tuesday, February the 17th, 1981.

AK: Gee, where does the time go?

CE: Yes. Once again, continuing the Oral History Project for the California History Room, Mrs. Kent and I are way out on the Point Reyes Peninsula and we're at the ranch and presently in the ranch house of Alice Codoni Hall. She is located here at D Ranch. Is that correct?

AH: Right.

CE: Right. Point Reyes Peninsula. Alice is of Swiss-Italian extraction. Her father was Quinto Codoni and she is also a cousin of Nellie McIsaac Codoni who we had the pleasure of interviewing a few years ago. Now, Alice, you were born at Point Reyes Station, January the 2nd, 1898. Was this ranch at that time in the possession of your family? Tell us a little bit.

AH: My mother came to Point Reyes at 21 years old when she married my dad. This is his second wife. He was divorced from the first, which we know nothing about. And he had a son and daughter from the first wife and my mother raised them. They were about six or seven, or seven and eight and Momma took, raised them like her own. She had four girls, my mother. So I had a half-brother and a half-sister. But Momma said they were not sassy like her own; they respected her. So maybe she was right. I don't know.

CE: Where were you living then, in Point Reyes Station?

AH: Lived there, yes. We lived there all our lives. She lived there all her life. She came there as a bride at 21 and she died there at 87, my mother.

CE: Could you tell us where it is in relation to Point Reyes Station? Is it a neighboring ranch?

AH: Oh no it's not a ranch; it's right in town. Ruth should know more than I do to tell you where it is.

CE: Also joining us today is Ruth Stahl who has arranged this interview. Well tell us some of your -- You have sisters and brothers?

AH: I have three sisters.

CE: All alive?

AH: Yes.

CE: Living around the area?

AH: Two in the city; they're widows like myself, and one in Petaluma has a husband.

CE: In Jack Mason's latest issue, *Point Reyes Historian* for the winter issue, he has an article about your family. And your father Quinto came here 1872.

AH: I wouldn't know.

CE: Well, this is what the records say.

AH: Well he should know.

CE: And they flocked to California and he joined his brother Joe at Tocaloma.

AH: Yeah, the ranch there.

CE: And then Joe was Nellie's father.

AH: That's right.

CE: Now he seems to get involved in the hog business. Is that right?

AH: Yes.

CE: His first adventure.

AH: He bought hogs and he bought calves and he had a slaughterhouse out here by the RCA on the water.

CE: On the water?

AH: And they would come in lumber wagons and bring the hogs and the calves. Sometimes Pa would kill maybe seventy-five calves in a day and they shipped them by schooner.

CE: Well, it mentions here that he went in with some other Point Reyes rancher and they bought a schooner, the *Point Reyes*.

AH: Yes, that's true.

CE: What was the advantage of this? They could take it to the market?

AH: Well, they went direct to the city, then.

CE: Was that down here at Schooner Bay?

AH: Yes. I forget what day they shipped the calves and the hogs but before that --

CE: Well they said -- Jack says that they could accommodate a deck load of two hundred hogs. It must have been a big vessel.

AH: Pretty big. Before that, Pa use to buy all the hogs out here at the Point and it took them two days to drive them on foot to Point Reyes Station. And you know the little ranch here, Rogers? You must know that.

CE: Yes.

AH: Well, across from the Portuguese Hall, I.D.E.S. Hall, which is torn down, well Papa had a corral there and he'd put his hogs there that night and he'd stay with

some Irish people by the name of Gearys. That would be up the first ranch where I use to live; eleven years I was on that ranch. And he'd stay there overnight and daylight he'd get up with his dogs and start out to Point Reyes again.

CE: You mean just drive them with the dogs?

AH: He had a horse and cart but that would follow Pa and if a hog got over the cliff that horse would stop and Pa'd go down and get the hog. And then if they got too weak -- You know that's a long ways. You know at the foot of the hill, Seahaven, there was poor Portuguese people lived there, and Pa thought, "Well, if a pig can't go no more I'll give it to these Vieras." They were poor people, and Pa gave it to that family. Of course I guess they butchered it. That's the story there.

CE: Describe your father for us. What was he like? Big man?

AH: No, Papa was small. Broad. Good Christian man.

CE: Good Christian man.

AH: Oh, Lord yes. He went to mass; couldn't walk no more. I guess the little church in Point Reyes.

CE: Is it true you owned a slaughterhouse on Paper Mill Creek?

AH: Yes, he did have one. They use to kill calves there on Sundays.

CE: On Sundays?

AH: Yes, you know, where those houses are, you know, Ruth, there by the bridge.

CE: I suppose that's how Point Reyes Station got their chops and steaks?

AH: Well no, we shipped them direct to the city; they never kept nothing like that.

CE: Was your family home on B Street?

AH: Yes. Ruth knows more about Point Reyes than I do.

CE: Well according to Jack it was one of the nicest homes in town and it had a marble fireplace and electricity.

AH: I guess it's fixed nice. I haven't seen it.

RS: Mrs. Mendall lives there now.

CE: Now your mother was Clara.

AH: Clara Philippini.

CE: All right. Now, would you name your other sisters? You're Alice and you married Mr. Hall.

AH: There's one called Elsie. Stewart, but he passed away. He's buried in Olema. And there's Claire Eggert; she's buried in Olema.

CE: And another sister?

AH: Oh, Lucy Anderson, Petaluma.

CE: Agnes?

AH: Agnes is dead and my brother Joe is dead. Those are my half-brother and half - sister.

CE: How did your father get into banking?

AH: Well, I don't know. He was a big shot in Point Reyes.

CE: Papa was a big shot.

AH: Papa was into everything. They even called it Quinto's Bank I think, there where he started, the Point Reyes Bank, the first bank in Point Reyes. He was a Director and I don't know what he was, a little of everything.

CE: Was he pretty conservative in money matters?

AH: Well, my dad lent a lot of money but in those days you didn't need a note. Your word was -- Papa lost very little, but he lent money, you know, ranchers all over. My mother sometimes would get mad. Pa never lost too much. He was all right. He owned a lot of property in Point Reyes. You remember?

RS: Yes.

AH: You remember that Station Café? It was torn down, the whole block --

CE: What did you say, Alice?

AH: I said my dad believed in real estate, not my mother, but my father. He liked to invest, you know. He owned a lot of houses in Point Reyes. Where Lucy Barret lives, remember?

RS: Oh yes.

CE: Did he buy this ranch originally?

AH: He bought -- Papa had the second mortgage, and I think Rapp had the first, so Papa saved himself. He had to buy out Rapp. That's how he got the ranch.

CE: And this is known as D Ranch?

AH: Right.

CE: Do you have any map that sets forth any of these properties? I understand that it goes way back, doesn't it, Ruth?

RS: Oh yes.

CE: Labeling these by letters, way back to the Shafter days, when they had it. I guess this was during the Depression when your dad got this property, then? And it's right above the beach here where a great many people think Drake careened the Golden Hinde. I guess you heard that story all your life.

AH: Yeah, we don't know where he landed, do we?

CE: No. The Drake Navigators Guild think it was there.

AH: Yeah, we use to know a lot of those men.

CE: Well, tell us a little bit about your schooling. Did you go to the local school in Point Reyes Station?

AH: Yes. I started up in the hill a way, you know, where they're fixing that house. I don't know whose it is; they've been working on it.

RS: Oh yes, right opposite the new West Marin School.

CE: I see, there was a school there.

AH: I started there at six years old.

CE: Six years old.

AH: Then they had the Black School and I finished there. I have a picture --

CE: Alice has a class picture, or is it the whole student body?

AH: That's the whole school with one teacher.

CE: She's about six, so this is 1904 and she's sitting on the front stoop with all of them. Do you remember your schoolteacher?

AH: Yes, Miss McKenzie.

CE: Miss McKenzie.

AH: Yes, this is her here.

CE: I see. Who is the other attractive gal?

AH: That's Katherine Gallagher. She's dead too. Half of those people are gone.

CE: Was this a one-room schoolhouse?

AH: Yes.

CE: All grades.

AH: First grade to eighth. Black School was just the same. You remember?

CE: Did you have any chores when you were at school that you had to do?

AH: Not much, maybe clean the erasers. I mean, the blackboards and that stuff.

CE: The boys would fire the stove in the wintertime.

AH: That's right.

CE: Did your mother ever send hot soup to the teacher or anything?

AH: No, no. She use to send us hot food for Papa. When I lived in the other -- When I went to the Black School I used Papa, in the rain. He would come and get me piggy back, you know, so I could eat at home then he'd bring me back. Things have changed.

CE: Well, as you grew a little older, I'm sure you had to share some chores with your sisters.

AH: Oh at home we did.

CE: What did you do?

AH: We had a wood stove like here. We had to -- Pa would buy the wood; us girls would have the wheelbarrow and pile all the wood and then when he'd come home from the, you know, from the landing here with his horse and cart, we'd have to unharness it, feed it, clean the barn. We had five cows. We had to deliver five cents a quart milk over town. Go after the cows back where the Coast Guard is and we were scared to death. There was a big pasture but full of tramps and in those we could see the smoke and we were scared to death. Oh golly.

CE: Did you milk?

AH: No ma'am. I helped deliver the milk.

CE: Did you have milkers on the property, or did your father do it?

AH: Oh no, father did it.

CE: How many cattle would you have?

AH: We only had four or five cows. And we had one cow. She could open any gate in Point Reyes and she would get in the gardens. You know where Chedas lived, those people there by the name of Marshall? And that darn cow, one night she got in there and he was a butcher and he cut the tail half off. Oh, my father could have killed him. Poor cow. But she could open any gate. She had horns.

CE: Where did you meet your husband, Bill?

AH: Big city of Point Reyes. Bill use to -- He liked ranch; he bring horses out and plow for different ones in Point Reyes, and plant.

CE: When were you married, Alice?

AH: I was twenty-one when I was married.

CE: I have to figure out every date. You see how that is? She was twenty-one.

AH: Well, I can't figure it in my head. I need a pencil. In those days he was driving a truck for Grandi Company and the feed didn't come in bulk like now; it came in sacks, you know. So he was making eighty-five dollars a month.

CE: When you married him?

AH: And paid my dad twenty dollars for a little house in Point Reyes.

CE: You know, when you look back you could do a lot on --

AH: Yeah, but not today.

CE: What's the difference, other than inflation? The attitude?

AH: People are so different today. You know? We never locked the door or nothing. Now I've got three locks on the door and I'm still not safe. Just living in fear. It's not funny when you live alone here. I don't like it, but I make the most of it.

CE: When did you and your husband take over this property from your dad?

AH: I've been here forty-two years and I was on another ranch, eleven, the Heims Ranch.

CE: Before you moved here?

AH: Yes. You know, across from Rogers there was a -- Before the Home Ranch, Murphy Ranch. There was us, and then Murphy Ranch.

CE: How big is D Ranch in acreage?

AH: 1212.

CE: Twelve hundred and twelve acres?

AH: Yes. I wish it was mine instead of the Federal Government.

CE: We've got to get into that, too. Let's stay with your family a little longer though. Your father died in 1940. He was a good age.

AH: Eighty-five.

CE: Is he buried also at Olema? Most of your family are.

AH: They are. Not my husband. He's in San Rafael in a crypt.

CE: Did your mother live a long life also?

AH: She was eighty-seven. Pa would have been eighty-five in ten days had he lived.

CE: Did he ever go back to Switzerland once he came? Did he ever help any young Swiss come to the Point Reyes area for jobs?

AH: That I don't know.

CE: I know Nellie spoke of her father doing that. They sort of ran an unofficial Swiss Consulate and I'm sure your father was involved in that.

AH: Yeah. Well he knew everybody.

CE: If somebody needed a milker or whatever, they'd write back home. So, you and Bill moved here in 1940. What have you mainly raised in the way of cattle?

AH: Just dairy cattle, yeah, that's all. Well, years ago we planted hay and all that, beets and turnips, but see today you buy everything.

CE: Holstein mainly?

AH: Yes. And the hay wouldn't, what would you say, dry out like it should, you know. It would be raining and then you would have to throw over the shocks. Oh, it was a mess. Now it's better.

CE: Where's the milking barn?

AH: Where that red -- See those red things up there on the top? That's where they're milking.

CE: How many cattle do you have right now?

AH: They milk, maybe 250; two Mexicans.

CE: Two hundred and fifty.

AH: Around that. But my daughter runs the ranch, not me. I don't do nothing.

CE: Well, you served your time in doing it.

AH: I cook for this old Indian guy, what, fifty-six years?

CE: Does he work on the ranch?

AH: He can't do nothing. He's 89 years old. He can bring a little wood, you know.

CE: What's his name?

AH: Ernest Morris.  
CE: Morse?  
AH: Morris.  
CE: Oh, Morris.  
AH: Yes, ma'am.  
CE: 89. Is he a Miwok Indian?  
AH: That's what -- calls him. She gave him that title; he's from Marshall.  
CE: And he comes out to see you?  
AH: No, he lives here. I've had to cook for him for fifty-six years. I'm ready to throw him out. I hope this isn't gonna -- He doesn't hear --  
CE: No, no, no. Well let's get to this point about the Federal Government and its interests.  
AH: Well I don't like it, I'll tell you right now.  
CE: I don't want you to say anything you don't mean, but --  
AH: At my age the money doesn't mean anything. I got a million and something for the ranch which I don't need at my age. It's stupid. I didn't have it when I was young, and worked like a --  
CE: Yes, when you could have used it.  
AH: So there you are.  
CE: Well you have children.  
AH: I have a son and a daughter and I have six grandchildren and one great-grandchild.  
CE: But you can live here until the rest of your natural life.  
AH: Well, before they gave me my check they took out twenty years rent. I don't remember how much money but I had to put that out first and then I got my money. They're well protected; don't worry about that.  
CE: Do you know Boyd Stewart?  
AH: Oh, God yes. I know all those people. I was born in Point Reyes Station.  
CE: Of course he didn't have a son, he had just the daughter, Jo Ann Whisby.  
AH: Yes I remember, big stout girl.  
CE: If I remember correctly, he turned the ranch over in her name so she had life tenancy. Could you have done similarly with your daughter?  
AH: We can stay here twenty years.  
CE: And your daughter, too?  
AH: Yes. I don't think she's going to stay. It's too much work. You see my daughter is a widow too and it's hard to -- And help is terrible.  
CE: Well, you know the way Mr. Stewart explained it, he didn't want to give up his ranch either. It had been in his family for years. And there's some third and fourth generation families out here, Alice, but if it was a choice between that and being a National Monument Seashore, it would be better than having it built up as suburbia. Would you agree with that? Would you like to see houses all over here?  
AH: Well I don't know if I'd like to see houses with all the weirdoes we have here now. I can't tell you which is the best. I don't know.  
CE: Mrs. Kent's smiling over there. There are a lot of people who float through here, in talking to the rangers, that they wish they'd never found the way to Point Reyes Station.

AH: Some of those rangers are bad.  
CE: Are they too far out for you?  
AH: They don't come to my house, thank God, but they raise cain at the next ranch. You know Spalettas? They're fighting with his cows on the road; they're fighting all the time.  
CE: They don't seem to realize who was here first.  
AH: They just take over. You're nothing, you know. They're not too well liked, let's put it that way. There's a few who will eat out of their hand but we don't.  
CE: Well there's no reason why you can't maintain your independent attitude.  
AH: I don't bother. You know, I don't do nothing wrong.  
CE: If your father were alive when this happened, what would his reaction have been?  
AH: Oh I don't know. My dad was -- I don't think he'd take too much of this business.  
CE: How about your husband?  
AH: My husband was English.  
CE: Oh, English. Mrs. Kent, you want to say something, I know.  
AK: I think it's such a beautiful spot. I said it's like a grandstand seat over the ocean. It looks to me like the most beautiful spot.  
AH: Well, years ago, you know, when we owned the place, it was lovely. But today it's different.  
CE: Do people trespass across your property?  
AH: Oh yes. The other day we counted thirty-five birdwatchers. Got a sign: "Bulls In The Area." It don't mean a thing. And there is bulls. There's no fooling. They're not afraid.  
CE: Well this is a big, new adventure for a lot of people who --  
AH: Now they've got all those stupid whale people. You should see, the other day, see, I do all my daughter's washing and on Sunday too. I go to mass, I come home and I wash clothes for Vivian every day. I was hanging out a few pieces and there was twenty cars, bing, bing, bing, bing, bing down there. Twenty at one lick and then they have these shuttle buses you call them, taking them out to the lighthouse to look at the stupid whales.  
CE: Well you know we've gone through a decade of ecology nuts too, and it's like a whale never spouted, you know, for centuries before but suddenly they've discovered the whales and they want to save them.  
AH: I wouldn't go across the street to see them.  
CE: Tell us some of the experiences you've had out here. You had some trials, periods of trial when sickness occurred or things that have not gone right. Do you feel isolated out here?  
AH: Well I think it is because I don't have no more car. I sold everything.  
CE: So you're without wheels.  
AH: And my daughter is so busy, you know, running the ranch, taking care of her family. Now she's working on her books, income things, and she's busy as can be.  
CE: Does she have an equal amount of acreage to you? Twelve hundred and twelve acres? Or is this all part of it?  
AH: Well it's all in one.  
CE: I see. Well she must love it out here.

AH: She likes the cows. She's like this girl here; they're crazy for their cattle. Like Carol has, I don't know how many head of registered cattle. Sometimes I say, "Why don't we get out of here?" You know, work early and late and what do you gain? Tell me. She owns eight acres in Petaluma, outside of Petaluma city limits.

CE: Who does, your daughter?

AH: My daughter. She has two houses on it; she could go and build a nice home but she likes the ranch, so I guess – They packed Bill out of here; they can pack me. I don't know what to tell you.

CE: It's her lifestyle.

AH: She loves her animals. She's got one son in Petaluma, married, works for a dairy concern.

CE: You have a boy also, you mentioned.

AH: Yes.

CE: And where is your son?

AH: Nicasio. He works for the highway.

CE: Oh, that's when Mrs. Kent and I were driving out there you said that her son was near there on Nicasio Road.

AH: Yes, by the school, or, you know where the County –

CE? Sure, maintenance yard or whatever you call it –

AH: Yes. There's a nice beautiful home on the hill there; that's his.

CE: That's his! Beautiful home. Do you go visit once in a while?

AH: Not very much.

CE: They come out here?

AH: Once in a while. They're too busy. They have other company, young company, not us. And they like to go; they go all the time. They have a motor home and they go Palm Springs; they go Utah. They go here, they go there. Our life is so different, it really is.

CE: Has the church been an important part of your life, Alice?

AH: Oh yes. Not to brag, but we're pretty good. My daughter would walk rather than miss mass. We have to go to Olema, nineteen miles every Sunday, eight-thirty mass.

CE: You go with her, don't you?

AH: Sure.

CE: Is that the church that the Briones family –

AH: No, that's Bolinas.

CE: Olema, oh yes. That's the new Catholic church.

AH: Yes. You know Jiggs Rogers?

CE: Not yet.

AH: Oh you haven't got a hold of Jiggs?

CE: That was the church where they had the services for Josepha Stewart.

AH: Yes, yes.

CE: Were you there?

AH: Yes.

CE: She was a wonderful woman.

AH: Nice lady. I never knew she was a Catholic though. Maybe he went there and gave her communion. You know, different things the priests do that.

AK: Maybe she wasn't, maybe she wasn't.  
CE: I think she was, remember she taught music at Dominican College.  
AH: She was a lovely lady anyway. I liked Jo.  
CE: Well that is a distance for you to go.  
AH: Mass is at eight-thirty so we leave here at quarter to eight.  
CE: Now this is all in that parish, this, way out here, belongs to them? Does he come out to see you on occasion?  
AH: Oh after Vivian's husband passed away he came, that's all.  
AK: Does that priest live right there?  
AH: Yes, but he's going to retire in June.  
CE: What's his name?  
AH: Father Berron, Richard Berron. He's going to retire in June.  
AK: Oh, I didn't know that.  
AH: Yeah.  
CE: Did you watch on television when His Holiness the Pope came to this country and made his tour?  
AH: Oh, part of it. Not much of it.  
CE: And now he's in the Philippines?  
AH: Yes, and he almost got killed. Why don't he stay where he belongs?  
CE: Well he's trying to mend a lot of fences and bring these extreme units together.  
AH: I think sometime you're better home. He just missed being killed, I think, I heard on television. Oh well.  
CE: How did World War I touch your life?  
AH: My husband was in World War I. I wasn't married then; got married after that.  
CE: But he was in the war? Did he go to Europe?  
AH: He went to Verdun.  
CE: He was in Verdun? Was he wounded?  
AH: No, he was all right.  
CE: Thank God for that.  
AH: Yes.  
CE: When you were married and lived out here, after 1940 I think you said, you bought this ranch, or took it over. Did World War II – How did World War II touch your ranch life?  
AH: We weren't on the ranch; I didn't get married until after Bill came home.  
CE: I'm talking about World War II.  
AH: Oh, my son was in World War II, Billy.  
CE: Well, did World War II touch your ranch life out here other than blackouts or getting transportation? How would you – Wasn't that all affected?  
AH: We had to go out at night. what is it when we had to put things on the –  
CE: Blackout?  
AH: Yes, and drive, and put things all over our windows. Then they'd call up – They could see light, and oh God.  
CE: Weren't there some servicemen billeted out here?  
AH: They were up to RCA and they'd stop you, "Where you going? Where do you live and who are you?" And that's the time you go out at night. Then the coast where the – there was the Coast Guard. There was a Coast Guard Station there, and all

the boys would be over there. And we had, oh, I couldn't tell you how many hogs we had in those days. They made two or three trips with garbage. We had big troughs out here past this gate as you come in for the hogs; they'd dump it, you know. One day they got a piece of bacon. It was bad.

CE: And what happened?

AH: We lost I don't know how many thousands of dollars. They got – What do you call it, pigs get from bacon?

RS: Trichinosis?

AH: They get around in circles. It was hot; they were burning hogs by the hundred here. Poor Billy, my son, and some of the men couldn't eat, you know, in that heat their stomach would just rattle, rattle. Oh it was terrible.

CE: Tell me Alice. I'm a city gal. Why are there usually hogs around a dairy ranch?

AH: Well everybody had hogs because they use to separate the milk in those days and then the skim milk went to the hogs and the other cream went to the creamery. Today they take the raw milk direct to Petaluma. You see, it's altogether different.

CE: You don't have any hogs then right now?

AH: No.

CE: But that was part of the picture then?

AH: That's why they had hogs. Everybody had hogs.

CE: I see. They come how often to pick up your milk? Daily?

AH: Now? Every morning. It goes to Petaluma and then it goes to Lucky's San Leandro, places –

CE: What is the early hour your Mexicans milk? At four?

AH: One o'clock.

CE: One in the morning? When do they do it again in the afternoon?

AH: One o'clock in the afternoon.

CE: Isn't that kind of early?

AH: Well I don't know. That's what they do here.

CE: Well, I'm just interested because we interviewed a man, Franklin Burns, and it seemed to me they did it at three in the afternoon and three in the morning.

AH: Well they had a different schedule.

CE: But you have to be ready with that milk when the pickup comes. Yours all automated with the milking machines?

AH: Yes.

CE: Never touches human hands; it goes right in the tanks. Cooled down and –

AK: We went through the milking barns. I have to tell you about Carla. She didn't know anything about cows. She didn't know anything about ranches, so Mr. Burns, he didn't know anything about that, took her around. He took her all through the whole thing and the questions she asked were embarrassing beyond belief and he laughed and laughed at this city girl that didn't know things. Do you want to tell her what you said?

End, Side A

CE: Driving out here, Ruth was saying that she's known your family for some time. The children, would be your grandchildren, I guess, or maybe your children, were involved in 4H. Was that your daughter and son?

AH: Vivian is a leader, is still a leader in dairy.

CE: In 4H?  
AH: Yes.  
CE: Vivian is your daughter?  
AH: That's right. She's working on her books; I don't know if you'll get to meet her.  
RS: And Future Farmers too.  
AH: Yes, Karen is very active. You should see the trophies, ribbons, all kinds.  
CE: Well that's wonderful. Did you ever get any help from the State Department of Agriculture, or whatever, the Farm Bureau, in, over your lifetime in this dairy ranching that was helpful to you? Did they come out and talk to you people or arrange some kind of grange meetings that were of any benefit?  
AH: I don't think so.  
CE: You were kind of on your own, weren't you?  
AH: My daughter is. She knows plenty, I guess. She's got a good head.  
RS: She's a good business woman; not her mother, but Vivian.  
CE: Well maybe we can meet her later before we leave the area. I just got a glass of park water.  
AH: Yes, we have to pay for our water so don't drink too much.  
CE: I won't. Well how do you get water? Do you have a well here or what?  
AH: No it comes from a ranch. Do you know the old Gallagher ranch? That's where the water comes from.  
CE: Oh, how does that happen?  
AH: Piped in here.  
CE: Did you ever have a well on the property?  
AH: Yes we use to have two windmills or three out here but –  
CE: Is water a scarcity?  
AH: Well during that dry season we had, they had to have trucks come in and bring water for the cattle. We had to pay for that. She did, not me.  
CE: How about hay? You have to bring in feed, don't you?  
AH: Oh yes. I couldn't – She could tell you how many. I think the other day she said something about ninety-six thousand dollars for hay or alfalfa, some mill feed. Think of that.  
CE: What an expensive operation it all is.  
AH: Too much so, I think.  
CE: Well then you have these Mexican families whose job it is to just take care of the cows; that's all they do.  
AH: Cows, milking. Yeah, Vivian's down there half the time washing the barn and giving shots and I don't know what she does.  
CE: You've got a vet that comes out here to see you?  
AH: Yes, every two weeks he comes. Zimmerman, John Zimmerman.  
CE: Zimmerman. Is he any good?  
AH: Vivian likes him, he's good to Vivian; he tells her.  
CE: Alice has the wheel off an old fishing vessel. What's the story behind that?  
AH: I can't tell you too much else. That came off the Jaunta, that fishing boat that was wrecked. Bill got that. It's all dirty, should be varnished.  
CE: Yeah, but it looks good. And then you have another wood box there marked Drake's Cove.

AH: Oh that? We use to have a cabin down at the beach but the Federal Government made us tear it down.

CE: The government, really, in your judgment, hasn't treated you too nicely, have they?

AH: I don't bother them.

CE: No, but you didn't want to sell the ranch, and they took away your cabin.

AH: Well, they condemned it, and at my age I cannot fight the government.

CE: Not many people can.

AK: What did they do with the cabin if they condemned it?

AH: Well they made us tear it down. But you got Mendoza out here, Portuguese, that eats out of the Seashore. The man in charge, hand, he's got a beautiful cabin. He didn't have to tear his down. So there you are. There's no justice you see, you just have to know the right people and we don't have the right name. We're just common poor people.

CE: You mentioned several neighboring ranchers close to your property here at D Ranch. Can you tell us some of those names again or your daughter, Vivian, that are still part of this Point Reyes National Seashore and have been prior to takeover by the government? Which we have discussed in some detail too and how she feels about it. Which is right, I mean --

VH: I know, but what do you do?

CE: Not a darn thing.

VH: They run it like a political thing.

AH: Jim Spaletta is one ranch.

VH: They never owned it though.

AH: No but he rented it.

CE: What's his name?

AH: Jim Spaletta. He was a renter though; he never owned it.

CE: Okay, any other ranchers nearby? Are most of them dairy ranches?

AH: They're all dairy. The next one comes Joe Mendoza, right, sister?

CE: Well Mendozas have been out on the Point for a long time haven't they? Point Reyes Peninsula?

AH: Yes. And George Nunes.

CE: Nunes. That's like the Nunes that had the shipbuilding place in Sausalito.

AH: Oh yeah, I know that name. That's all out there. Then comes the lighthouse.

CE: Have you been there since the Coast Guard gave it up, or have you no desire to go down those four hundred steps?

AH: I wouldn't go down those stairs if you gave it to me. Then the ranch next here is – What do you call it, who owns, George Nunes? As you go back, you know – Then comes, well, Gallagher's, George Gallagher, Gallagher Brothers, put it that way. They got stock.

CE: Is that on the way to the RCA?

AH: Going this way, yes ma'am. Then comes Joe Lunny and then Domingo Rogers. Do you know that name, Domingo Rogers, that little ranch?

CE: Domingo Rogers. That's right up where we came off of the Inverness Road, wasn't it?

AH: Yes.

CE: Well then you have the RCA and the Coast Guard Station take up the rest of the peninsula.

AH: And then the other side would be the Oyster Company, remember.

CE: Alice's daughter has joined us and she has the – shares the ranch next door. Her house is – When did you come out here?

VH: When I was eleven years old.

CE: Because in 1940 or so, that's when they got the property. So, this has been home to you all your lifetime, more or less?

VH: Well I lived away six years in San Francisco.

AH: Before you were married, though. She worked in the city.

CE: Well your mother's commented on the changes, you know, that have occurred since this has become the Point Reyes National Seashore. Do you share her philosophy, too, that it's too bad it had to happen?

VH: Yes. I don't think they needed all this land. Of course, I don't belong to Sierra Club. I thought they should have been happy with the frontage or the seashore.

CE: Why all this sixty thousand acres?

VH: I don't know; they don't know what to do with it now.

AH: It's ridiculous.

CE: Well we've gone through a couple of decades of ecology magnification. You know that, and everybody wants to get a pack on and rediscover the wilderness and that's all part of the syndrome, don't you think?

VH: Well, and I think they thought that people out here would subdivide, you know. That's what their excuse was for taking it away from us. But I said, "Who'd want to live out here, you know?" We have the worst weather in, what, I guess the whole coast, through the summer, or the whole state, maybe, I don't know.

CE: Well, with the lighthouse, I think historically, had the worst weather of any, certainly Pacific lighthouse.

VH: We're not far behind I don't think; we get the same as they get.

CE: You have a beautiful complexion, so this fog must be good for something.

VH: I work outside, mostly.

CE: You work outside? Have you ever traveled to Scotland or England?

VH: No.

CE: Because I've heard that this is supposed to be very much like that, the moors and some parts of Ireland.

AH: We've just been to the islands, that's all.

CE: The islands.

AH: Couple times. And pretty soon again.

AK: How about your boat travel?

AH: We don't travel much.

CE: You don't travel much. I was asking your mother if World War II made it difficult for you in any way out here and she was talking about the blackouts, of course, and the restrictiveness of that and there were some troops billeted out here. But was the main problem getting your milk to market?

VH: Getting help, there was nobody. That's when I came home.

CE: That's when you came home.

VH: My dad always said I came home to eat.

CE: Well, you had to get the milk somehow to market. Did they come out and get it, then?

VH: Yes, he was allowed. See, they took our workingmen and then my brother volunteered. He wanted to join because all his friends were gone.

CE: Did you have to get involved in the milking yourself?

VH: Sure, helped my dad with everything. I was the only one home.

CE: Well it's really in your blood, isn't it?

VH: Yeah.

CE: If you wanted to you probably wouldn't leave here.

VH: I don't know. I get kind of tired.

CE: Tired physically, you mean?

VIV: Yes.

AK: Well now you've got her here. Let's find out where she was born and married and –

CE: Yeah, well. You were born, where, at Point Reyes Station, also? And same schooling as your mother, or did you go into high school at Tam?

VH: No, Tomales High.

CE: Tomales High.

VH: Then I went to Heald College in San Francisco.

CE: Good for you. That's where you got on the books, then.

VH: I know. That was a mistake. I'm still in the books. I should never have learned all this.

CE: Well you know, I'm amazed. If you have two hundred and fifty head of cattle, roughly, and you have twelve hundred acres and you have Mexicans to help you milk it, and they come every morning – Your mother was saying, one in the morning you milk and one in the afternoon. That's a heck of a chore. And it seems that this is not hay-producing country so the cost of hay and feed must be exorbitant for you.

VH: It is.

AH: What was that ninety-six thousand? How long was that?

VH: That was the difference between last year and the year before.

AH: Oh, I see.

CE: Better or worse?

VH: No, it cost me that much more. Oh, everything I buy is higher but we don't get a milk raise because the consumers holler if we ask for a milk raise, but everything we buy is practically double; everything, not just the hay.

CE: How many gallons a day are pumped out of here?

VH: About eleven hundred.

CE: That's not – When you think of what it retails for, that's not much money, is it?

VH: No.

CE: The vet comes regularly?

VH: Every two weeks.

CE: Your cattle are healthy, I presume? With your experience –

VH: Oh yes. We do most of the work ourselves.

CE: You do? When we drove through the gate, Margie noticed there was a young calf that just – I don't know the term –

VH: Born.  
CE: Born. Were you there assisting in that?  
VH: No. We don't help unless they have trouble.  
CE: They do it themselves? It looks like it had just happened. Did you just happen to look out the window and see it or were you aware it was going to happen?  
VH: No, just see them when they're born.  
AH: I told that lady, "You straighten those calves out and everything else, pull them out herself, if they have trouble." She can do it, her and her daughter. Her mother would run a mile. I wasn't much help.  
CE: This country reminds me of "All Creatures Great and Small."  
VH: Yea, that's about it.  
CE: In Yorkshire, and I think it's wonderful that you can, that you know how to do these things.  
VH: Well, you have to when you live this far, you know, when you have a cow in trouble you can't wait hours for a vet, you know. We keep all kinds of medicines and we can give shots.  
CE: When does your day start, Vivian?  
VH: I get up at seven.  
CE: Seven?  
AH: Feeds the calves and beds them.  
CE: Do you have to feed your help?  
VH: No more.  
CE: They're self-sufficient.  
VH: We used to.  
CE: And your children are at school, school age?  
VH: No, no more.  
CE: What, you mean they're out, married or something?  
VH: One is married. He'll be twenty-six in June.  
CE: You don't look old enough. She doesn't.  
AH: Tell me about it.  
CE: And you have – What's his name?  
VH: Roger Hall.  
CE: Do you have other children?  
VH: Roger Hall Horick is his name.  
CE: Roger Hall Horick.  
AH: And she goes by Vivian Hall Horick.  
CE: That's nice. That's like the English hyphenated names.  
AK: When they were small, where did they go to school? Did you have to take them?  
VH: We had a little school out here when they started, you know the little one-room schoolhouse.  
AH: They went to Inverness first, from the old ranch.  
VH: No, she said the children.  
AH: Yes that's right, hon, you're right.  
VH: We had a little school out here and then they went on to Point Reyes.  
CE: Is your other child a daughter? You have a daughter?

VH: I have three. I have Carol. She went to Cal Poly two years. She was a dairy science major.

CE: And where is Carol now?

VH: She's home.

CE: Is that the girl that came in?

VH: Yes.

CE: Well what a joy she must be to you.

VH: She's twenty-two. She doesn't look it, though.

CE: She doesn't. But just think of what her knowledge is. And the other child?

VH: He was just twenty-one. I have no more little ones. Not until July, I'll have a grandchild.

CE: All right, then when you get up and you do those chores at seven, then do you get any rest during the day?

VH: Oh I guess, in between. Some days no. It depends what happens; you never know. Some days it seems like I have boots on all day.

CE: Do you ever go – Do you ever get into town?

VH: We go in on Fridays to Petaluma. Grandma has to get her hair done.

CE: Oh, she's very styled. I mean, I know this is physically hard. I bet at night you're tired. You don't even want to read.

VH: Oh I go to bed early.

CE: Oh here she comes. We've got photographs coming.

AH: That's my husband.

CE: There's Bill.

AH: He use to call me Mamie Eisenhower because he never liked bangs and I wore bangs in those days.

CE: Very good.

AH: And this is Vivian's son and his wife when they were married.

CE: Oh my goodness, where were they married?

AH: Petaluma Catholic Church.

CE: What's your reaction to the people who tramp through your area?

VH: They don't really bother us.

CE: Do they trespass?

VH: Well you have to let them. That's in your lease, you know, unless they disturb your cattle you can't say anything.

CE: Can they open your gate and walk through?

VH: Yes, but they're supposed to close them.

CE: Well do they snoop around. Have they been indiscrete?

VH: No, I don't think so. They're mostly birdwatchers and they're a pretty nice group of people.

CE: Birdwatchers, or as your mother said, whale watchers.

VH: Well yes, there on the highway they don't –

CE: Whales have been spouting for centuries, but just suddenly it's of interest.

VH: You should see the traffic on weekends out here; it's really something. My kids don't even want to drive to town on weekends. It's awful.

CE: Are you interested in raising prize stock, other than just you want the best cattle that you have?

VH: We've been all over the state with –  
CE: Showing your cattle?  
VH: Yes.  
CE: Ever been to Grand National?  
VH: Yes. Junior Grand National. See the Grand National doesn't have a dairy show anymore. They didn't have enough interest, so they dropped it.  
CE: Well where is the Junior Grand National?  
VH: That one is there, the Junior Grand, but I mean the adult division. They cancelled it a couple of years ago.  
CE: And what is the name of your stock?  
VH: The Fredericks Hall Ranch.  
CE: Hall's Ranch.  
VH: But they're all Carol's; they're not mine. She started when she was what, nine years old in 4 H?  
CE: This is your daughter?  
VH: Yes. Of course I could go on you know and she also competes in the barrel racing.  
AK: Runs what?  
CE: Barrels. We've seen that, Margie and I. They have to run on a horse in this arena and circle two --  
VH: Three.  
CE: Three barrels, is it? And then zap back to where they entered in the shortest possible time. Do you have to ride over the property much on horseback?  
VH: Carol does, yeah.  
CE: For what reason?  
VH: Oh, check on the cows in the back part. We have four-wheel-drive trucks but like now, you can't drive back there; it's too wet.  
CE: But do they wander to the point that they forget to come home to be milked?  
VH: Oh not those. We check. You're talking milk cows? No they come home.  
CE: I'm talking about any kind of cows. You're talking about the stock now that is your show.  
VH: No, the young stock and the ones that are going to calf, the heifers, are way in the back. They're in a separate area and they have to be watched so she uses a horse a lot.  
CE: Do you ride?  
VIV: Not any more. I use to.  
AH: Horse came home without her the other day.  
VH: Yes, Thursday.  
AK: We just saw one being born just as we came in.  
CE: Yeah. You take your mother every Sunday to church, I hear?  
VH: Oh yes.  
CE: That's very good. Not many people do that. It's an important part of your life?  
VH: Yes.  
CE: I was wondering, the priest ever come out here?  
VH: Oh yes, once in a while, not too often. He's not very social-minded, is he?  
AH: No.  
AK: He should be.

CE: What is your remembrance of Ernest Morris, the old gentleman that your mother says she's fed for years and years? He was sitting in the kitchen when we came and then he left. Is he truly a Miwok Indian?

AH: Sure.

CE: Was he born from around here?

AH: Marshall.

CE: Born in Marshall. We had interviewed Dr. Robert Thomas who's a practicing physician in San Francisco who is a direct descendant of Chief Marin and he can prove it. By the way, you know he is going to write his story. It probably is published by now.

AK: It should be about now.

CE: Have you any interest in this Drake's story?

VH: Well I have a big collection of artifacts.

CE: Do you? Like what?

VH: Like everything.

CE: What do you mean, charts of horsemen and stuff like that?

VH: Yes, everything.

CE: Has the Drake Navigator's Guild Or Admiral Nimitz, when he was head of it, ever approached you?

VH: Oh yes, he was real nice.

CE: Well tell me about that. I worked with the Navy for thirty years and knew him just slightly but – And I'm a member of the Drake Navigator's Guild. There's three schools of thought, as you probably know, where Drake landed and – Robert Powers, the nut tree man, feels that he landed, careened the vessel over at San Quentin Point and Dr. Neesham thinks it was Bolinas Lagoon. But, most mariners feel that this was the place.

VH: Ed Vanderport. Talk to him. He'll tell you.

CE: Oh, Vanderport, know him too, yes. Well how did you, just over the years, just snooping around down there, pick up –

VH: And my kids, I taught them when they were little what to watch for and they picked up all kinds of things.

CE: In your judgment, would you say that's the place?

VH: Well it seems the most logical when you check the charts and all that, you know. Of course, I get all the Navigator's brochures and I sort of go by what they come up with, you know.

CE: Well that's good to know we have a fellow member of the Drake's Navigators Guild.

AK: And this is the most logical place; there is no doubt about it.

AH: They have a picnic here every year.

CE: We took Mrs. Kent out to the Quadracentennial event in '79 in June. It was a cold, clear day, if you can remember, and they had the reenactment of the landing. Were you down there?

VH: I wasn't home.

CE: And those people who were supposed to be Indians were shivering. They were shivering. I taped the whole proceedings for the Navigators Guild and it was so cute. We had a table. We had some schnapps with us, you know, and Mrs. Kent

turned to the man who was Drake and she said, “You look cold. Would you like a drink?” and, “Indeed I would,” he said.

AH: It was cold.

CE: Well, you have some shards. I’d love to see your collection some time. Do you have any brass?

VH: No. I think Dad had a few nails or something, spikes or something. Last year they had a display in the DeYoung Museum and I saw a piece and it was labeled that Rudy Horick had found this on Drake’s Beach.

AH: Yes. It was like a tea cup or something like that?

VH: No it looked like a small bowl, a dish, flat, that you’d put soy sauce or something in.

CE: Well if you remember, too, a couple of years ago Dr. James Hart, Head of the Bancroft Library, where the plate of brass is in a big glass case – They had it tested, you know, with nuclear analysis and twenty-first century metallurgical process, and they think that the whole brass plate is a fake. So, if that’s so, then that shoots down Robert Powers’ thesis. It’s all predicated because they found the plaque over there. Anyway, we went on this three-day hearing and one of the days we went onboard a Navy ship, took this whole State Historic Resource Commission out a hundred miles.

VH: Yes, I was supposed to go but it was real foggy, right? They told me it was lucky I stayed home.

CE: The fog horn on the ship ran every half a minute. You couldn’t see a darn thing. But in a way, it kind of substantiated the Navigators’ thesis, because if Drake had gone into San Francisco Bay, there would have been more talk about it. He went right by. Never saw it. Getting back to you and your ranch life, so you envision your children carrying on this when you get tired of doing it? Can they stay? How long can they stay?

VH: We have thirteen more years and then I don’t know what they’ll do after that.

CE: The ranch is not in their names. Is it in your name?

VH: No it’s in Grandma’s. It’s a lifetime thing, passes down to the heirs.

CE: But can you use it in your lifetime too?

VH: I don’t know. I can use it until the thirteen years is up and then they probably will lease it five years at a time. I don’t know. They don’t know themselves. They may give it back to us.

AK: They wouldn’t know what to do with it. They’d better renew that lease.

CE: Well do you – Don’t you feel it’s right that there should be working ranches in this property?

VH: Well that’s all it’s good for, I mean as far as hiking –

CE: Well it saves the land, and it’s a realistic way of handling it.

VH: We don’t have any wooded area around or anything. No hikers, so it’s –

CE: Do you believe that four hundred years ago elk were cavorting all over this peninsula?

VH: That’s what they say. That’s the story.

CE: Does the history of this are interest you?

VH: Oh yes.

CE: I presume you’ve read all of Jack Mason’s books?

VH: Oh yes.

AH: Yes we always buy them. Whenever he has them printed, we buy one. He's pretty good, you know. He makes a few mistakes.

CE: Well who doesn't? At least he does it. He gets it together.

AH: He knows what he's talking about, put it that way. I think he's a nice man.

CE: Well, you have lived here most of your life. Have you ever thought of writing your impressions of it?

VH: No.

CE: Time doesn't permit it, energy?

VH: Not right now.

AK: That's up to you, Ruth.

CE: Ruth seems very knowledgeable about what's gone on here.

AK: How long have you been here, Ruth?

RS: Not too long, 1967.

CE: Well, Mrs. Kent, would you like to ask some questions? We have a little time left on this tape. Do you want to ask dear Alice something? You gals are contemporaries. You've been through a lot together.

AK: Well, I'm a newcomer and she's been here, you see, you know. The fact that I'm this old doesn't help me as much as it helps the people who remember well, who were born here, you see. They can remember so much more. I don't know much about the coast. We're in the valley, and I think so many of those people who have been there since they were born can tell us about how they went to school and where they shopped and that kind of ordinary, everyday kind of living in San Anselmo, for instance and Fairfax, and all along the line. But this part, out here, doesn't seem to have changed very much from that long, long time.

CE: It is sort of unchanging, isn't it?

AK: Yes, it is, exactly.

CE: Would you agree with that book, *Island in Time*, sort of concept?

AK: Yes.

CE: You know we did have the pleasure of interviewing a woman, now gone. Her name was Edna Shafter Orr Crist. And her grandfather was Oscar Shafter who for – The Shafter's had control of this peninsula for sixty years about.

AK: But how much of it? We never have –

CE: The whole schmear. The whole schmear. I mean, this is the middle ownership period and then of course the Howards entered the picture and then it was divided. But she remembered – She died at 92, I guess. She remembers coming over here with her father the day after the earthquake and fire and taking the train to Tocaloma and then a buggy and going out to sort of where the park headquarters are today, to her uncle, Judge McMillan Shafter's place the Oaks. Have you visited that?

VH: No.

CE: It is now owned by the Vedanta Society which I don't understand because it's the one piece of private property in – It's a little enclave of private property in this whole National Seashore. And Boyd Stewart went to Washington and made an inquiry about it. And he wanted to know how come our government permitted

that, and they hedged and hedged, and I think, if I remember the story correctly, they told him not to concern himself with that.

RS: Kind of a religious thing.

CE: Yes, but I think there must have been some reciprocity between the Indian government and this government. I don't know.

AH: I've never been there. I'd like to go some day.

CE: As you say, sometimes you don't get satisfactory answers, but it's an enclave and for a long time you couldn't even walk through it. Now you can.

AH: I've never been there.

CE: But it's a beautiful little house. It looks like an old southern mansion.

AH: Wouldn't that be the old Shafter house?

CE: Right.

AK: It looks just the same.

CE: Do you gals, do you remember the Olema Hotel, Alice?

AH: Oh sure. Nelson.

CE: Did you know the Nelson family?

AH: Sure. We use to walk from Point Reyes to Olema for Sunday school or catechism when we were kids, you know, and we always stopped and played with the Nelson girls.

AK: There's a woman in San Rafael who was a school teacher. She lived at the hotel and then later she married one of the Nelsons, and her name is Nelson.

AH: Beatrice?

AK: No.

CE: Margaret Nelson Hall. She married a Hall.

AK: That's right.

CE: Is that any kin to you?

AH: Maybe she married the boy. There was a son there.

AK: She lives in the Danish Home and she's a wonderful person.

CE: Have you revisited the hotel?

AH: No.

CE: It's kind of interesting. You go in the bar. It has a wine and beer license only, but you go in the bar and it's fitted out like a library in somebody's home. And there are shelves and books with little brass railings holding the books and it has an atmosphere.

AH: Have you eaten there?

CE: Yes.

AH: Do you like it? Some say they're awfully high. I said, "Let somebody else try it first."

CE: It's nice to see the building restored.

AH: I think Jerry's is better.

?: That's what I like to see.

AH: I think Jerry's Farmhouse is –

AK: Yes we like Jerry's too. We went across to Jerry's.

AH: It's clean and they have nice food, but the other I don't – Some – They said the poor priests went there one night, told them to have our steak and couldn't even bite it, so I thought –

- CE: Well I think the present owner, Downing is his name, is more interested in historic preservation than cooking, but he'll get the word I'm sure.
- AH: I don't want to get stuck. I don't care what they charge if it's good but if I get stuck, forget it. I don't want to go back. I want good food.
- CE: You know every summer we have a reception, and this summer we will have one, and you ladies will be invited. Do bring your mother. It is in Mrs. Kent's garden and she lives in Kentfield. I want to thank you both for sharing with us today your reminiscences.