

## BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: William Waddell

*As a child, I experienced much love in the family, much human understanding and much attention--not as one child, but of a family of eight. We were given the responsibility of work in the home with everyone having a certain task to perform. At the end of the week, each one was paid according to his age. At certain times, I received as much as three pennies to five pennies for work performed during the week. The work performed during the week was primarily getting up at 5:30 in the mornings, and making the fires for Mama to cook, as well as to get a little heat in the house for the others to get by. Each one had a task such as I've mentioned. . . . We had in our family, a chain of commands, in other words I mean that the older one was responsible to pass down news, orders, to one below him.*

William Waddell was born on August 9, 1908 in South Richmond, Virginia. He attended Manassas Industrial School, Lincoln University (1927-1931), and the University of Pennsylvania (1931-1935).

As a veterinarian, he was employed at Tuskegee Institute where he worked with George Washington Carver on peanut oil therapy.

After leaving Tuskegee, he maintained a practice in West Virginia. For a short while he headed a bovine tuberculosis program in Fargo, North Dakota. He also served as the regimental veterinarian with the U.S. Ninth Cavalry.

A resident of Hawai'i since 1973, Waddell lives on O'ahu. His daughter, Kathryn Waddell Takara, conducted the interview.

Tape No. 18-15-1-88

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

William Waddell (WW)

June 21, 1988

Honolulu, O'ahu

BY: Kathryn Takara (KT)

KT: This is June 21, 1988, and I am at 1515 Nu'uuanu Avenue, at the home of Dr. and Mrs. William H. Waddell. I will be interviewing him. This is Kathryn Takara.

So, Dr. Waddell, tell me a little bit about where you were born, and when and what your childhood was like.

WW: I was born in South Richmond, Virginia, August 9, 1908. As a child, I experienced much love in the family, much human understanding and much attention--not as one child, but of a family of eight. We were given the responsibility of work in the home with everyone having a certain task to perform. At the end of the week, each one was paid according to his age. At certain times, I received as much as three pennies to five pennies for work performed during the week. The work performed during the week was primarily getting up at 5:30 in the mornings, and making the fires for Mama to cook, as well as to get a little heat in the house for the others to get up by. Each one had a task such as I've mentioned. One would water flowers, one would cut wood, one would keep the yard clean, and one would run errands. We had in our family, a chain of commands, in other words I mean that the older one was responsible to pass down news, orders, to one below him. And the one below him or her would pass on down until the last one got all of the rules, regulations and whatnot for the day.

We had times for recreation. We played in a playground somewhere near us, as well as (in) the yard of a church. We had times to play and times to get back home. We were never late going to play and never late to return home. If you were late in returning home from play, it meant that you would be late going to play the next day or two.

We also had, in our neighborhood, deep respect for anyone older than you. For an example, if you were caught fighting or doing anything wrong in the street, the people that saw you could take the privilege of stopping you from what you were doing.

(Telephone rings. Taping stops, then resumes.)

WW: You ready?

KT: [Yes.]

WW: As I was saying, we had the highest amount of respect for people older than you. For an example, if you got in a fight or you were caught doing anything wrong, the people older than you had the privilege of not only stopping you, but whipping you. And by the time you would have arrived at the house, the news would have beaten you there. And you would get another beating for participating in a street fight, or an argument, or a gang fight. In our neighborhood, like any other neighborhood, there was a certain amount of jealousy among the young people, as well as among the young lovers. Sometime, you would have to fight to get home, and again, if you were fighting to get home, when you got home, you would get another whipping.

All in all, I would say, as a child, in Richmond, Virginia, you had love of the family. You (had) security of the family. And you had cooperation among all of the family and any activity sponsored by the family, or sponsored by anyone else when the family was participating.

Life in Richmond, Virginia, as a child, not only in my family, but in most families in our block, was built up around discipline, integrity and honesty. It was a pleasure to live in a town like Richmond and to grow up in such a town where the feeling among people was genuine and wholesome most of the time.

KT: Can you tell me what your mother's name was, and your father's name and what they did, and if they were active in the church, and what was the role of the church?

WW: My daddy's name was William Henry Waddell III. He was born and reared in Amelia County, Virginia. His background was that of farming. And a major part of that farm life in Amelia County was owned by his grandfather. And I had the privilege of meeting him as a boy. I was taken up by my grandfather to see him. The fellowship from the great-grandfather to the grandfather to my father was that of love and human understanding. A spirit of genuine fellowship. A spirit of taking a glass of wine from dad to son, dad to son, and not getting drunk.

KT: The name of your grandfather and great-grandfather are the same as your name?

WW: I'm William H. Waddell IV. I acquired that name from the family tree. My mother was born and reared in Midlothian, Virginia.

KT: Can you spell that?

WW: M-I-D-L-O-T-H-I-A-N. That is about thirty miles southeast of Richmond, Virginia. It's located between Richmond and Danville, Virginia. My mother's first father came from Africa. He came from Monrovia [capital of Liberia], Africa. And I didn't know him, but from what I can understand, he was a very, very fine man who loved his family. He believed in family life, and he was very strict from the standpoint of discipline for the girls, of which there were two. He died early in life. . . .

KT: What was his name?

WW: His name was Quarles, Q-U-A-R-L-E-S. And people talked about him for years after he had passed. And my second--my mother's second stepfather was a very nice man also. He reminded my grandmother, according to her, to be the very image of her first husband. He was a farmer, and he believed that life depended upon early to bed and early to rise, and good food.

KT: What was his name? Do you recall his name?

WW: His name was Henderson, Henderson. My grandmother was a tall, beautiful woman with copper-colored skin, and she was a full-blooded Cherokee. Again, from what I can gather, she was very strict on the girls, my mother and my aunt, when they were coming up. And she taught them, as they did in that area of the world, to do everything that a woman, a girl (is) supposed to do. So by the time they were about twelve to fourteen years old, they could wash, iron, sew, cook, they could do everything efficiently. And that was the trend to bring up the girls to do everything and prepare them, I guess, for later life which would, at that time, have been matrimony, a marriage.

KT: So when your mother and your father became married, did they meet in Richmond, or they moved to Richmond?

WW: They moved to Richmond, Virginia, and from what I have been told, my mother and my aunt came together. And they ended up (by) two sisters marrying two brothers at one wedding. And my father went to Richmond to work at a shoe company by the name of Wingo-Elliott-Crump. He went there to work for three young men who went into business. He went to work at the age of eighteen, and he worked for them for forty-two years. He was a driver of a horse by the name of Charlie, Charlie I. And I remember Charlie I because I would ride on Saturdays with my father in the city of Richmond to all of the shoe places. And then we would stop and pick up shoes to take back to the company after delivering from the freight yards. And some of the freight yards were so very pleasant as a boy. Pleasant because en route sometime, candies and fruits that were being made and shipped to Richmond, the boxes would break and the bosses of the place [the freight yard] could not send all of the broken boxes to the place [e.g., markets] so he had permission to give out these things to people coming down, those who worked there. And I always got enough candy and stuff to last me for the whole school week (KT

chuckles) during my Saturday visits.

KT: Were things segregated during that period of time, during that period of time or was there mixing of the Whites and the Blacks and the other ethnic groups? How was Richmond then, do you remember?

WW: Well, I used to say at one time, that I was born in a state or city of segregation, baptized in the rivers in segregation and wiped with the towels of segregation. Still, there was a type of human understanding between Whites and Blacks. The White people of that era would do much more and did much more than any era, I think, in proportion since that time. You'd play with the White boys, the White children that lived near you, in the backyards and on their lots at times, but you could only play back of the fences of those who had high fences so other White people could not see you playing. But I remember the Hatchets down a half a block from me. I played with them, and I remember as I grew up and went off to college, and went back at Christmas time, I would see him, Hatchet. He was attending, at that time, the [U.S.] Naval Academy. And we'd talk over the fence, say "Hello, and how you're getting along in school." But I think during our junior and senior year, or just senior year, one Christmas morning, we broke down two parts of the fence to talk and to fellowship.

And I remember in the city of Richmond, when I was working in the summer months at Hot Springs, Virginia, I waited upon all of the outstanding people like, T.W. Woods and Sons, Miller and Rhodes Co., a store which is similar to Macy's. And Thal Hulmer, and a lot of people that were affiliated in the business world. And when I revealed or related that I was going to school and came home at Christmas time, they told me to come by and see them. They would want me to serve, mint (juleps and) eggnog parties, serve the parties.

KT: What years were these?

WW: They were in the years when I was (at) Lincoln University between '27 and '31. And they would pay me and give me a lot of money that they didn't have to do. But they found out that I was trying to help myself, and they helped me. And I remember a Dr. Fawlkes of Richmond, Virginia. He was an eye, nose and throat man. I will never forget him. When I was accepted at the University of Pennsylvania, I told him that I was having trouble with my tonsils. And he told me to stop by his office when I came to Richmond, which I did. I went to see him. And without any red tape or money whatsoever, he extracted my tonsils, took me to a hospital, came over to see me three times while I was there. I went home on the second day or third day. On the fourth day when I was fixing to leave town, I stopped by his office and asked him how much I owed him, and he told me I didn't owe him anything at all, to pass it on down to somebody else.

And in my life, I can remember so many people who told me the same thing. I remember a Mrs. A.M. Barnes whose people made the first

Big Ben clock in Germantown, Pennsylvania, who was very kind to me financially when I was going to college. I remember Hires Root Beer people that did the same thing. William H. Hires lived in Upper Darby, Pennsylvania. I remember Judge Harry S. McDevitt who was the hardest judge they say in the world because he would give you a hundred years and tell you he was sorry he couldn't give you any more if you did what was wrong. But he had a very kind heart and I remember him very well. And I think I read where as a boy, (he) became a judge just about like his dad, as hard as he was. I remember the Anheuser-Busch people from St. Louis. The money that they gave me. I remember the Cudahys and how they would give (me) money.

KT: Would you make out official forms or applications for scholarships or there would just be a check written because they liked you?

WW: They sent me a check. Everything by checks. However, I remember also, the Rockefellers. Now the Rockefellers--everybody hated to see them come to Hot Springs, Virginia, to the Homestead Hotel. And everybody would hate to wait on them because they only gave you that brand-new dime. But as years went on, I found out that they were making huge contributions to all of the universities in the form of buildings--the Rockefeller Hall(s) and Andrew Carnegie Halls. You see, they gave to the (universities) and gave in bulk where it meant the most, because I think they worked on the assumption that the more you gave a lot of the bellboys, the more they would spend. And of course, you never got a chance to come in touch too much with the Rockefellers because you were met by the secretary all the time at the door. They would give you two dollars a week but you earned it, every penny of it, because all would ride horses and you had about ten to twelve to fourteen pairs of boots to take to the place every day to be cleaned up for riding the next day.

KT: Where was this, at the Homestead Hotel?

WW: The Homestead Hotel.

KT: Can you tell me a little bit about what that was like, the Homestead Hotel?

WW: Well, that was a very beautiful place. I think in one portion of their (brochure) or catalog that they put out, (there was) a verse that said, "Heaven and earth never declared a place more beautiful for the habitat of man, nor the growth of a soul." It was that way. You had three types of springs there, at Hot Springs. You had the hot springs of water at one area, that of soda (in) another area and that of magnesia (at) another area. And it was always strange to tell how you could have all of that water varying so within a 1,000 yards apart. The Hot Springs, during my time there as a bellboy, was a most exclusive place, that, and White Sulfur Springs. Now at White Sulfur Springs and the Homestead Hotel, you could get passes, not passes, but you could get registrations or forms to be taken in the best hotels in the world regardless of where they were. I

remember the old Ritz-Carlton was a favorite place for them and the Traymore [Hotel] I think, and the Royal Hawaiian. All the better hotels in the world, you could register through those two. But this was a place where everybody, the blue bloods, the blue books would go by. We would watch and see who was coming in and whether they were members of the blue book.

KT: Now, what is that, the blue book, for people that don't know.

WW: The blue book was a book where your aristocratic people, American, of the world belonged to. The offspring. The genealogy on down. You came from such and such place, son and daughters traceable at least 100 years.

KT: But only White?

WW: Huh?

KT: Only White?

WW: Only White, yes. Yes, only White. Once in a while, that blue blood is mixed up a little bit. For example, I had the privilege of meeting a colored man (who) belonged to the blue blood because--not on the record, but his brother was a U.S. Justice of the Supreme Court and he was his brother. So basically, he could (have) been on there [Blue Book] if he had, you know, put pressure, I guess. He was as White as anybody else in the world, as White as a [his] brother, but he decided to be [Black]. But there are instances that there were Blacks that could have been on it.

KT: Because of who their father or grandfather . . .

WW: Because who their father was and grandfather and whatnot. A lot of people in America. Blacks might have made it, but then it would have been the question of somebody being embarrassed, you know. But, at the Homestead Hotel, they had four or five dining rooms. You had your American-plan dining room that could feed, without difficulty, 2,000. You had your à la carte, or French, which took care of 500. You had your chauffeur's and maid's dining room for people that came that were chauffeurs and maids. You had your dining room for children. They'd bring their children and their nurses who took care of the children (and they) had their dining room. Then, you had the dining room for the people that worked there. For an example, we had about thirty-eight to forty bellhops. Now that's a lot of bellhops. And then you had the place for the chambermaids to work. And then the people working there. And they raised all the milk. They made all the ice cream there, they raised all the chickens. It was a huge place. It was managed by three brothers known as the Ingalls Brothers. Fay, George, and I can't think of the third one [Abbot]. But the third one, I think, was the president of the Cincinnati and Ohio Railroad. And one was the president of another railroad. And then one was the president of the Homestead Hotel. And that went on for years. All of them were

Harvard men. Played football there, all of them were in the blue book.

KT: So how many guests would there be at any particular time there?

WW: Well, I would say in the neighborhood of about 2,000 to 2,500.

KT: And then how much help, including the guests' maids and servants or cook, you know, whatever, nurses and whatever they had with them?

WW: How many what?

KT: How much help, including the hotel and the . . .

WW: Oh, well, you had to have (nearly) 1,000 people to work in that hotel. 'Cause you had your cottages too. You see, you had your cottages, and then you had your horses, you had your stables, you had your caddies. I mean, golf, two golf courses. You had your tennis championships held there. And it was a place for the rich man. For example, when I was there, it was about seventy-five dollars a day for a single. And that was during hard times.

KT: That was about the depression . . .

WW: Yeah, yeah. Seventy-five for a single one. And when you got a room with a living room and bedrooms on the side, one whole wing like that, it was really money. And then some of the people rode surreys, had these old-fashioned buggies with colored drivers and people get in those (to) ride. Then you had your Cadillacs. They had over 100 cars for hire there, right there on the place. Then you had your bathrooms where people went there just for the hot springs baths. People who had gout, muscular diseases. And you had concerts, a concert every morning from twelve to one [o'clock]. And five to six, you would have another concert at the casino or around and you'd have a concert again at six o'clock, for one hour, your musicians. Then you had supper, [for] which everybody dress(ed) formal, you had to, dress formal was for every dining room. And after supper you'd go to the coffee room where you have your coffee, and a little (cognac or) a little brandy. See, where they sip and smell, you know. And you sip and smell in your Crystal Room which is [a] very huge place, until movie time. And movie time starts around about eight o'clock. And the movies last from eight until ten. Then after ten, ten until two or three, you have your dance, you have your orchestra.

KT: Every day?

WW: Every day, except Sunday. On Sundays, you have your concert, music and symphony and whatnot, but every night, every day, you had dancing from ten until two or three. And it was full dress. You know . . .

KT: Formal?

WW: Yes, formal.

KT: Did the help, the help was happy to be working there? Was there any resentment that these people have so much and other people didn't, the help that worked there, didn't have so much? Was there that kind of feeling?

WW: It was a different feeling. It was a different feeling. I mean, you see those people at the Homestead. When they'd be going to the dances with friends, if they saw you as a bellboy, they would recognize you and speak to you, and would tell them, "That's my bellboy." And this was a high-class place. People called you by your number or name. And once in a while, you would get a "cracker" [a prejudiced Southerner] who didn't know any better. He'd come off with Joe or Sam, or Jolly or Happy, or anything he could think about, but you kept walking. If he called you, you know, if he called you Joe, your name is not Joe, you'd keep walking. If he call(ed) you Sam, you'd keep walking. But I had something funny one time happened to me. This man, I don't know where he is from, but I knew he had no business in the Homestead Hotel, but he had money, and he got there. And taking him to his room, he called me Happy one time. (Chuckles) And right away, I thought about Happy Hooligan, you know, in the paper. So I kept walking, I didn't open my mouth. "Happy!"

I said nothing.

Then later on, he said, "Hey, Chocolate."

I said nothing.

Then later on, he called me "Crow."

I said nothing.

But the sad part about it, finally he called me William. (Chuckles) And I had to answer him. (KT chuckles.)

I (said), "Yes, sir, you hit it. William is the name."

And he said, "Didn't you hear me before?"

I said, "No sir, I didn't hear you. I only heard William." He smiled, but from then on, he called me William. But that type of thing among the better type of people, you didn't hear. You never heard any namecalling. By the same token, you had everything in God's world in the hotel that you wanted. You had all kinds of men's shops, women's shops, maybe about twenty or twenty-five. All kinds of newsstands, anything you wanted was right there. And you had your bar there. And your parts connected to the bar, places to sit. Just beautiful. Then you had that on the Crystal Room. You had that everywhere. See, although the place was dry, people would bring their whiskey down by the carloads when they'd come. And one

of their old favorite drinks they had, at that time, I mean, was pinch bottle. Looked like to me everybody was drinking scotch, scotch.

KT: You mentioned a cartoon, Happy Hooligan, what is that?

WW: Oh, that was something funny in the paper where a guy was always happy, you know. And one was named Happy and one named Hooligan. They looked--reminded me of a day of two comedians, always doing funny things (chuckles), see.

KT: No particular--were they any ethnic group, or they were just . . .

WW: Well, in the papers, they were White, see. Just like Mutt and Jeff, but they called them Happy Hooligan, see. And he kept calling me "Happy," and right away my mind reverted to Happy. The guy, you know, in the . . .

KT: Cartoon.

WW: Cartoon, you know. Because in the world of mixing with people, you know, you have all kinds of name(s). I mean, if you are colored and you are nice and agreeable and listen, sometime they call you Sunshine. But, again, that is something which you encounter among (uncultured) people. But still, in the colored world, you harbor names, too. Some of the names the colored people called each other (chuckles). And crazy names, you see. But I guess that's life. You find everything that will make you laugh or smile (chuckles).

KT: Well, let's go back just a little bit. What about the church in Richmond, that your family went to? Very often the church has been known as a focal point within the Black community. Was that so in your community or was it not so?

WW: Very definitely, it was the focal place there. It was a gentleman who baptized me. Dr. Bingy. Now, Dr. Bingy was the first pastor to take over that church. That was the oldest Baptist church in that area. The White people had it first, but I think the Blacks took it over in 1897 or 1898. They bought it from the White people, and the White people, I think, made a gift for them, practically. And that's where I was telling you about the understanding. You see, the White people of the South were much more understanding than the White people in a lot of other places because they were too busy making money to understand. But everybody went to church, to Sunday School. Everybody went to church, Sunday afternoon and Sunday night and also prayer meetings on Wednesday night. The home, I mean, family life was built around the home and the church. And your preacher wasn't in politics, like (he is) today and anything else that they're in to make a dime or nickel, you see. You had a different type of person. People that felt that they were called for the church, you understand. They had a calling for the church. And they put out, now you had a lot of funny things going on in the church. A lot of funny things, but basically, they were honest.

KT: What do you mean, funny things?

WW: Well I mean that people. I mean, you had a lot of people going to church. Those particularly who went to church on Christmas days and Easter Sundays to show off their Easter frocks, you see, and to show off their Christmas frocks. I mean, like those who would come in, would wait until the preacher (got) started and then come in with some sort of crazy walk and look to get the people's attention. For an example, I got something I could tell you. I wrote something about Adanphadelia, how she'd come to church on that time and look at you, and if you didn't look at her and smile, she'd roll her eyes at you, and shake a hand at you, you see. Or they'd get happy and faint, and knock you over if you were near them, you know. Well, of course now, that is not only common with Black people or colored people. I went out to some White churches in West Virginia, and I saw at this White church, a man who had the holy laugh. He's a man--as a rule, all of them are fat and big. When the church service's nearly over, they just start laughing and cannot stop, I don't . . .

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

WW: Well, now that was a darndest thing that I'd ever seen in my life. I've never seen anything like the holy laugh. And that was in the White world. And then I enjoyed another place at a revival I went where the White people had called this Negro in because he could sing and pray to preach. And they turned the sermon over to him after a period of time, and he got up. So when he got up, he said that, "I'm taking my text tonight from the tenth chapter of clover, and the sixth verse." And the people began to look at each other and he (began) to talk about clover [a type of hay]. So finally, a little, small, red-looking White man got up and walked down the aisle and whispered to him. And told him that, "What do you mean? Do you mean clover?" He said, "I never heard of clover, do you mean Timothy?"

"Oh," he said, "yes, Timothy." He said, "I knew it was one of those hays," he said, "but I just forgot it because you gave me too much of that mountain moonshine," and it was a fact. That actually happened.

But I've seen so many things happen in churches. However, in this church where I went to, it was a pretty good church. You had everything in there. (There) was a lot of charisma. (There) was a lot of good preaching. And of course, the preachers had their particular sermons that they would like to bring the people down to their knees on. Sermons like Belshazzar and the fall of the city, see. And the people would just go all to pieces about them. But basically, church life was good, and you didn't have what you have

today. In other words, people had the spirit of cooperation, the spirit of working together, getting along together, both for the community, for the city, and for the state and country. It was togetherness. And you didn't have the hatred that you have now.

And let me tell you about a peculiar thing. When, if you were Black and you died in Richmond, Virginia, the White people would call you and let you know there would be fifty or a hundred coming to the funeral. And they would set aside so many aisles for them. And when a White man would die, if you worked for him for years, it was in his will that he would want his colored help there and on the front seat with him. 'Cause my daddy went to the funeral of all of the three men I mentioned in the beginning. He and another man, they were right there with the family when he died. And vice versa when my daddy died, I was overseas, but they had five or six aisles there for the White people. So there was a genuine understanding, and you had cooperation among the Black churches and your White churches. And you did not have the hatred. And we didn't have the idea and the spirit that everyone owed you something. That the White churches down there owe me something, see, or the Black churches owed you something. We didn't have that. You were brought up with the idea that every man should have a roof over his head, that he can call his own, number one. And that you are responsible for every child you brought into the world. You owed that to the family of man when you bring him here. They didn't ask to come here, you brought him here. So, you must feed them, clothe them, and take care of them until they become mature.

But I don't think that you could beat the church life, the type of church life that they had. Of course, you automatically witnessed a lot of high-spirited things in a lot of churches, like I've gone to churches where I enjoyed watching the people shout. Where one would start shouting and they followed that whole aisle after aisle, just shouting around the church. I wouldn't be in the shouting line, but I'd be on the side watching. 'Cause now, what I couldn't understand was how some of those people who hardly walk because they had bad feet, their feet were hurting 'em, but they'd get out and shout (chuckles) like it (was) nobody's business. Like nothing in the world happened to their feet. So I would always enjoy that and always enjoyed at those country meetings, the good food they'd put out, and it was always given to you free of charge.

KT: What kind of food would you have?

WW: Well, if you go to a big meeting in the country, you would start off with the barrels of lemonade, about eight or ten.

KT: Barrels?

WW: Barrels. Fifty-two gallons. They are round, lemonade. Good old-fashioned homemade lemonade. And then to eat, you would have fried chicken, fried ham, fried rabbit, baked quail, baked chicken, (and pork). I mean, you'd have ham, I mean fresh ham as well as

smoked ham, and you would have from the garden, string beans, lima beans, every kind of vegetable you can mention, tomatoes, onions, carrots. And they built at these churches. They take five or six--well, tables built around churches and it may be 400 feet around in various areas around that church. They say homecoming for that church, and it's homecoming. And all kinds of bread, hot rolls, hot biscuits, corn bread; and as a rule, all kinds of watermelon, the yellow and there were the white and the red; (and) cantaloupe. But not as much ice cream because of the ice thing, but they would have enough, ample for everybody. And they had all kinds of cake, pies, and cakes. They had sweet potato pie, blackberry pie, strawberry pie, and there were the other kind of pie made of green leaves, (rhubarb). Yeah, (rhubarb) pie, and they would have all kinds of homemade wine.

KT: Wine?

WW: Homemade wine.

KT: At church?

WW: On the outskirts. But that was for their family. Everybody couldn't go up there and get the wine. They got to know you before you get that. And anything from the garden, they would have. And any kind of fruit. There'd be peaches, and in the summertime, and cherries and plums.

KT: And this would be once a year, you would have something like this?

WW: Once a year, once a year. And that would last--in the beginning, it would last a whole week, when they have a revival, and then it'd end up that Sunday, being homecoming with everybody being there, you know. People from maybe New York, Chicago, from all over the country, would return for that. And they'd bring their families, see. And then you'd have singing. And one of the chief things they would have would be, a half a mile from the church, you'd have horse races among themselves, where they'd get out and bet on their horses, you see. And once in a while, you'd have trouble, but very seldom. The only time you'd have trouble when somebody else from another community (would) come in and try to steal the boys' girls, then you'd have trouble.

KT: Well, then you mentioned, just to pass on a little bit, about going away to high school. Did you go away to high school?

WW: I went away, I left Richmond, Virginia, when I was thirteen years old.

KT: Why?

WW: Well, (chuckles) we had a White principal at our school. And my father along with several more people said that if I did anything wrong, he did not want the janitor who lived two doors down from me

and the White principal to whip me. He would rather for them to give the janitor a note and let the janitor bring the note home. And then he would whip me and the janitor could watch. Because number one, he didn't believe in whippings, he believed in talking. And that's the first one. Then, number two, he didn't believe that a White man should be beating on a Black's man child. That was his principle. He believed that, because he said he--a Black man in the city of Richmond was not a principal of a White high school, and he couldn't beat on nobody in no White school. So he just felt like it was not a fair thing. Let the colored people, the teachers or the janitor beat on him [Black child] before him [White principal]. Let him [White principal] know that they were punished. But [it was] not for him [the White principal to do the beating].

So when I went home, I told my mother that I'd gotten in a fight. I'd gotten in a fight because a guy knocked my (dessert out of my hand)--he wanted a piece of my "heavy joe," we called it. That was a combination of molasses and bread and a lot of stuff you'd get for penny. And you got a great big piece and that you ate that and drank a cup of water. (Then), you wouldn't need anything else for, say, six or eight hours. Well, this guy walked up to me and asked me for some. And he had candy. And I said, "Candy, give me piece of your candy," and he wouldn't. And he tried to take my "heavy joe," I call it, from me. And I hit him and knocked him down, because if I hadn't hit him and knocked him down, he was going to hit me. So I beat him to the punch. And the principal came out there, 'cause everybody gather(ed) around, see if (it) was going to be a good fight. So the principal came out and he stopped us. And he took us in and said to call Mr. Archer. So I said, "Mr. Evans, my papa told me that to tell Mr. Archer to tell you that he would whip me, and Mr. Archer could watch. But for you not to whip me."

So then he called Mr. Archer. And Mr. Archer said, "Yes," he said, "he's one of our better citizens. If he says he's going to whip him, he'll do it. And I'll go over and watch and come back and let you know that he'd been punished."

So the man was a big fat White man. We called him "Peter on the Roll," because he would roll when he'd walk (KT chuckles). "Peter on the Roll" (chuckles). So he said, "Okay, if he's going to do that, it's all right." So, he said, "No, don't do that." He told Mr. Archer, "Don't do that." And that was the first time he'd ever had a colored person to tell him not to whip a child. And he respected that.

So that night, I told them when I got home what had happened. And I heard them whispering around in the next room, my mama and dad talking about this school up in Virginia, and that one of the teachers had mentioned to her that it would be a good school for me to go to and whatnot. So, and she said, "I even," she told my daddy, "I even wrote to the teacher, the principal up there and I got a letter from (tape inaudible), I'd show him." I didn't know anything about it, nor did my dad. So, they read it and then my

daddy told me come on downstairs with him and my mama.

KT: You had a two-story house?

WW: Mm hmm. "Come on downstairs." And I went down there and they were talking to me and asking me about it, would I like to go. They said, "It opens up in five days now. Would you like to go?" I told them, yeah, I'd try it out. So he drove me, got permission from the people he worked for to take my trunk about four or five miles from where I lived for the train. And I caught that train and went on to Manassas.

KT: By yourself?

WW: Mm hmm.

KT: First time on a train?

WW: Mm hmm. No.

KT: No.

WW: Not the first time. On by myself. And I changed in Alexandria, Virginia, just a little ways away from Washington, went on to Manassas [Industrial School], and they met me there. And that's where my life started.

KT: And then you went there from eighth grade to twelfth grade?

WW: Mm hmm.

KT: Okay, well, I think we'll stop now, well, no we have another few minutes, let's see. We won't stop now, we'll go ten more minutes. So tell me a little bit about the experience at Manassas.

WW: Well, Manassas, I found out to be a very fine school when I got there and something I shall never forget. [Oswald] Garrison Villard, maybe you've never heard of him in history. He was that son [actually grandson] of William Lloyd Garrison, the great abolitionist. He was the president of the trustee body of Manassas. And Manassas was discovered by a woman by the name of Jennie Dean. Jennie Dean was a very fine woman, a very comely woman, but a very strong woman. Jennie Dean was a woman similar nearly to Mary [McLeod] Bethune, on that order, but uglier. And that's saying a lot, 'cause very few women can get to be as ugly or uglier than Mary [McLeod] Bethune. And then there was another lady that she reminded me of, was a lady by the name of Lucy Laney. Lucy Laney was the founder of Haines Institute in Augusta, Georgia. And that school turned out a lot of great people. It was a prep school. It turned out a lot of good people. But coming back to Manassas, it was a boarding school and it must have had about 300 students. And the discipline was very good there.

KT: Was it a military school?

WW: No, it was similar to military because we trained every morning. We didn't have uniforms but we trained. We trained every morning. We had to drill. We got up at six o'clock and went to breakfast. We got up at six, we made our beds up, cleaned up our rooms. At six-thirty, went to breakfast. At seven o'clock, we returned to our rooms and (went) to drill. And we drilled from seven-fifteen until about eight [a.m.]. And then we'd go to class. And we'd stay in class until noon, at twelve o'clock and we'd eat lunch. We'd get out of school at three o'clock and you'd go to your trades, like painting, carpentry, and electric, or go to the farm work, like dairy farming, or farming around near the campus.

KT: What did you do?

WW: Well, I did a little painting and carpentry work, but you were excused for football and track and baseball, so I was always excused. (KT chuckles.) I'd go a little while, see. But life there was very good. We had our meals on time.

KT: How was the food?

WW: The food was good, the food was good. You see, again, we had food fresh from the farm and whatnot. And we sang grace and our grace in the morning was, "Thou art great and thou art good, and we thank thee for this food by the hands thou hath prepared. Give thy servants, thy daily bread." Something like that. And on Sundays, we'd sing prayers to God from whom all blessed. And they'd sing for the good meals, because it was (chuckles) always good on Sundays. (KT chuckles.) But, we had social life, we had clubs there. We had the Paul Lawrence Dunbar Club and Booker T. Washington Club. They were two clubs where they selected you. You could belong to either one. But one of competition. One tried to outbeat the other in everything. And that was a very good thing. Then we had socials. But we didn't dance, we had marches, you know.

KT: Marches?

WW: Yeah.

KT: What's that mean?

WW: Well, they play music, and you grab the girl. You put one arm, this hand here like this in front of you, you hold her hand and the other hand around the shoulder, and you march down like the cakewalk.

KT: Oh, I see.

WW: Yeah, I showed Karla how to do it, and you'd march by the music.

KT: Uh huh.

WW: It was very good. Was like a cakewalk. And we march(ed) and at the socials, you had one or two teachers there and they wouldn't let you get too serious, you know. They could tell when you'd be getting serious. They didn't mind you going down and whatnot, but they didn't want to keep you . . .

KT: We'll stop for a minute.

(Telephone rings. Taping stops, then resumes.)

KT: We will end here and begin the next time.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 18-19-2-88

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

William Waddell (WW)

July 13, 1988

Honolulu, O'ahu

BY: Kathryn Takara (KT)

KT: This is July 13, 1988, and I'm here with Dr. William H. Waddell at his apartment at the Queen Emma Gardens in Nu'uuanu, Honolulu, Hawai'i. And I am interviewing him. My name is Kay or Kathryn Waddell Takara.

Dr. Waddell, can you continue to tell us a little bit more about the experience at Manassas and then what you did after leaving there?

WW: Well, I should mention the outstanding people that had an impact upon my life. For an example, the principal of my high school, William C. Taylor, was the first Black graduate of a White school in Kentucky--this school gave training similar to Tuskegee Institute, trades--and from what I can understand from a man who went to this school after Mr. Taylor graduated [there] was (an) outstanding historian, Carter G. Woodson, of whom I had the privilege of hearing him lecture at Manassas, who also gave me quite a lift concerning what I did not know about Blacks. Coming back to the principal, Mr. Taylor, he was an outstanding man who had a way of working and dealing with people, of which you rarely see today. I imagine it was because he did not get through this school in Kentucky until he was between thirty-five and forty years of age. But he had a wonderful way of working with people and bringing outstanding people to Manassas as faculty members. I remember men like a poet from Washington D.C., Sterling Brown, who came to work when he was a student back in Amherst or Harvard or Yale, one of those schools. I remember Allison Davis coming there, who was quite a teacher later at Hampton and the University of Illinois. I remember Gregory, Dr. Gregory who went to Williams, who was the captain of the baseball team and the first to make that type of history at his school. All of these people came to Manassas to aid the teaching personnel. Basically, I think, most of the teachers attended Howard University at one time of their lives. But Professor Taylor, as we called him, left quite an impact on most of the students, as well as Dr. John D. Williams, the school's physician who lived in Manassas.

As a boy I remember traveling around with Dr. Williams in my spare moments, and I remember him going through Prince William County, as

well as Warrington, Virginia, and maybe twenty, twenty-five miles from Manassas. And Dr. Williams was a handsome man, a mulatto, whose daddy was a preacher. But I found out if you were good, in those days, even as a student, when you were in need of medicine, race did not matter. But Dr. Williams had (as) many White clients back in those days as he had colored. And it was very strange about Dr. Williams that I--things I remembered and things I tried to do throughout our life. He never turned a man down because he never had money. Many times, he would go to visit people and he was paid by vegetables and apples and cider. But he got his money through more or less, what the people grew.

And then the same time, we had another man who is still living today, who was my coach. He must be up in his nineties. He was a man who took a few students and did a lot with them. I was a captain of the baseball team, and state champions we were; captain of the football team, and state champions; and a member of the National Black Relay Team of American High Schools. Strange as it is, I followed Professor [Ted] Chambers even after he left Manassas. He went to Wheeling, West Virginia, where he turned out athletes that went to the Big Ten schools, and then they made All Big Ten, they were so good. Late in life, Professor Chambers returned to Howard University to be the coach of the football team and the soccer team. And the soccer team were the National College Champions of America for three years, having beaten teams like Harvard, Yale and the best in this country. Ted Chambers, our coach, did much to stimulate and turn the lives around of many people.

Manassas, I guess, gave me a foundation and something to work foward to. And that is to become a veterinarian. It was at Manassas that I delivered the first calf as a student in high school. It was there that I decided I wanted to be a veterinarian. They had no veterinarians at Manassas during those days.

KT: How did you deliver the first calf?

WW: Well, the big boys, the boys larger than I was, showed me how to turn the calf around. They told me how to take my right hand and push the head of the calf up toward the head of its mother when she was not straining, when she was not in labor. And once I got the head going in the direction of the mother's head, then when she was not in labor, I would take the left side of the calf's body, which were the legs and tail, and bring that down toward the opening of the vulva, and after about fifteen or twenty-five minutes, we brought the calf into the world. But the big boys could not do it because they had large hands. Their hands were larger than mine and this was a calf, a cow, a heifer which was too young to give birth without help.

While at Manassas, I was fortunate to get a job at the Homestead Hotel in Hot Springs, Virginia. During my tenure there, I was too young to work as a bellboy, but I worked as a porch boy. Hot

Springs, Virginia, at Homestead Hotel had a porch which ran about 2[00] or 300 yards in every direction and you would put the large rocking chairs over the (balustrade) at night and as people come out, you would put a chair out and give them a paper to read for the day, and they'd come out and read the paper a while before the sun came out. And it was very beautiful watching the mountainsides from that particular angle so they would come over that side. While there, I met such outstanding people as the Fords, Henry Ford, and the Cudahys, the Anheuser-Busch, the Marshall-Fields.

KT: I think we talked about the people you met last time.

WW: Yes, yes. Well, those people, a lot of them, played quite a part in my later years in life, such as Mrs. A.M. Barnes, who was responsible for me getting at Penn and followed me during my tenure there. But I went to Hot Springs for eight summers, and when I graduated from there [Manassas Industrial School], I went to the University of Pennsylvania with the help of Mrs. A.M. Barnes and Judge McDevitt, and one or two more people whom I knew. Because during that time at Penn, it was hard for a Black man to get in veterinary medicine. And there were--I was the first Black man to get in after the last one graduated in 1913. I got in there in 1931. And I was told what had happened that one of the veterinarians, the last one in 1913, had an attitude that the students nor the faculty appreciated. He was very smart. (Chuckles) He was a mulatto. Looked like he was White, and he didn't care anything about his White brother and his superior thinking and feelings. He felt that he was as White and as good and had as much as they had. So consequently, in that era, that didn't go too well.

KT: But he did graduate?

WW: Oh, he graduated, yes. He graduated and he practiced medicine at Tyrone, Pennsylvania. His daddy was a chaplain at Lincoln University, Pennsylvania. He was a graduate from Lincoln. He had a B.S. degree when he went to Penn, so he was smarter than a lot of the people, and the boys resented that from what I heard. And he had money and a lot of them didn't have money, so it was resentment. But at Penn, even in 1931 to '35, you still had trouble from the standpoint of discrimination and segregation.

KT: Is this the University of Pennsylvania?

WW: Yes, yes. It was during my senior year before I could go over to your restaurants all around the university that were managed by people that were not born and reared in this country, but people whose parent came (earlier). (Chuckles)

KT: Immigrants?

WW: Immigrants, yeah. They were the ones that were the hardest it appeared. And I only went over there during my senior year because

one of my classmates told me that I had to go over so I could find out that they would let you come in. 'Cause he went around personally to ask people how about a senior in a veterinarian school coming over, and they told him yes. Well, to appease them and make them feel not hurt about the whole situation, I went to one or two. But I didn't really stay long, I just went in and had a cup of coffee and left. And I remember one fellow was telling him, Kelburg was a fellow who made the arrangements that, "You know that man," he says, "is quite a gentleman and quite a nice fellow." And Kelburg told him, according to some, that, "All of them are nice. You just have been told wrong things about them, that you find nice and bad in every race." But things have changed.

KT: Where would you eat then, if you could not eat at the restaurants, at the student . . .

WW: Student union. We had a student union known as Houston Hall that most of the students would eat. But basically, I took a lunch because I was too poor to eat at the student union. I took a lunch and I ate with my classmates, a lot of them, and a lot of other students that were in the veterinarian school that didn't have money to eat there. Then sometime you would go around and eat at the frat houses to get a meal, at the rich boys' frat houses. We'd go in five minutes before time, and we would eat. And they would be glad to have us coming. You know, the headwaiters would have us wait on their tables because they figured we were intelligent, we were nice, and whatnot, and we ate at those houses sometime.

KT: You would help, help serve?

WW: To wait tables, wait the tables, and eat. But that was quite a rush because that meant that I had to rush there five minutes before school was out, set up the tables, help set up the tables and wait. And then I would have to eat in a hurry to rush back to classes at one. I had an hour. But sometime, we'd go down to the soup line, an Irishman, a Jewish fellow and myself, and have some good soup. That soup was very, very good. But at times, we would change hats to keep people from detecting us, or caps. But the line was always long.

KT: This was the depression time, was it?

WW: Yes. In the depression times, a lot of doctors in that era were not being paid by their clients. So they worked for the city to give shots sometime for fifty cents to a dollar. And a lot of them did that. But it was tough times and only those people who had money would go to the doctors, you know. They would go to the free clinics of which the city paid.

KT: What would fifty cents buy during the depression?

WW: (Chuckles) Let's say, during the depression, for students that had a little party with about ten or twelve. Two dollars would give a

party, because we would go out and buy our cheese crackers or bologna and go to a druggist and get maybe a pint of whiskey for medicinal purposes, because the times were dry. And we would take lemonade and Coca-Cola and mix it to a pint of whiskey, and that would be our fellowship for the evening. (Chuckles) Yes.

KT: A party on fifty cents for ten or twelve.

WW: Well, I said two dollars, yes.

KT: Two dollars.

WW: Yeah. Ten or twelve. Five couples. And once in a while, as I got to be a junior or senior, I would go out with schoolteachers that were working, but they were getting their money in script. (Chuckles) And once in a while they would get money. But I went around with them on Saturday nights to nightclubs which you could go in and have a good time for five dollars. But I stopped that because I noticed they were trying to get me into a spiderweb so I couldn't get out. So the only way I would go (was) when I had fifty cents, a dollar, to pay my own way. Then I would go out and I would take three or four schoolteachers. But Philadelphia, in those days, were pretty bad for manpower because there were only very few boys, men, that continued school after high school. And so many of them didn't get through high school. So you did not have the manpower or the men for the eligible women, the nice women that you had. And still, in that era, you had a caste system in Philly. And a caste system was the old Philadelphians. Now, it wasn't like the caste system in Richmond, Virginia. The one in Richmond, Virginia, you had to be real light to belong to it.

KT: Light complexion.

WW: Yeah, real light, see. And once in a while the brown skins could get into it. But in Philadelphia, you didn't have that. You had to be an old Philadelphian, dated back maybe to fifty to sixty years, when the people first came in after the Civil War, at least back to 1900. The further you go back, the better, but you didn't have to be completely high yellow, or light complected. You could be brown if your people had been in Philly, or even dark brown. They had their society in Philly, like they had in most towns where you had a lot of Blacks. You had your separations, you had clubs, and etc.

KT: Wait, what do you mean, separations and clubs?

WW: Well, you had certain clubs that accepted certain people, jobwise, see. Now, for an example in Richmond, Virginia, you had a club known as Big Fifty. And they had fifty members and they were made up of the leading people. And in that one, you did have lawyers and people that had good jobs. Say, if a man was a headwaiter at a hotel, he made money, he could be a member, you see. And the thing about it is, that--you had a group of clubs then. You had your

literary clubs where people would read. They would go, and your schoolteachers, and etcetera. But you had a different type of thing, you see.

For an example, in the White world, and I lived in the White world quite a bit of my life, having been only [Black] one in certain communities. You had a different feeling among the Whites in the separations and Blacks. You take a colored man or a Black man, if they had these huge clubs, the lower Black would work like mad to get to the parties or dances and would become very indignant because he felt like he was as good as those that attended, regardless or irregardless of his training. He may have had a fifth- or sixth-grade education, but basically, he felt as if he happened to have been as good as the doctors or lawyers or anybody else. And if he could go, he would go. Even financially, if his status did not warrant him to go, that was [the] Black world.

But if you turn around and go to the White world, the White man in the lower bracket of life was cognizant that he was not in the same category of [as] his top people. So he would not go. He would go to those places [where] he would enjoy himself the most. And that was [the] situation that he seemed to realize that water seeks its own level. And he stayed on his level, whether it was back in the coal mine area or oil mines or high class. He stayed on his level.

But in the Black world, as far as your lower Black man was concerned, there was just no higher level. Hell, [he thought] he was as good as your doctor, or your lawyer, or your supreme court judge. And my philosophy of that was, and is still, that once Blacks got to the top, if they would turn around and help his brother at the bottom to get to the top, then sooner or later that attitude would disappear.

It is an established fact that once the Blacks had an opportunity to go to college and make good, they turned out to be better than a lot of them that got there the hard way at the top. But although they got there the hard way at the top, they never stopped to give a hand to the man who was trying to climb up to him. And that is one reason that I used to criticize my Black brother or colored man. The fact that he did not stoop to give a hand to those below him or beneath him. We were talking about Philadelphia, and we got to the caste system and whatnot.

KT: And what about the teachers at the university there? How did they treat the Black students? How many Black students were there at the time that you were there between '31 and '35?

WW: I was the only one at the university in the veterinary school. They had a quota at Penn. Although Penn is supposed to be the Quaker school, and the Quakers are supposed to be very religious, in your med school, they only had an acceptance of two minority people. Now, I'm thinking in terms of the Jewish people. They only admitted two Jewish people to take medicine at med school a year at Penn

during my time, see. And they only let one colored get into med school.

Now, unfortunately, there was a fellow who went to Lincoln, (who) was in med school at Penn during my time. And I knew him very well. His daddy was a doctor. His daddy finished Penn. His boy went to Penn. And he messed up. Instead of him studying the way he should study, the papers would come out, the Black papers, of which I sort of held responsible for this boy's downfall. Every week, they would [feature in society page] have this young man, this young Pennsylvania student, visit(ing) friends in New York one week. Next week in Jersey City. Another week in Baltimore. And another week in Washington D.C., and sometime a week in Richmond, Virginia. I read about this when I had time to read the paper. And I got an inkling of what he was doing through a professor of mine whose son was in med school at Penn, who was his classmate. I spoke to him one day, leaving his daddy's class. His daddy had lectured, he came in to hear a lecture in veterinary medicine instead of, I guess he had a free period. And when I was going out, I said to him, "Do you know Charlie Lewis? Is he in your class?"

He said, "Yes, do you know him?"

I said, "Yeah."

He said, "By the way, I think, my daddy told me that he went to school at Lincoln with you."

I said, "How is he doing?"

He said, "Do you know him well enough to talk to him?"

I said, "Yeah."

He said, "Well, he's not doing too well." He said, "He didn't answer questions like my daddy asked you today in class some questions and you answered. He didn't answer."

I said, "Why?"

He said, "I don't know."

So I made my business to call him that night and ask him how was he doing?

And he told me, "Fine."

I told him I heard he wasn't doing so fine.

He said, "Well, I'm having a little trouble, but I'll do all right," he said, "I got it, I'll get it."

Well, I thought he would. But in two or three weeks, I heard on the

radio that he'd committed suicide. And he committed suicide because he was failing. And he was in his sophomore or junior year. But he was just playing, playing too hard and not studying.

In my class, they asked me, every day, I guess, when I first went to school, to keep me on the ball, questions. And I found out that they were going to ride my butt, or they were riding it, so I studied every night. And after I got to the point [when] I would answer the questions every time, they let me alone and go to somebody else. And that could have been that they were trying to measure each student. But I knew I had one professor, in particular, (who questioned) me the whole week, every day. And one of the fellows asked me, he said, "He loves you, doesn't he?" (Chuckles)

I said, "Well, I hope that love affair will soon be over, but I guess that's his privilege." And then I had some that were very fatherly to me, that took an interest in me. But I knew where I stood at Penn the first year I went there, because in my class, maybe I mentioned to you before, I wrote about it in a book, where The Views of a Black Veterinarian, I mention about my dean, who was telling the group that he didn't particularly care about foreigners, or Jews, Catholics, or colored people. And some of the fellows didn't like it and they challenged him and I never opened my mouth. When I got on the outside, two or three of them asked me what was wrong with me? That I didn't say anything? This man said he didn't like me.

So I just looked at him for a minute (chuckles) and then I answered him. And my answer was, "I don't give a damn whether you like me or not. I'm not here to be liked. I'm here to get a degree." So I don't care anything about conflict of personalities, people liking me. 'Cause I'm certain that in the game of life, I've ran across people that I didn't like. But all I wanted was a degree in veterinary medicine, but fortunately the same man who told me he didn't like me, turned out to be one of my best friends when I was in the process of formulating the School of Veterinary Medicine at Tuskegee Institute. And I say formulating the policy, because I was the only one who worked on the project. And worked on it for years.

KT: Maybe you could tell us a little bit about how you got to Tuskegee.

WW: Well, I got to--when I got ready to graduate from Penn, I went up to see Mrs. Barnes to tell her my plans. Incidentally Mrs. Barnes was interested in about eighteen students, [from Persia, Iraq, Caucasus], that area, including myself. And I told her what my plans were, and she told me she had made plans for me. But first she asked me what was my plans. I told her, I was making plans to go to the Tenth Cavalry which was located at Fort Huachucho, Arizona. But she told me that she had been a friend of Booker T. Washington's. And Mr. Washington used to come to her church and they gave him money to the Tuskegee Glee Club, and a quartet sang at that church every year, and they gave Tuskegee money. So she felt

like that I should go and work with my people. And that is how I got to Tuskegee.

KT: Let me interrupt you just one moment. We did not speak at all of Lincoln University, and maybe we should say a few words about Lincoln before we get down to Tuskegee.

WW: Well, Lincoln University was my mother, my alma mater. Every man who went to Lincoln, loved Lincoln. I have never . . .

KT: For the people that don't know, Lincoln was after Manassas.

WW: Lincoln University was after Manassas. Lincoln University was established as Ashburn Institute before the Civil War. And I went to Lincoln, and Lincoln basically gave me the foundation which started at Manassas. We had all wonderful Presbyterian people. Wonderful men of the Presbyterian faith, of which we did not encounter prejudice the way maybe I would have at some schools. Because we got to know their families, and we were invited to the families for meals, and whatnot.

KT: The teachers were White at Lincoln?

WW: White, yes. They were gentlemen and Christians. I enjoyed Lincoln. I met some wonderful people. Of course, Lincoln is a school that--more than 50 percent of their graduates were either lawyers or doctors. And I think I was about the second veterinarian. The first veterinarian was from Lincoln, first veterinary teacher, was a gentlemen whose father was the chaplain of the school, and he went to University of Pennsylvania. I met him during my senior year at Lincoln, and he told me all about Penn. The irony about this particular thing that I had the privilege of meeting him during my junior year [at the University of Pennsylvania]. And when I was working in the pharmacy doing my practical training there, and I saw him, and my eyes got wide open. And I spoke to the gentleman, actually the doctor. And I don't know whether or not he spoke or not. But I do remember Dr. Frank Lynch who said to me, "Do you know Dr. Fisher? I was his classmate."

I said, "Well, I thought I'd met him one time in life, I'm not quite certain."

He said, "Well, he did go to Lincoln, didn't he?" He said, "I think I met him at Lincoln." He said, "Well, do you know whether he's White or colored?"

I said, "No, I don't know." I said, "We have White going to Lincoln, as well as colored. I don't know." But I said I thought I'd met him and the conversations stopped right there.

But going back to Lincoln, I was really inspired by men like Langston Hughes, my frat brother whom I had the privilege of fooling around with and whatnot. He had the privilege of visiting and

fellowshipping with me at my home in Richmond, Virginia. And the Mitchell boys, and Thurgood Marshall, now a U.S. Supreme Court man, and many more lawyers and judges and doctors that have done well by Lincoln. But I enjoyed Lincoln, and Lincoln gave me the Alumni Award for Distinguished Services.

KT: What year was that?

WW: That was in 1971. Of course, in 1970--I hate to jump around like this--but Penn, University of Pennsylvania, gave me the Distinguished Alumni Award, also. And I was the first Black to be ever given that at Penn. I don't know whether or not that carries any weight being the first Black to get it, but apparently, I must have done something. But I kept in touch with Langston [Hughes] all through life, up until he died. And I went to a party one time in New York, of which I wanted my daughter [KT] who was going to George School to join me there, but we had bad connections. But at that particular party, I met an outstanding individual by the name of Bankhead.

KT: Talullah Bankhead?

WW: Yes. And also, the lady who was supposed to have been a princess of the Russian [Anastasia], during the Revolution. One disappeared in America. She was there, and I never will forget the impression I got of her. Nice-looking woman, but she must have had about a half a yard of underskirt hanging. And I was wondering how in the devil, anybody who could play the piano like she did, just look into space, and have her underskirt hanging like that and didn't do anything about it. Finally, I mentioned to Langston later on, he said, "Oh, don't pay her any mind, she doesn't care what she wears or whatnot."

(Telephone rings. Taping stops, then resumes.)

WW: I enjoyed myself immensely. There must have been ten people. It was in Greenwich Village, someplace. And I regretted that my daughter did not meet these people. I think she would have enjoyed them. Incidentally, speaking about the princess, from what I read in the paper about four or five months ago, this same lady died at the University of Virginia. She was connected with that. Died down there. I just can't think of her name right now, but I knew she was a princess from Russia that disappeared.

KT: Was that the same one that became a nun or something like that from Russia?

WW: No. This is, I think, this is the one that, they made a picture of recently.

KT: Oh, okay.

WW: They made a picture of her. I just can't think of it because that was back about in the '60, '61, or sometime in that neighbor[hood].

KT: Did you have an opportunity to hear Langston Hughes read his poems and was he a poet when he was at Lincoln?

WW: He was a poet. And let me say, at that time, of course, you know, Langston was older than I am. Because he didn't come back to school until he was thirty-two or thirty-three. But he'd been all over the world, and he'd lived in Russia. As a matter of fact, I was talking to a lady who teaches at Emory [University], who went to Russia not long ago, and she met some people that are still living in Russia that knew Langston, and they were talking about Langston. And there's a man at Tuskegee who was in Russia during the same time Langston was there. And his name is Settler, S.H., he was there. And a number of people were there. But speaking of Langston, Langston read poetry at the various schools, and a lot of them were White schools that he could get contact with, through White contacts in Pennsylvania. Because in those days, you had to be a powerful Black to get into the White schools. I remember a man whom I worked with at Tuskegee, research work . . .

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

KT: Side two, we're continuing. Let's move on then. Can you mention any particular influences that you want to include before we move to Tuskegee? Any particular influences, professors or incidents, events at Lincoln, that you want to mention, anything else?

WW: No, I think that Lincoln gave me a foundation which enabled me to go to Penn and get through. And then I went to Tuskegee. But in those days, after I got to Tuskegee, I ran into quite a bit of experience, a new experience when I got there, because they had just selected a new president. I found out quite a few things that (were) new to me, of which I had not experienced. And I didn't quite understand it, see. I guess going to schools that I went to, made me think in terms of perfection and not deal as much with the realities that people are people, regardless of what race. Because I have found later in life much fighting and meanness and evilness among all people of all races and nationalities. It's dog eat dog. And the biggest dog with the biggest bite will come out all the time unless the little dog with a big mouth bite(s) as hard as he does. And then sometimes that will even the score up. But Black veterinarians getting through school before my time and during my time had a hard time. And with one or two exceptions, in these schools and land grant colleges [from Reconstruction Period], they had a difficult time because they had, in so many instances, uneducated Black people in charge that got there through politics. And very sensitive people, because, most of them did not want veterinarians because the veterinarians were called doctors. And they had no doctors [doctorates] on the campus (even though a few were working on the doctorate), (yet) everybody called them ("doctor"). Most of them

Blacks with a million-dollar body, two-cent brain [were] put into these jobs by the White politician. And they had enough common horse sense to appease, to implement, to steal, to do anything to maintain that position as being head of the school.

KT: When you mention land grant schools, what does that mean?

WW: A land grant school, they came about after the Civil War. They were the schools that were endowed by the U.S. government for colored people. And some instances where they had White people, they had some schools, too. Like Berea College, you see, they got money for that, for the government to help. But what I'm trying to say is that during that era you had a lot of people that were carpetbaggers. People that tried to play both sides of the government. The White, the Black, the colored and White, to get money. And to get money for schools, but keeping most of the money themselves and only giving the schools a certain portion. You had that, see. And then you had these Blacks, with one or two exceptions, fell right into the same pattern or class as the White man who was in charge of the whole thing. And so many places, the Blacks were only given enough to survive. But most of it would be given to, or returned back to the Whites where they could use it as they saw fit and get rich off it. That's what you had.

KT: The Blacks would give it back to the Whites?

WW: Oh, yeah, yeah. But he . . .

KT: The White presidents?

WW: Yeah. And they would take some themselves, you know. They'd get their share, too. They weren't that dumb that they wouldn't steal money. They took money, too, see. As [W.E.B.] Du Bois in the Colors of World, I guess . . .

KT: Worlds of Color.

WW: . . . Worlds of Color, wrote about this. Ralph Ellison, in his Invisible Man, he just told about what was going on, but he didn't mention the stealing that went on. And Saunders Redding, in The Stranger's Not Alone.

KT: Stranger and Alone.

WW: Stranger and Alone. He wrote about these people that were controlled by the White politicians. But this did not have to be. It was a matter of not putting the blame on the White world completely, because these Black people in those jobs didn't have to do it. Because we have cases of one or two that didn't do it. And we had cases where Whites in the area even tried to make them do it, but they did not respond to such a thing. They had integrity. But in most of these schools, these Black presidents had an opportunity to do wonders for the Black veterinarian, but as I said, they didn't

want anybody on their faculty that they figured might be smarter than they were. So they bypassed them. It was not until one Black man who made so much money at one of the schools that he (was able to) attend all of the big fraternity gatherings. And at these gatherings, everybody would wonder why he would come in his great big car and all this money to throw around. Then he told what he was doing as a veterinarian. So that aroused these Black presidents and all of them right away wanted a Black veterinarian to come to his place to work.

I had five offers when I was in Tuskegee. I met five presi--not five presidents, yeah, five presidents, came to the Farmers Conference. One came [from] north of Alabama to school. He wanted me (to) come up. He'd open up a clinic for me to practice, but he would arrange to get half of all of the money that came in at practice. We had another one south of Virginia (who) made the same offer. One south of that state made the same offer. Two in the Southwest made such offers. But I refused all of them. I refused them on the basis that they were going to exploit me and get rich off of my work, and by just sitting down. All of them offered me a job on their faculty making money, number one. And fairly good money at that time. But in return, they expected me to open up part of my [veterinary] practice for them. And I vowed that I would never get into that. I turned all of them down. I went to Georgia to see one, I went to the Carolinas to see one, I went to Tennessee to see one, and I went to Louisiana and to Oklahoma.

KT: And they were doing it in all those places?

WW: They want(ed) to do it.

KT: Oh, they wanted to do it in all those places.

WW: All. And once--the man who started this was in a state in Southwest. In the Southwest. He started it. But he--and at frat meetings, he'd tell these people when they'd meet at gatherings what he was doing. And they saw him. He was on the state payroll, making good. He had a hell of a practice. And then right away, the eyes of the presidents got as large as the eyes of a horse. And their ambition (began) to climb. They wanted some of the intake. So they offered me jobs at their place. And the sad part about these guys, a lot of them, if you were on their payroll, would pay you. But you didn't know the amount of money you were making. You would sign your name when you (went) in, and they'd make a rubber stamp of your name. And when payday comes, you would go to the office, and the man who worked there, in control over there, would just stamp your check and give you your money. You never saw what you were making. But one Black, a mean Black, who later worked with me, north of where I was working, challenged a man and threatened to break one's neck about his check. And he found out, hell, that he's making over \$200 more than what his check said, of what he was promised. So what actually happened in that case was that the president of that school figured that this Black was crazy. The

president of this particular school was as White as they come. I'm not calling any names, but if you read the book, Du Bois's book, you'd find out exactly what his name is. But he figured, this Black mean man who demanded his check was crazy. So he decided to call him in and talk to him, of which he was very nice. When he called him in, he did not only give him the \$200, which was withheld, but he raised him 200 more dollars, which the people at the state university happened to have been getting and which he was supposed to have gotten in front. In other words, this particular man was only getting one half of what he was making. This was a fact.

KT: That went on with more than one person?

WW: Sure. All of them. This man happened to be a doctor. But his pay went up the same as the people at state university did, see. And the same thing happened in the state south of Virginia. And in the state south of that. And over in the Southwest area. I knew every one of them by name, these guys. I met 'em. But at that time in Virginia, there was an honest man who didn't believe in it. He wasn't an Uncle Tom. He was straight to the point. And you couldn't fool with him, and they didn't fool with him. He had a son who was the same way, who happened to have gotten the presidentship of a school, too, he was the same way there. He was an honest man. At other schools that weren't land grant, you had some horsing around, too, with funds, but not to the extent like the land grant. These schools where you had horsing around going on, they were more considerate. They would at least work in terms of twenty-five dollars and thirty-five and fifty dollars, which still was good money in that era.

KT: So when you became--were you aware of this kind of cheating on people's paychecks when you were there, or it was only in later years that you became [aware]?

WW: At Tuskegee?

KT: Uh huh.

WW: At Tuskegee, I don't think that existed at Tuskegee. But at Tuskegee, what happened to me, was I signed a contract with the opportunity of all of the outside practice and with the use of the facility of my department. I signed a contract to that effect. When I built (my house) at Tuskegee, the old-timers that were there, raised hell about me building [so soon, and wanted to protect me from getting in trouble with the Tuskegee administration]. They told me what had gone on (in the past). Once they get you to build and get your feet on the ground, then they treat you like they wanted to.

And I said, "I don't believe you." Because my dealing in the very beginning was just terrific. It was only after I began to loan money to people on the faculty, with no interest. They were friends, people who'd pay me the next payday, because they ran out

of money. After all I was on the school faculty and I had my outside practice. It was during the time that word got around, how much money I was making and stuff like that, that I was called in and was told by the president that Dr. [George Washington] Carver needed more space for research work. And he wanted me to use the lab. And I told him that I was in charge of Dr. Carver's project in the hospital there, and that Dr. Carver didn't need any extra space, that I had a lot of all that space out for research, which was supposed to be done. But they told me, he thought that it would be wise for me to do it. And he had built, in the meantime, down from my house, in a building that he had, a place of which he had opened up as a souvenir place that failed because improper management. That was followed by a restaurant which failed because of the fact, I wouldn't say improper management, but I would say, that in your school area, people had homes and they ate more at homes and didn't have the money to eat at these outside eating places. So, I was told by Zarb, who was a friend of mine, that the president wanted to see me. And I asked him why. He told me, he want(s) to talk to me.

I say, "Well, what the hell's to talk about?"

He (said), "Well, you see him."

But when I saw him, he told me he had been driving through the country, and he stopped in Atlanta. And he saw a young--he saw a man there, older than I was, who'd gone to University of Pennsylvania, White fellow by the name of Wright, who knew me, who was a veterinarian. And he thought how good his place looked on the side of the road. And he thought that a lot of money could be made if I would use his place which he had already converted, and I didn't know, into a dog-and-cat hospital down from my house a hundred yards, and that this dog-and-cat hospital, the only thing that he would require would be hospitalization and boarders. And I said, "Well, that's 40 percent of my money."

He said, "Well, I would require the boarders' hospitalization and a percentage of your drugs over \$200."

And I told him, I had to think about it. So I thought about it, I didn't mention it to my wife because she was pregnant at that time. But then after much cogitation, I decided that the fact that I'd just built a new home, and I had this huge furniture bill from (Rich's) in Atlanta for over \$4,000, I had a deep well on me of 700 feet, I had the heat from Williamson Plumbing in Montgomery, Alabama, I decided I would do it. But I told him I didn't like it. And things went on like that not too long, because the war called, I had to go to army. And that broke that up. Then when I got back from the army, why, he wanted me to start a school of veterinary medicine. And that is what happened.

KT: I see. Now, when--this is a little bit confusing because when you first went to Tuskegee, there was no school of veterinary medicine?

WW: No.

KT: You went to work with George Washington Carver?

WW: I went to work to be in charge of the veterinary clinic.

KT: I see.

WW: Dr. Bias had been the veterinarian there. But Dr. Bias got in trouble, not because he wasn't an efficient veterinarian, but he got into trouble (concerning) something I'm writing about now, and which I'll bring to light to show you just how the Black personnel in these schools had a behavior pattern. They had a facadal type of behavior pattern that was very difficult for you to judge or know unless you've had a hell of a lot of psychology.

KT: Can you then speak a little bit about your experiences with George Washington Carver? What was he like as a man and what was your relationship to him?

WW: I worked with Dr. George Washington Carver on the peanut oil therapy. I worked on guinea pigs and white rats and rabbits. I would tie off the muscles in their legs, and after a period of time, the muscles would atrophy, get smaller because the circulation of the blood wasn't getting there. And then I would go to work and massage and rub these legs with peanut oil. And the muscles and whatnot would come back to normality after a period of time. The analogy I'm trying to draw up (is) that we were using peanut oil on people that had polio, see, or infantile paralysis. And what I tried to prove to Dr. Carver was that I would expect the muscles to come back to normality after atrophied, or after atrophy. But I did not expect the muscles to come back to normality in cases of polio. Because in polio or infantile paralysis, the nerves were affected. And peanut oil would not stimulate the nerves. In the meantime, Dr., I mean, Dr. Saunders Walker and Professor Austin Curtis, and myself, worked with peanut oil on therapy on the muscles and body to determine the process of bleaching. Of what effect peanut oil would have on bleaching the skin.

And I worked with Dr. Carver. I found him to be a very angelic type of person, a very fine man. And he was just like no one of whom I'd ever seen until I had the privilege of meeting Mike King, Dr. Martin Luther King. On the side, we could call him (Mike), those who knew him well enough. But he was angelic. I mean, nice the same way.

KT: So, Dr. Carver, how many years did you work with him, before he died? [George Washington Carver died in 1943.]

WW: I worked with him from '35 through '37. But I worked with him night and day, in relationship to the peanut, I mean, the peanut oil on the rat, on the animals. And then, once a day bodily on peanut oil for myself.

KT: Could you tell a little bit about your army experience?

WW: What time we're getting to be?

KT: It's quarter to four. Shall we break now?

WW: Break now.

KT: And pick it up another time?

WW: Yeah. Break now, and I'll come back to that.

KT: Okay. It's a quarter to four and we're going to break now.

WW: Mm hmm.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 18-26-3-88

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

William Waddell (WW)

July 26, 1988

Honolulu, O'ahu

BY: Kathryn Takara (KT)

WW: They are not doing anything in the lines of turning around and giving a hand to the young Black veterinarian of today. They're not doing it. They're not giving the leadership that they could give in these big jobs.

KT: We're running out of time. I wonder if you can just speak a little bit about your Honolulu experience. We're almost out of tape.

WW: Well, coming back to Honolulu, my experience in Honolulu has been nice. But even before I came here [in 1973], I used to--I spoke at several Kiwanis meetings for them. But I feel like that speaking out at a Kiwanis and being active and overactive in the NAACP [National Association for the Advancement of Colored People], or your city council or your state government, I have paid my dues. I've worked hard on those things, and I think it's up to the younger man in the neighborhood of forty-five to fifty, to give his time and his attention and build up something for those to follow him. Because in that age bracket, you're better able to do a lot of things because you don't get tired as quick, and you have the skills to manipulate, to maneuver, and to help more than you do when you retire. However, I'm still busy at work leaving data as the oldest contributor for Blacks in the area of veterinary medicine for those to follow. And I'm very sorry to say that, although I have worked with the women from back, from the days when I started working in the '40s, I've worked with them, there're only few that in turn have given back to the practice and to the community the things that might have made a better world for those to follow.

KT: What about the various ethnic groups that you see in Hawai'i? How have you reacted to all the different groups?

WW: Well, I love people. And I've met people from Liberia, I never will forget a young man from Liberia I met one time who was here. I had friendship, I formulated friendships with him and tried to give him an insight on becoming a veterinarian and how to help his people when he got back to Liberia. I did that because one time, I might have gone to Liberia. Had an opportunity to go to do veterinarian

work for the U.S. government there, but which I refused.

I have seen people from Samoa. I met one or two students that were in my daughter's class, and who lived with people in Honolulu, who attended Hawai'i Loa College. Had a very beautiful friendship and relationship. Had good working relationship with people from Fiji, and also with people from Nigeria, whom I see once in a while and talk to about problems. I've worked with people from other islands nearby.

But basically, I've never had any problems working with ethnic groups, nor even White people, or any group, Indians, or India. I've been able to get along with people everywhere I've gone. And I think that people will just have to be people, and be themselves, and they'll find out that a lot of things, a lot of people they don't like, that they will become interested in and begin to like. Now, there are people that it's hard to get close to, some people. For an example, I don't find the Chinese in this area as good as the people, Chinese whom I knew as a child.

KT: Wait, let's stop just for a minute.

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

KT: Can you speak about your move to West Virginia after leaving Tuskegee?

WW: . . . people with blue eyes lived back in Chestnut Hill [West Virginia], referred to as "guineas," that they were crosses between the local people and Indians. And perhaps that was so. But by the same token, we had a lot of crosses between the local mountain people and the White people in town because there were people in Chestnut Ridge that referred to some of the outstanding people in their town of Philippi as brothers and cousins and sisters. And I know it was quite embarrassing to them sometime, 'cause I remember a fellow they call "Big Red" would come from the mountains down to the city where the streets were quite crowded with people, city fair or on Saturdays where people ride up and down the street. And he appeared to have gotten a lot of delight and pride in hollering at the biggest man in town, as his half-brother. (Chuckles) And everybody would laugh because he did look like the man, they looked alike. But strange as it may seem, all the White people said "Red" was crazy. But later on, if you talk to some of the main, better citizens in town, they will tell you that "Red" wasn't crazy, that this particular man was his father. And this big man was a--and this man was a big man in town.

KT: So the mountain people were White people, or the mountain people were mixed blood or. . . .

WW: Well, most of them were--I would say they looked White. They had blue eyes and blondes, or else black hair and gray eyes. But the people in town called them "guineas." And, of course, I knew them.

They were very nice to me, but they were very indifferent about having people of color up there because the thing about it is, they didn't want anybody refer to them as being colored. However, there was a little girl worked up there in grade school and grammar school that I was instrumental in getting her into a nurses training school in Clarksburg, West Virginia. And she later graduated from nurses training school, and she married a fellow, a man, who got his Ph.D. He was a colored man and a dark man, and that was very unusual for the girls up in the ridge to marry Black men. But this man was dark. And speaking about qualifications, this man finished Stanford and was teaching assistant there, student assistant, and taught there for a year prior to going to Miami International School, and from there, he went to Old Dominion in Virginia, (where) he's still there in charge of a department.

KT: And what was her name?

WW: Her name was Mayo, Olivia Mayo. And Olivia has done very well. She had three sons [and a daughter]. One finished Yale, one finished University of Virginia, and one James Madison University. And her daughter, who finished James Madison University, is now working on her master's or Ph.D. at the University of West Virginia. But on the whole, basically, the girls there didn't go very far. They were pretty, but non-educated. And they would move from Philippi [West Virginia]. Most of them would travel to the state of Ohio, around Canton and other places like that. Probably would marry, sometime they'd marry interracially, whatnot.

But I got a lot of experience from the standpoint of working with people in Philippi. Philippi was a nice town, but in the meantime, I was doing so much traveling, and word began to spread about my work in Philippi, that I was invited by an outstanding citizen in Morgantown, West Virginia, the Garlow family, to come and practice in that area. (Telephone rings.)

KT: You want to answer that?

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

WW: . . . Mr. Garlow's family was an old family in Morgantown that had farms and mines. And Mr. Garlow was a University of Pennsylvania graduate, so we had a lot in common. And I still feel very close to the family because at least once or twice (pause), bi-quarterly (chuckles), I hear from a Judge Garlow--his wife, who is the first woman judge in the state of West Virginia. And I hear from the boys, one who went to Harvard, one who went to Yale, and one who went to Princeton. The oldest son David was in Argentina working, but he finally got established on the outskirts of Philly, Philadelphia, and he's doing very well.

KT: Wait. Before you go into their--I want to stick pretty much to your story. So, tell me more about your experience in Morgantown, since our time is limited.

WW: Well, I was very active in Morgantown, West Virginia. With the help of the Garlows, I purchased some land out on the highway about seven miles out and built a hospital. A hospital about 140 feet by 80 feet. And it was the Morgantown Animal Hospital and Clinic. And I had a very nice practice there. Not only did I practice, but I entered into the community life there. I spoke at the churches and I participated in the Mental Health Association. I was the president for one or two years, and I was in charge of the program committee for one or two years. I also was an honorary fire department member, and I was the recruiter for the first Blacks who participated in sports at West Virginia.

KT: At West Virginia . . .

WW: University. And I had a very, very--working--good relationship with the public there. And I must say, also, that we, Mr. Garlow and members of the Unitarian committee from the university and the Quakers, broke down discrimination in Morgantown.

KT: What kind of discrimination existed before you folks went to break it down?

WW: Well, they would treat you very nicely. I ate where I wanted to go 'cause I went in, but other people couldn't.

KT: Why?

WW: Because they were Black.

KT: But why would they make an exception of you?

WW: 'Cause I was a professional man, I guess. And when my wife came to West Virginia, she went to a place where normally, they didn't wait on colored people, but they didn't know who she was. So they waited on her, and she went back several times as she came to the town there. But we interceded in breaking down the discrimination completely, working with the students because--and working with the students when the big games would come about, like Syracuse [University] and Pittsburgh [University of Pittsburgh] and Penn State [Pennsylvania State University]. When the colored people would come to Morgantown to see the games, they could go to the games and could buy sandwiches and whatnot at the games, but they could not go to the hotels and the restaurants. Now . . .

KT: What year was this?

WW: That was in the late '50s. The late '50s. But before I left Morgantown, they could eat in any place. As a matter of fact, I never will forget, I lost a good client of mine, who was a Greek. And the reason I lost him, because he said that I couldn't come to his restaurant to eat. He was a very nice client and whatnot, so . . .

KT: How did he have the audacity to say that when you were healing his animals?

WW: Well, he just felt like that--I could go to his place to eat, but other colored people couldn't.

KT: I see.

WW: But on the whole, through hard work, and people like the Garlows, whom I shall never forget, and a few other people, we broke down discrimination completely. And one time I remember, when I was the president of the mental health, there was a lady from New York, who had been a graduate of Vassar [College] and also John Hopkins [John Hopkins University]. I brought her there to speak. And we always had supper with them, the members of mental health would eat in the hotel. So, I went and introduced her to the group and I left. And she was wondering why did I leave. So I didn't tell her there. I could have stayed there and could have eaten, but they would have--in this big hotel--they would have put a big screen around a particular room where we were.

So, I left, but that day, or that night at the church, where we had the big meeting, I made an apology for the city of Morgantown, for the city council, for the governor of the state, and for everybody else for [my] not being able to eat with her. And they had about 500 people in that church that night for the meeting. Although I was in a church, all hell broke loose because the preacher said they didn't know about it, and I asked him, had he ever seen a colored person eating there? He said no, 'cause he very seldom went to the hotel. But making a long story short, that the preachers working and the students working and the faculty working, and the students inviting their people to, instead of coming to the town for the next big football game, to get motels and hotels at the smaller towns away from the town, Morgantown.

So, after that experience, they felt (as if) they were crazy, and that they would open up, they didn't want to lose that money. And the funny thing about it is that after they opened up, I went down once or twice to meetings, and I had a talk with the [manager]. And the [manager] was telling me that since he had integrated his hotel, he hadn't had any trouble at all with tourists, Black tourists. He said his White tourist(s) would take souvenirs, towels, glassware, and whatnot. But (often) the Black tourist or colored tourists would leave the beds made up and cleaned up before they left. And he said that it was a real pleasure to serve them. And he asked me, "Dr. Waddell, how can you account for the fact that we haven't had any trouble here with Black people?"

I said, "Well, have you had any trouble with White people?"

He said, "No."

I said, "Well, you ought to know, Mr. Manager, that water always

seeks its same level. You take the common White man or the common Black man, if they're not accustomed to eat in a place like the hotel and they feel uneasy or not at ease, then they'll go out on the street and eat out there or eat at someplace where they're accepted." And I said, "You will find that to be the truth as long as you stay in business."

But I cared a lot for Morgantown, and I went away from Morgantown for sixty days, but I stayed fifteen years because I ran into problems that I just could not afford to leave. And strange as it might seem, the reason I didn't leave, the problems or the position I was in, because I was trying to open the doors for Black people. Had I left that area, word would have spread that this colored man, a Black man came in, but he left before the job was completed. When the job was completed, then I left.

And speaking about when I left Morgantown for sixty days, I went to Fargo, North Dakota to do special work in tuberculosis. And I was requested by people in Washington, D.C. to accept this job because I had done a very good job on a retired colonel's Angus herd. They were from down in the Martinburg's area. And somehow they got tuberculosis, and they sent them up to Fargo, North Dakota--I mean, they sent them up to Morgantown, West Virginia, for postmortem. And I ran into these herds because of my experience with tuberculosis, and they were quite pleased with the work I'd done, so they recommended I go to Fargo. I went to Fargo, and again, this was another place which I enjoyed working with people and in the community.

KT: Wait, before we get into Fargo, could you mention a little bit about two areas. One would be--you mentioned that you worked with cattle, but then you also mentioned that you took care of small animals. Does that mean that you were in charge of large and small animals?

WW: Yes. When I first went into West Virginia, I found that at the end of the day, it was very common for me to do 150 miles a day, working and riding. And word would get about when you went to one area twenty miles away, that the doctor was coming in that area, and people would call twenty miles away and catch you twenty miles from their place before you got back to your hospital. So consequently, you would leave in the morning on a case at maybe 6:30, 5:00 [a.m.] and would not get back until 4:00 or 5:00 [p.m.] or later, and then you had to go back again, maybe covering the same area. So then I decided that I would build this hospital which would accommodate both large and small animals. And when I did that, it made it easier on me 'cause I would have the farmers to bring the large animals by the way of trucks to the hospital. And that curtailed or cut down on a lot of my road work.

Basically, I was doing mostly a lot of large animal work. But then when I built the hospital, I did more small animal work because I had people sometimes coming from Pittsburgh down, which was sixty miles away, from Uniontown, Pennsylvania. Sometimes [from] the

borders of Virginia they would come, and [from] the borders of Ohio they would come. And sometime, I would have them coming up from the southern part of the state. When they (came) to football games, they would bring their pets and leave them during the games, and I would treat them and whatnot while they were there. And then on their way back home, they'd pick the pets up.

Basically, my hospital, I would say, was a hospital by the side of road for people, because I had many friends, mostly White and a few colored, on their way to the football games at the university, would stop by my hospital, and my hospital would accommodate quite a few people. And they would have lunch there, and would stop back by and have lunch. And when I (went) [to] their area of the country, I would always stop by their home and eat and whatnot. Just common courtesy, you know, that--or interchange of fellowship. But, sometime I had as many as fifteen to twenty people stopping by. And all of them would always bring, when they'd come, sometime they'd bring a turkey or a roast and sometime we'd have the same. And I had a good girl working in the hospital that was an excellent cook. And they always enjoyed themselves. They'd party at my hospital, the same as sometime students would ask to come out. I was out in the country, had a large lanai overlooking the mountains, and they'd come out.

KT: In other words, you had a living space that was attached to the hospital?

WW: That's right. I had three bathrooms in the hospital, three bedrooms, a kitchen and the huge, huge living room, and a huge lanai. And it was very beautiful.

KT: What were the most unusual animals that you got in your years of veterinary medicine?

WW: Well . . .

KT: That you treated?

WW: I treated. . . . What it was, I used to treat animals for the zoo--not for the zoo, but for circuses that came to town. I treated gorillas. I extracted a tooth from a gorilla one time. I treated elephants, but I never did get to treat the lions and tigers, and I wasn't too crazy about treating them (chuckles) either. But I did and I treated a bear, treated bears, and, you see, what will happen, people feed gorillas and bears candy, chewing gum, and stuff like that and over a period of years, they would get hollows and you had to extract the tooth, but we'd put them to sleep to do it, you know.

But one night I had--it wasn't a gorilla, it was a baboon. A man owned a baboon there, and these were drinking people and they would take this baboon to the bars, and everybody called themselves being nice to Lucky. And they'd give him drinks of whiskey and he'd shake their hands, clap the hands, and hug 'em, and stuff like that, you

know. But one night, he came out to my hospital, and he had put a ring on his hand and they didn't know it. And this ring had worn down to the bone. And his hand was swollen up quite a bit. So, the owner brought him out there.

In the meantime, we had one or two football players. I believe one was Sam Huff, one was Joe Mahoney. It was (a) time when West Virginia had some good football teams. They came to the clinic that night when Lucky was out there. Lucky was the guy's [e.g., baboon] name (chuckles), and we tried to work on Lucky, and Lucky wouldn't let (anybody) get near that finger.

So finally, I got some jelly beans, and I put some chloral hydrate in it and Lucky would eat the jelly beans and spit out the medicine, and then finally, I found out that I wasn't getting anyplace, so it was quite a show that night, because I had about fifty and twenty clients in my hospital, and they were watching this monkey raise--a baboon raise a devil. He jumped on a man and bit somebody. And finally I went and got my choke collar, big choke collar, and choked him down and gave him a shot and put him asleep, and we took the ring off his finger. But it had eaten to the bone, had gone to the bone, and he had made it bad by scratching on it. But that was the most exciting thing 'cause he had everybody laughing and jumping around, everybody was afraid of him. And it took just about half hour maybe to subdue him. And he's snarling at people and trying to bite them, and he's big. But once we got him straight, he was all right after that.

KT: What about snakes or birds or skunks or things like that?

WW: Well, I used to at one time (chuckles), used to de-skunk animals. Desack them, they call 'em. But I stopped that because one time my office was in Philippi, West Virginia, and city hall was on the top of me, and the telephone operators in the small town. It was a big building. And I desacked the skunk. I took out two sacs, but the thing about it is, he had a third sac of which I missed, (chuckles), and could nobody stay at city hall there for about a day. (KT laughs.) We ran everybody out of city hall and off the streets of Philippi. But that was a time that--after that time, I decided I wouldn't desack any more skunks.

And I took out the fangs of one or two rattlesnakes for pets. But then one time a rattlesnake, a small one, played crazy, wasn't sleeping. He tried to put those fangs in somebody who was in the cage before we took the fangs out. So, I stopped taking fangs out because it could have caused a lot of commotion and trouble. But I think they were the only things that I tried to--oh, and one time I slit a crow's tongue so he could talk.

KT: Interesting stories.

WW: Yeah. And then another thing is that I never will forget a polly parrot. I was in West Virginia, but I had to go to Grafton, West

Virginia, and this lady had a polly parrot. And I went in the house. The lady was talking to somebody across the street and she told me go in, that she'd be home. So I went in the house and this old polly parrot started using the word, "Come here, nigger." "Come here, nigger." And kept hollering, "Come here, nigger," and I didn't know what it was first. I thought it was a person.

So later on, when the lady came in, I didn't look too pleasant, apparently, 'cause she asked me what was wrong, and just about that time, that polly parrot called me again, "Come here, nigger." Well, I thought he was talking to me. But the dog, the black dog that they had (chuckles) was named Nigger. And the polly parrot would call the dog 'cause the people were accustomed to calling the dog Nigger. He's real black Chesapeake Bay [retriever].

And, that time, basically, I didn't know the parrot was talking. I thought it was somebody else, and I was fixing to leave, but it just goes to show how sensitive you can get about certain words. But after the lady came and explained, and then the dog came in and started barking at the polly parrot, I felt like a fool being so sensitive about the word "nigger" when it was talking to the dog. But I didn't see the dog, and I didn't see--I didn't know the bird was talking. Sounded like some old woman to me, but they are some of the funny things that you, you know, you run across.

KT: One other area, before we leave West Virginia, I've often heard that there are lots of poor mining people there. Did you run into any of the miner people, the coal miners, and what was your impression, not only of them, but of the lifestyle that they lived, and how--did you work with them?

WW: Well, I remember the first cesarean that was done in the state of West Virginia, I did it. And word got out that I was going to do that. So when I got to this particular place, of which I have a picture of everybody there around about, it wasn't quite dark. There must have been about 100 people around to watch the operation.

KT: What was it on?

WW: A cow. Cesarean. And I heard one man state that he had seen ninety-five stars and moons but had never seen anything like that. When I worked, it was just amazing, and then the word got around about this doctor going on the inside, on the side of a cow, and taking a calf out. And that spread all over that county and all over the next counties, and they (began) to wonder why didn't some of the other veterinarians do that.

Well, in this particular county, they had a man (who) look(ed) like a coon hunter. He wore a coon hat and looked like a wild man. His name was Henry. And he had done a lot of things, of course, they were lucky to have him. And he had helped a little, but I guess he had also lost as many animals (as) he had saved. But I had--I didn't have an animosity toward him. As a matter of fact, I tried

to help him, you know, as much as possible, because it's hard for me to cover two or three counties, which I was doing. And he'd come out and he'd watch. For an example, one time, I went to treat a calf that he had been working with. More than a calf, I would say, maybe a young heifer. And he was treating the animal for pneumonia and something else. And when I got there, the animal was still down, the man told me that he had [Henry] there and he was treating it for pneumonia, and she wasn't getting any better. She wouldn't get up.

Well, I said, "Well, let's get her outside and see, let's walk around so I can see her." So I told two or three to help to get her up, and lo and behold, when she got halfway up, I could tell right away she had (a) broken leg. So no wonder she couldn't get up. So we got the leg in a cast and stood her up and she did just wonderful, wonderful.

And another time I went to see a cow that had rabies, and they told me that this cow had just swallowed an apple and everybody'd seen her. At least ten men sitting around on a fence said they had seen this cow that had swallowed the apple.

So I told the owner, "Let's go in then and check her." (Chuckles) So, he said he had to go in the house for something. So, I went and checked this young bull. It wasn't a cow, it was a young bull. And he charged me, and I jumped the fence. And they were laughing there, rabble sitting on the fence started laughing then, and I began to curse them out for laughing. Number one, because the cow could have killed me. He would have killed me. He could have gored me to death, he was large enough. So then, this animal had, instead of the normal type of mooing, it had a bellow with it, and right away, when I heard that bellow, I knew that animal had rabies.

So, I told them that I'm not going in there because that animal had rabies. And I said, "The animal will die within a day or so. I don't want to shoot the animal 'cause I want to make certain when we take that head down to the capital, that it won't be any trouble, you know, find(ing) what they want." And the animal died that night, and I had the state police to take it all the way to state capital. And they came back right away that the animal had rabies. But that animal that bit this animal had, let's see, I think it attacked about eight or ten animals and dogs. So that meant that a lot of them that we gave shots to. Most of them did live. But several of them died, and (there was) no question about it. They had rabies.

But (this is) the type of things which you experience in practicing with large animals as well as small animals 'cause we had so much rabies in Philippi at one time, that I am certain that thirty-one people with animals were taking the shots to keep them from coming down with it. And the cats are very vicious because they attack people in the house, and people think that they are playing, you know. But we had about eight or nine cats that attacked people, old

people had to take the treatment and some were allergic to this particular treatment.

KT: So when you would vaccinate, would you have to vaccinate lots of dogs at one time when you would do your state vaccinations or whatever?

WW: Yes. In fourteen days in Monongahela County, (where) I was in charge of the rabies program, we gave the two-year shot there. I vaccinated, in fourteen days, worked in the morning from nine o'clock until six, with the help being well organized and areas being organized by the tax assessor who sold his license for the dog after I left each place. In two weeks we, I think, got about 18[,000] or 19,000 dogs.

KT: That's just amazing.

WW: And I had two counties other than my county. And we had also a girl (who) would go along who would take the money, and as we did it, issued the tags and certificates. And instead of the girls going home and the men who worked at night, they stay at the hospital to help the people coming in there for vaccinations and . . .

KT: . . . let's move on to Fargo, North Dakota now. You took this job there, you said. Was it with the government?

WW: Yes. And I . . .

KT: What year was this, again?

WW: Ah, '63. I enjoyed Fargo very much. As a matter of fact, I formulated wonderful friendships there. But again, you have your problems. I had problems there but I was able, at the period of time, to get rid of the problems. I had problems getting a place to stay. The place of which I was accustomed, like I was accustomed to staying.

KT: Wait, let me turn the tape over.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

KT: This is side two. Go ahead.

WW: I got in North Dakota, and the people are very broad-minded and, again, I think there were two colored people in town. One was a shoeshine man who had been there for years. And I was there. But this shoeshine man lived out in a place which he enjoyed. But basically, it wasn't a type of place for a professional man to live in, nor [for] a man who'd been having contacts with people from

other counties and other states to come visit and to work with. I lived down on Fourth Avenue in the beginning, the place that [there] was pretty fair. But eventually, I moved to another area because I felt better in moving to another [nicer] area where I could have the people come to my house, because I was a field man. I didn't have an office in the city hall. I didn't want one. I worked in my house.

KT: Now, what was your position when you went there?

WW: When I went there I was in charge of the tuberculosis program. I was a district, an area veterinarian because I covered the whole state doing that work. All that they had of veterinarians there, I traveled all over the state because I'd had more experience in that work. And then I had people that were in that work that didn't know what they were doing. They weren't giving the tuberculin test. They were giving the intermuscular test and the subcutaneous test, but not the dermis directly in the skin. They weren't giving that. And I taught them, a lot of them, how to do that, and they were recent graduates from a good school. But I don't know what happened that they didn't know how to do that test.

KT: What was that second test you mentioned? They either did the . . .

WW: They either put the needle directly in the muscles or underneath.

KT: And what was its name?

WW: Subcutaneous.

KT: Can you spell that?

WW: S-U-B-C-U-T-A-N-E-O-U-S. Instead of putting in a derm, the derm is that skin right here, like you see right here. You don't go underneath it. But I taught them that.

And then I was located in certain areas when I was doing that work, but then Fargo was my base. So when I went back to the base, I wanted a nice place to go. And I had trouble until I got what I wanted. And finally, I got in touch with [Hubert] Humphrey, who was the vice-president [of the United States].

I had met him when he'd been running in West Virginia against Jack Kennedy [in '59 or '60]. And he had a meeting at my hospital, you know, 'cause he didn't have so much money, he met with about fifty people out there and that's how I got to meet him, to know him. And I told him that I was having difficulty. They had promised me one place to stay in, and I had difficulty getting the key. They just kept fooling around, and I said, now, what I'm going to do, I'm going to take all of my furniture and go move it around on the south side of Fargo and put it directly in front of this man's house and stay there until I get what I want. And when he got on the ball himself, with the people there . . .

KT: Humphrey or the landlord?

WW: Humphrey.

KT: Was he a senator at that time--or vice-president.

WW: Yeah, yeah. [Humphrey was vice-president.] And he got in touch with them and within five hours, I had the key to the place. This was a townhouse unit down on [the] south side. But, you see, the thing about it is, the average American citizen, other than the state of North Dakota, never knew what Humphrey did in the line of communication and working with people. He was at least fifty years ahead of his time, 'cause he broke down the racial setup in the city of Minneapolis, [Minnesota] when he was mayor there. And he made that city a city like no other city in the United States, even including New York. He did things that no other city had accomplished in Minneapolis. The man was ahead of his time. He's like Adlai Stevenson, ahead of their time.

And I got the place without any difficulty. And then when he came to Fargo when he was running against [George] McGovern [in 1968], I had the privilege to see him and fellowship with him and whatnot. And he is one man that I would love to have seen to be president although he talked a lot, and people called him blabbermouth and whatnot, but he was the happy warrior, and he would have done wonders, I think, with his philosophy for the world. Not for the country, but for the world.

Speaking about Humphrey, who died [in 1978], and of which I dedicated the (my) book People are the Funniest Animals, I called him, and on his hospital bed, he told me, "Go to work and do it." Humphrey did a lot to break down--he and Wachman from the state, from Temple University, and Lincoln University, to break down discrimination and segregation in the United States Agriculture Department. Because they act[ed] as co-sponsors of the Black man in veterinary medicine, which revolutionized the service scales for all Blacks in U.S. Department of Agriculture. When that book was written, we only had GS-9s and 11s for Blacks.

KT: That's a pay scale?

WW: Pay scales.

KT: And then you wrote this book?

WW: I wrote it because of what was going on and how the Blacks had been just messed with and screwed up down through the generations. Blacks that taught Whites how to do this job. When promotion time would come, they'd send these guys, these Blacks away to substitute for somebody else, and when the Blacks came back, here were guys, fellows, doctors whom they had taught to do meat inspection work six months ago were hired were in [superior] positions. So, we wrote about this, and that was the thing that revolutionized the pay

schedules for Blacks in the USDA. And talking about Humphrey, the past Sunday, to show you how he felt about the world in '68, I heard the address he made for his acceptance speech in Chicago. And he started off by saying that it's a new era. We will now go into the area of change. And in this area of change, we will work on unity, peace and prosperity for our country. That was in '68. In '88, the gentleman who is running now . . .

KT: [Michael] Dukakis.

WW: Dukakis, for president, said practically the same thing in his speech. Now, just suppose from 1968, before the students did their thing, and which basically caused him not to become--he lost the election. If he had started working on that particular thing in '68, where would we have been in '88. Where we would have been? That is one of the reasons--an injection here--that I have been working so hard all my life to build up so those of today will accept what we lack and build up for those for the year of 2000. For the difference, that type of follow-through makes; it makes a better world and better people. And it would destroy, if it had been worked on '68 up until now, would destroy so much misunderstanding that you have in your country. It would have brought about a better type of integrity, not a better type, but integrity period.

But coming back to this particular thing, I enjoyed Fargo, the people were good. I held a very big committeeship in the Kiwanis. I was the president and vice-president and in charge of a program committee there, again in mental health. And I worked also with the Black students at all of the schools there, trying to get them to fall into the mainstream of American life and try to convey to them, it is nice to communicate. It is nice to work better one-on-one and develop a human understanding than be just completely radical. But in some instances, mistakes were made when you work--after you begin to think of students, in recruiting of students and screening of students.

I think Concordia College, which is over in Moorhead [Minnesota], had the best method of recruiting students because they had graduates and they had a trained individual to go. But, when Moorhead screened and recruited students, with much regret they didn't get the best students. They got a lot of good students, but they had a lot of guys off the street that would have been better living and working in pool parlors than in college. And then North Dakota State got some good students, but still, they got [some] students that didn't measure up to par. And it was then, this--in these areas that I tried to help as much as possible by telling them what to do, instead of just having people pick up the guys from the street, go to the YMCAs [Young Men's Christian Associations] that were, for an example, there in Minneapolis and the churches, the Black churches, they could have gotten much better students. But in messing around, you had your other schools getting the better students, you understand, than they were getting in that area, but I

did what I could for them.

KT: What about your work on the Indian reservations? What did you see there, and how was their reaction to you as a Black man?

WW: Well, the Indians respected my work. As a matter of fact, they respected my work to the extent that at night, they would come down and bring their children to me instead of to the federal hospital on the reservation. They had a lot of respect for me.

KT: What Indians were you working with?

WW: I worked with the Chippewa. And the Chippewa, I wouldn't say--let's put it this way, your Chippewa was a cross between the--your French-Canadian, your Ojibwa, and one or two more. But I worked with them, and some again reminded me so much of your guineas up on the Indian reservation. A lot of them had blue eyes and blondes, and some were brown, like the Polynesian brown, beautiful brown, and all of them had good hair.

KT: Good hair, what is that?

WW: Well, that's straight hair, straight hair, just like your Polynesian hair, straight. Sometime I used to wonder when I was there, I'd make trips to Honolulu, eight or ten trips, I guess, and found out that the Hawaiian, in many respects, reminded you so--not, let's put it the Polynesian--reminded you so much of your Chippewa. And a lot of your Hawaiians reminded me of the Sioux because they were darker, you know, a lot of them were. And when you got to know a lot of them, they just reminded me of the Sioux, and a lot of them too also reminded me, like I said I believe, Chippewa.

I did work, quite a bit of work on the reservations, public health work, and I lectured to them quite a bit, but I found so many things going on, on the Indian reservations that I didn't like. I didn't like the fact that your young Indian boys used to consume quite a bit of whiskey, not dope, but they drank whiskey, and a lot of them couldn't drink whiskey, couldn't hold it. And then a lot of the Indians were quite smart, a lot of them went to your leading schools. But they fought against segregation the way the Black man did, the only thing about the Indian was that the Indian would like to think and feel that he could and would segregate the Black man, too, those that weren't intelligent. But a lot of Indians made good use of the schools. And a lot of your Indians were still living for the day that they would ride again against the White man. A lot of Indians felt sorry for themselves. And by the same token, a lot of Indians helped themselves. A lot of them farmed real well and did real well as long as they stayed away from the alcohol. But I met some very fine Indians that could drink a can of beer, take a shot of a highball and would be like anybody else. But basically, there were so many of them who could not. They had their parties, their nightclubs on the place and they had their powwows. They had leadership, but still, not as much as they needed to make what they

were trying to do successful.

I enjoyed working with them because they were the underprivileged and they respected me, I think. Some used to call me back of my face when I wasn't supposed to be listening, "Chief Fast Needle." (KT laughs.) Yeah, Chief Fast Needle, they called me because they said I was so fast with a needle and the animals wouldn't holler nor do anything. It was all over before you knew it.

But, about experiences, one experience that I shall never forget, reminded me (that) when I was a regimental veterinarian of the old Ninth Cavalry, I went to a place to treat a horse, and once again, I saw everybody looking. And I stopped 'cause I knew something was wrong. And there was a horse by the name of Montana. Montana had broken the legs and arms of two or three people, and by golly, I think they were waiting to see him break my leg when I went down on him. And we put him in a stanchion, and Montana walked away with the stanchion. And the stanchion had a cement base and iron rods, and Montana got loose from the stanchion and tried to chase me. And he didn't "try," he chased me until I got out of the way. And finally, I had another gun that I use on wild animals, and I shot him with that and brought him down and we took this thing off him. And like they do buffalos, you see, those buffalos were strong, too. When we used to work on the buffalo areas, they were strong enough to move that steel and iron rack, just shake it, just like you would shake a broom or stick.

But they were experiences on the reservations. But like I say, I'd go up there and stay two or three days a week from one to another, and they would meet me and they were very nice. We'd work and we'd go and we'd eat, and sometime they would invite you to their homes. Now, they had very beautiful homes. The government gave them at Belcourt, [North Dakota, near Canada-Montana border] a home was comparable to any two- or three-room, bedroom, in the country. Bath and washer and whatnot, all of your modern conveniences. Some of them kept them up, some didn't. Basically, most of them did. And they grew flowers on the outside, too. Made it very homey, some of them. But by the same token, you had just the opposite, too. But again, I enjoyed working with them and they were very nice.

KT: Just in passing, maybe we could go back a little bit. You mentioned that you were the regimental veterinarian for the Ninth Cavalry. I don't think you ever mentioned that before when we were talking. Did you speak of that when you--your North African experience?

WW: Well, I was in the cavalry when I left Tuskegee when they called. I went to the Ninth Cavalry, I was regimental veterinarian.

KT: Is that all Black?

WW: Well, we had all---the medics were all Black, but your field officers, with one or two exceptions, were all White. And in the Twenty-seventh [Cavalry], they were mixed, too, White and Black

field officers.

KT: And then the enlisted men, I mean your . . .

WW: All of the enlisted men were Black. However, when I got to North Africa, I had the opportunity to have any number of enlisted men at times to work with me, under me, and they were very nice and they enjoyed working with me.

KT: And what was your job there?

WW: Well, at that time, I would see that supplies got up on the hills to the front, you know, and I would see that, I would inspect the quartermaster's place where all the food come in. And I would inspect sanitation around the camp where I was. And then sometime, I was with a group that (would) go on reconnaissance on horses to see up on the hill what was down below and whatnot. And we'd camouflage it, you know.

KT: And did you have a special horse that you worked with?

WW: Well, when I was in the states, I had a horse that I really loved. He was 5R38, that was his number. They went by numbers, 5R38. He was about sixteen hands or more, seventeen hands. The only thing is, he's a little clumsy on his feet, but he was good. Clumsy on your feet is when they have just little bit interference, but not enough to throw you. But he was a good horse with lot of stamina. I kept him. And I had another horse I didn't like so well, officers had two horses. He was a little roan horse--5R3[8] was black with a white star and four white boots. He was a showcase, he was beautiful. I loved him. But the roan, I didn't like too much because he was a little sneaky. He'd bite you. He had these vices that you didn't like. Once in a while you'd go in and he'd eat a carrot from your hand and end up biting your hand or try to bite you. And if he went in his stall, unless he knew you and unless you'd continue to talk to him, he would try to mash you, you see. There're vices of which I didn't like and of which I didn't have the time to try to break.

KT: And was the roan with you in Africa, or did you have a special horse when you were in North Africa or Italy or in . . .

WW: When I was in Italy, we had a Moroccan horse that they would let us have to go on reconnaissance with two or three. And I would go on reconnaissance with the man who was in charge of that to make certain that the guys who were leading the animals up would know exactly where they're going, you see. They'd go up in the daytime to pick out the area, you know, and do it on the quiet so that they can travel after dark on that area, you know.

But the cavalry was exciting. We didn't fight as much on the horse because what actually happened, we were so much in need of men to fight in North Africa when the Second Horse Cavalry Division got

there, that they deactivated them and made fighting soldiers out of most of them. A cavalry man can fight in the infantry as well as on the horse. So they deactivated a lot of them. And then I was there doing the inspection work, some reconnaissance and accompanied some of the mule packs up, you know, and sanitation around the camp.

KT: Okay. I just wanted to get a little bit of that in. Okay, so let's finish up North Dakota and come on to Honolulu. How did the North Dakota experience end and how did you get to Honolulu?

WW: Well, at the end of this work on tuberculosis, at the end of the epidemiology and whatnot, and that type of work, after finding exactly where it came from, why I decided that it would be nice to come to Honolulu because my daughter was in Honolulu and I had been coming to Honolulu for at least from '69 to '73--'68 to '73, I think. And Honolulu had gotten to be like home, 'cause when I came over, I stayed three or four weeks. But if I hadn't come to Honolulu from Fargo, I imagine that it would have been one or two more places, places like Virgin Islands or Martinique.

But perhaps I would have done much better if I had stayed longer than 1973 with the government because I would have been eligible for a much better salary scale, and then I, in the meantime, was the chairman in charge of the Equal Employment Opportunity, also, for the north-central states. But I got disenchanted on one occasion that I felt like that if I had even remained, I would have resigned that particular job. I got disenchanted, I think, it must have been in Indianapolis, Indiana, I went on a special meeting out there. And I got in there that night and I went in the dining room to eat, and two Blacks came in, introduced themselves to me. And one of them was very handsome, and one was ordinary-looking, and they recognized me from my book and from other things. And they said, "Are you Dr. Waddell, we've heard so much about you," and on like that, and we talked and ate.

And I told them that I understand we had some problems and I had been invited there to help solve the problems. And I asked them if they had any problems, and they proceeded to tell me about the problems they had. So, I said, "Well, you bring them up tomorrow at the meeting, and I'm going to see what we can do about it."

Well, I went to the meeting where the big wheels from Washington came and they must have had about 200 people from that area, all the way around there, and we talked about the programs as such, and then we asked whether or not anybody had problems. And one fellow got up, he was a blonde doctor, one doctor got up and stated he had some problems because he was Jewish and he couldn't go to the Elks home. And then somebody else got up with problems, and the Blacks never did get up. So, when I was called upon later on to answer the Jewish fellow's problems, he said that he resented the fact that his director, doctor in charge, would go to all of the meetings and enjoy himself, and he felt like that he shouldn't go because, "I'm working for him and I can't go. And I'm a doctor like he. And I'm

one position under him." (Chuckles) And they asked me, "Dr. Waddell, what do you think about that now. You're in Fargo, North Dakota, how (do) you get along with the Elks?"

I said, "Well, let's get one thing straight." I said, "I haven't joined any organization with the exception of the Kiwanis since I've been out of college." I said, "The Elks were after me and four or five more organizations about joining."

"Well, why didn't you join? What Elks were they?"

I said, "They were Black Elks."

"Why didn't you join in?"

I said, "Well, I swore when I left college, that I went through so much brutality in initiations, I wouldn't join anything where they have beatings or whippings. So that's my reason for not joining the Black one. But then in Fargo, North Dakota, they don't have a Black one, but they have a White one."

"Well, how (were) you treated there?"

I said, "Well, when I go down there, I'm a king. They haven't asked me to join, but I'm a king because my friends take me, they invite me to go." And I said, "If I wanted to go down there, I could go every week or anytime because," I said, "when I go down there, I guess they make something special out of me 'cause I don't miss a dance. And I teach them how to dance. A lot of them can't waltz and can't do the common things. I've taught a lot of them how to waltz and how to do this and do that, and some of your modern dances."

But they said, "You do go?"

And I said, "Yes, I go. I'm invited. And as a matter of fact," I said, "I had their--as president of the mental health group, we had all our meetings at the Elks home because it was large and near and handy." But I said, "They'd never turned me down," and I say, "I have seen another Black there."

"But who is he with?"

I said, "Well, he's with a White woman most times, I think, his wife." I say, "He's a pharmacist at the hospital down in Jamestown. But he goes." But I said, "Now, here of late, the Elks wanted to take me in because they want me to be a beginner."

"Are you going in?"

I said, "I don't know. I don't know. I'm thinking about the thing." I said, "It is true that I went to their parties, their Christmas dances and everything. And if I didn't go, they wanted to

know where I was. But I don't like the idea of just wanting to make me a model, although I'm the only Black there with the exception of one. And he's been longer than I have. He's been in Fargo twenty-five years." And I said, "I was wondering, he shines the shoes for them and whatnot and he measures up to the standard of a lot of them over there who are farmers and uneducated, high school. Maybe if they would ask him, and take him, then maybe I would go in. They do have doctors and lawyers and businessmen, but that man's been there twenty-five years, and I think he is entitled to be asked before they ask me." So they thought that was a good point.

KT: The Blacks never stood up.

WW: But the Blacks never stood up. And the irony about it is that, that night, I was talking to a gentlemen who was from Washington and they said, "Bill," they said, "what would you do if I were your supervisor and I would discriminate against you." He said, "I know in Fargo, North Dakota, I heard how they love you there, and also at Bismarck. When you go to Bismarck, your supervisor always take(s) you or go(es) if you're with a group to eat at the Elks if you want to go."

But I said, "He hasn't taken me. I go to Elks because I want to try them out. And they never bothered me. They'd look at me and wave at me and point at me when I go there. And more so since I wrote this book about the Black man in veterinary medicine.

Then he said, "What would you do? You haven't answered my question."

I said--we were drinking--I said, "You better give us another drink 'cause you might not be able to stand the shock." (Chuckles) So he called up for what we were drinking, white spider. And we sipped on the white spider and he asked me again. So I said, "I'm going to whisper in your ear. I don't want the others to know what I'd do with you." But in whispering in his ear, "I'd put your ass in jail." And I would have, and he knew it.

But coming back to these Blacks who offered me a drink that night in the bar with the others, and I didn't take that drink 'cause I was angry with them. But later on at supper, they came over and said, "Would it be all right if we eat with you?"

I said, "Sure." And then they began to try to explain to me why they didn't get up. And why they didn't get up, they said they were afraid because of repercussions. And I told them that there comes a time in a man's life that he has to stand up for what he believes in, and what he thinks, and how he thinks.

And one said, "Well, my wife's pregnant." (Chuckles)

So, I looked at him for a while and I just smiled. And I said, "Well, if you're afraid of repercussions, maybe you had a point, if

your wife's pregnant." But I said, "I will forgive you and excuse you if your wife's pregnant. If your man is so bad that he'll throw a lot of junk at you and you're from Ohio and you're from up Massachusetts someplace," I said, "shame on where you're from, that a man would take something out of you because of how you felt about life and being a man." So I ate and got through and I (bade) them a fond farewell and I left to prepare to go back to Fargo.

But, I'm happy to say today, that the men who rode to Washington D.C. on my red book, The Black Man in Veterinary Medicine, they have much larger jobs than they could get in the states. However, there is one man, two men whom I have been affiliated with. One of them is a state veterinarian in the state of Pennsylvania, the first, Dr. Lane who was here. He's the state veterinarian there. Dr. Rube Harrington, one man who is as smart or smarter than anybody who had ever been to Washington D.C., regardless of race, creed or color, he is now the western region director of the whole West. He's their director, supervisor. And on the history [book] which I'm now working on, I'm giving Dr. Harrington and Dr. Lane a good send-off. I'm giving them a send-off that they can be proud of on the day of their parade, whenever it'll come. In Washington D.C., you have about ten or twelve [Blacks], more than you ever had in the . . .

END OF INTERVIEW

# **Oral Histories of African Americans**

**Center for Oral History  
Social Science Research Institute  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa**

**December 1990**