

JC: I never had the good fortune of meeting Audley's mother; she was dead when I met him. But his father's still hardy and incredibly active. Audley tells of trips with them. When they came from Pittsburgh to California, his father worked for one of the great steel fortune people and they [the employers] had a California home. That's what brought them out to Pasadena.

He lived in Pittsburgh, which although it's in the North, was a Southern kind of city, and still has its hang-ups, I understand... I've never seen Pittsburgh. But they lived in Homewood, which would be, I guess, comparable to East Oakland or some such. Or the Fillmore in the old days -- not the Fillmore now.

JW: Did he go beyond high school?

JC: Oh, yes. He's a graduate at San Francisco State University. He's a former supervisor of social welfare in Alameda County.

JW: What age was he when he came out here?

JC: When he first came out here, I didn't meet him. He was just a teenager. Then he came out... his first time out was in 1938. He came out with the Joe Louis camp. He was a sort of general cook and bottle-washer and so forth, because he was just a lad then. They liked it. And eventually his father -- what did the father do? -- the father had a liquor store, that's right, in Pasadena, and established a business, and was also the chauffeur-mechanic for the Singers -- their home was in Sewickley, which is a luxury suburb of Pittsburgh. Then the father eventually severed his connection with the Singers and established his own business and had it for a while. Then he went back to Pittsburgh because there's an extensive family of half-brothers and sisters.

Audley's paternal grandmother married again, Grandma Gertie. She was darling. She had the most delightful accent and she lived to a ripe old age. His other grandmother, his maternal grandmother, I never met because she died shortly after we met and she wasn't here. So I never saw her, although I have the benefit of some of her beautiful lace that she made.

JW: Did he, when he came out here, find a West Indian subculture within the Negro community?

JC: Well, you say West Indian. They're not real West Indians. They just call themselves "Black", and they don't look for where anybody comes. You know, you're just a brother or a sister. So I don't think so. I don't know about Mr. Cole, but I doubt it. They just associate with people, period. So I don't think so.

Every once in a while I will tease Audley and say, "Well, you come from the land of the coconuts," or whatever. Once in a while he'll say something about Harry Belafonte -- sounds as if he really did come from there. But that's all. Of