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Interview with
Mr. and Mrs. C. S. Sykes
September 27, 1971

Place of Interview: Fort Worth, Texas

Interviewer: Dr. Ronald E. Marcello

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Approved:

C. S. Sykes
(signature)

Russ C. Sykes
(signature)

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Oral History Collection

Mr. and Mrs. C. S. Sykes

Interviewer: Dr. Ronald E. Marcello

Place of Interview: Fort Worth, Texas Date: October 4, 1971

Dr. Marcello: This is Ron Marcello interviewing Mr. and Mrs. C. S. Sykes for the North Texas State University Oral History Collection. The interview is taking place on October 4, 1971, in Fort Worth, Texas. I'm interviewing Mr. and Mrs. Sykes in order to get their reminiscences and impressions of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Mr. Sykes was in the United States Army at Pearl Harbor at the time of the Japanese attack. Now before we get into the actual attack on Pearl Harbor, suppose each of you give me just a brief biographical sketch of yourself. In other words, tell me where you were born, when you were born, your education, this sort of thing. Let's start off with you, Mrs. Sykes.

Mrs. Sykes: I was born in Oklahoma City but lived most of my life prior to college in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Then I went to Oklahoma University for my education, and the first month I was there I met the man who was to be my husband seven years later.

Dr. Marcello: I see. When were you born, if you don't mind me asking?

Mrs. Sykes: October 14, 1915.

Marcello: Mr. Sykes, how about you?

Mr. Sykes: I was born in Ardmore, Oklahoma, October 5, 1913. I went to school at O. U. and met my wife, graduated in geology, got out of the university, went right into the Army as soon as I graduated, and we were sent to Fort Sill, Oklahoma, in artillery. We moved from Fort Sill to Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, to the artillery post there, and after I had been there three days I received information that I was to report to San Francisco, California, in three days. I was allowed to take my wife and my car with me and whatever I could take in the car. I left Leonard Wood and went back to Tulsa and picked her up, and we went to San Francisco. We waited there in the . . .

Mrs. Sykes: . . . hostess house . . .

Mr. Sykes: . . . the hostess house. We stayed in the hostess house for two weeks waiting to be shipped out to Hawaii.

Mrs. Sykes: Excuse me for interrupting here, but don't you think we ought to comment on the fact that you didn't intend to be a career Army man, that you were called back into the Army because you had a reserve commission.

Dr. Marcello: Did you take ROTC at Oklahoma?

Mr. Sykes: Yeah, I took ROTC.

Mrs. Sykes: We had no idea of ever having to serve many months before the war started, but we knew war clouds were gathering, but we really had no idea, of course, that we'd be thrown into the middle of the war.

Dr. Marcello: Now how long had you been in the Army by this time, let's say, by the time you got word that you were on your way to San Francisco?

Mr. Sykes: About a month.

Dr. Marcello: And that's all you knew, that you were on your way to San Francisco?

Mr. Sykes: No, we knew that we were going to Hawaii. There were actually five artillery officers selected to go. Selected is probably the wrong term. They asked for names, and we all put our names in, and all of us that happened to put our names in were selected, and we got to be very close friends with the people that we hadn't met before but that did go in this group.

Dr. Marcello: What was your reaction on going to Hawaii? Was this considered to be a pretty good duty both from an Army wife's standpoint and from an Army officer's standpoint?

Mrs. Sykes: Unbelievable, we thought! Of course, we had always dreamed of going there on our honeymoon, but we had not even been married a year yet, so we said, "Now, this is our Hawaiian honeymoon at government expense,

but I was awfully nervous about whether I'd get to go along or not. As I said, at this time, six months before the Pearl Harbor attack, we knew that the situation in the Far East was critical, but we had no idea, of course, that any problem would ever develop in Hawaii. In fact, I said to our family that we were going to be at an impregnable fortress. There's never, never any chance of any trouble there. The trouble will develop in the Philippines, and while we were waiting there for the embarkation in San Francisco, Red finally got transportation to Hawaii, and at that time he went on the luxury liner, the Monterrey, in great style as an Army officer. I was hoping then that I'd get to go, but all the wives who were left there were very nervous and thinking that maybe something would happen before we got to Hawaii that would prevent our going, and staying in the hostess house at that time were the wives who had been evacuated from the Philippines, and they were the bitterest group of women I think I've ever seen.

Dr. Marcello: Now they had already evacuated the wives from the Philippines . . .

Mrs. Sykes: . . . that's right.

Dr. Marcello: . . . at this time, and you say they were bitter. For what particular reason?

- Mrs. Sykes: Because they had been separated from their husbands for no reason at all, and they'd much preferred to stay there, and they felt very put upon that they had been sent away. And I wonder many times what their feeling was (chuckle) when they found out they would certainly have been in the wrong place.
- Dr. Marcello: The peacetime Army at that time wasn't a half-bad life, was it really?
- Mrs. Sykes: Oh, it was wonderful! It was the most wonderful six months of my life. You want to tell him about that?
- Mr. Sykes: I went over on that luxury liner, and I got over there a month ahead of her. The big problem with us was whether she was going to get to come. So we were writing back and forth and I was asking if there was any news if she was going to get to come, and she was writing, and we were hoping so, and finally we got word that they were going to sail on the Saint Mihiel, and eventually it got there about a month after I did. And we were living at--the other officers that went over with me--we were living in the bachelor officers' quarters, and we couldn't wait for our wives to get there. It was the most exciting day, I guess, in my life.
- Mrs. Sykes: It was in mine, I'll tell you. It was a ten day trip. It was the smallest Army transport, but I'd have gone in a rowboat at that point.

Dr. Marcello: Now you say you were living in the bachelors' quarters for about a month while you were there . . .

Mr. Sykes: . . . at the bachelors' quarters, that's right.

Dr. Marcello: I see.

Mr. Sykes: Yes, we stayed there. They had quarters for the married people and for the bachelors, and they called them BOQ's, and then the married people stayed kind of off to themselves to a certain extent. There was no segregation, but the bachelors were at one place so they wouldn't disturb the other people, I suppose.

Finally the Saint Mihiel arrived, and it was the prettiest ship I believe I'd ever seen. And I knew that my wife was really there. We had a command car . . . our cars weren't there at the time. They came about ten days or two weeks later. So we had a command car at our disposal that the commander had been good enough to let us use. They were pretty lenient, you know, when they knew wives were coming in. They were pretty nice to us. So we had a command car. They came in at Pearl Harbor, not Honolulu Harbor. We left Pearl Harbor and drove out to our place at Kawaihoa. Now Kawaihoa was on the northern part of the island.

Mrs. Sykes: It was fifty miles from Honolulu. And as it happened, we went through a little town called Wahiawa, then Haleiwa, then Kawaihoa.

Mr. Sykes: Kawaihoa wasn't a town, but it was just an area. Haleiwa

was a little place that had the . . . at that time it was the Army Air Corps and Navy Air Corps. There was no Air Force per se. And they had built a landing strip just three hundred yards from our house, and the fighter planes would land there and take off right over our house. Of course, we hated this when they would take off early in the morning and wake us up.

Mrs. Sykes:

I think we ought to tell them where we were going. Now I was on the ship. Of course, I was coming over with two other friends from Oklahoma, and my husband is talking about these two officers who were in ROTC with him, and we knew that one of the big problems would be getting housing on the base, so we were very concerned about where we would be living. So the minute we landed and were loaded in the command car, all the three couples together, we said, "Where are we going to live?" They didn't tell us, and we said, "Well, are our houses close together?" And they'd say, "Oh yes, very close!" So then you can imagine our surprise and our delight when we finally drove onto the beach to a beautiful beach house and discovered that the three of us were to live in this one beach house. It was a cottage, three couples with a cottage there. So it was the most marvelous six months then that we spent there on the beach, because all of us were Oklahomans and

had never lived on the beach, and it was the "Pineapple Army." We called it the "Pineapple Army." And we didn't work on Wednesday afternoons; we didn't work at all on Saturdays or Sundays. It was a very formal oldtime Army social life. If you ever went into the post at night, it was full dress. Our husbands had to wear . . . I believe he wore . . .

Mr. Sykes: A tux.

Mrs. Sykes: . . . a tux. You could have worn a dress uniform, but you didn't. You wore a white tux, and we all wore long gowns, even to go into the Army base to a picture show or a boxing match. And then we had to make formal calls on all the officers and not spend more than thirty minutes nor less than twenty, and they returned their calls to us. But we had a marvelous time living on the beach for six months. It was just perfect.

Dr. Marcello: In other words, like you say, a peacetime Army wasn't a half-bad place . . .

Mrs. Sykes: . . . not at all.

Mr. Sykes: No, it wasn't.

Dr. Marcello: . . . to be at that particular time.

Mrs. Sykes: Not at all. We considered we were having a wonderful Hawaiian vacation at government expense.

Dr. Marcello: I see. Well, in the meantime, what were you doing in the Army? Now you'd been there for a month, and you were an artillery officer, so just exactly what was

your function? Why had you been sent there?

Mr. Sykes: Well, they were rotating the artillery officers, and they had rotated five back, and they needed replacements. That's the reason we happened to be sent. We didn't know it at the time, but we found out later.

Mrs. Sykes: What was the artillery doing on the island?

Dr. Marcello: What does an artilleryman do on the Hawaiian Islands?

Mr. Sykes: Well, the artillery was to stop any invasion that came within range before it got to the infantry. First, it was the Air Corps. We were told that the Air Corps would know of any fleet or anyone coming to attack, and they would fight them as far out as they could. If they got past the Air Corps, the Navy was there. They were the next buffer, and if they got past the Navy, the field artillery and the coast artillery could fight them--would shoot to sink ships, destroy landing strips, destroy beaches, and support the infantry in any way. And then it came down to the infantry, and we thought we were in an impregnable fortress at the time. We found out a little different, but at least we thought that it was very fine. But the main function of the artillery actually was to support the infantry and protect the beaches.

Marcello: In other words, first of all you had the Air Corps, which I assume would be undertaking at least a good deal

of long-range reconnaissance. Is this correct? Now what was considered the backbone of the Air Corps at this time? Did you have very many "Flying Fortresses" on the Hawaiian Islands? Now I know on December 7 some were on their way, but were there any there before the 7th?

Mr. Sykes: I don't think so. I don't believe any Fortresses were there. They had PBV's, A-26's, P-40's, P-36's. The P-36's were absolutely obsolete, but the P-40's were not obsolete, so we were well fortified or well stocked with P-40's. The Navy had a lot of PBV's to carry out their searches in conjunction with the submarines that they had.

Dr. Marcello: Now be quite frank. What do you think the chances were of an attack on Pearl Harbor?

Mr. Sykes: Oh, I didn't think that there was a chance of it. If you had asked me the day before, I would still say . . . if this was the day before, I would say there's not a chance of it.

Dr. Marcello: This is the sort of answer I wanted to get, not hindsight. But if you could place yourself in the position even six months prior to the period that we're talking about now . . .

Mr. Sykes: There was one thing that did come up. Now we didn't expect an attack. We were alerted for sabotage. Now we thought that if there was any trouble, that that's

where it would come from. It'd be saboteurs on the island.

Dr. Marcello: In other words, what you're getting at here is that there was a large Japanese population on the islands, and there was always the possibility of some sort of a fifth column here. And I think, so far as I gather from my readings, that this was to be one of the prime functions of the Army, was it not, to guard against sabotage and so on?

Mr. Sykes: Yes, to protect the vital installations--water supplies, generating plants, and everything that would help the city run including radio stations and newspapers, and keep the streets open for the movement of troops and what civilian movement that would be needed, such as doctors and ambulances and things like that.

Dr. Marcello: Did you ever have very much contact with any of the Japanese who were living on the islands, either one of you? Perhaps as domestics or anything of this sort.

Mrs. Sykes: Yes, yes. Most of the people who lived around us were Japanese, but now not right on this little beach strip. Those were Haole people. And we had a Japanese servant girl. All the domestics on the Army post were Japanese. And we had several little Japanese towns where we did our shopping. Wahiawa was a Japanese town. Haleiwa was a Japanese town. I don't believe anybody except

Japanese lived there, and as my husband said, that was only about a mile from our place on the beach. And, of course, in Honolulu, when we'd go there shopping, we'd think that they were all Japanese. The majority was so great it appeared that they were almost all Japanese.

Mr. Sykes: There were Japanese, Chinese, and . . .

Mrs. Sykes: . . . well, yes, Orientals.

Dr. Marcello: There was sort of a polyglot population on the islands, was there not.

Mrs. Sykes: That's right. There were lots of Portuguese, and . . .

Mr. Sykes: . . . Hawaiians, too. (chuckle)

Mrs. Sykes: I believe the Hawaiians were a minority.

Dr. Marcello: I've read that they actually were.

Mr. Sykes: Yes.

Dr. Marcello: Did you ever personally have any reason to suspect any of the Japanese with whom you came in contact?

Mrs. Sykes: Oh, not at all! Not at all! No, we trusted them.

Mr. Sykes: No, I never did suspect any of them. In fact, even after the war started, lots of Japanese . . . there was a Portuguese family that lived just down below us, and he entered the Army and was killed at Tarawa, I believe. He was one of the few people that could work for the family, but instead of working and staying there he entered the Army later on.

Mrs. Sykes: Well, of course, although we said we had no suspicion at all that Hawaii might be attacked, we were very

apprehensive about a war breaking out, and, of course, the wives personally felt that as soon as this happened, we were going to be sent back to the mainland, so that was a constant fear, and that is one reason why we were trying to see all of the island and do all the sightseeing we could because we really had the feeling that our time was limited there.

Dr. Marcello: I would assume, as you say, that since everybody knew that the war clouds were gathering, that probably most eyes were either turned toward the Philippine Islands or perhaps the Dutch East Indies or some place like that as perhaps being likely targets.

Mrs. Sykes: That's right. The Philippines were the ones that we were not permitted Army information about, but that was the popular conception then.

Dr. Marcello: In fact, as I recall, the reason the fleet was sent to Pearl Harbor was because it was thought to be relatively safe there for one thing, but at the same time it might perhaps serve as some sort of deterrent against the Japanese and any further ambitions that they may have had.

Mrs. Sykes: My husband has already spoken to the fact that sabotage was to be the main defense there. I mean, that was the main threat, and at night it was perfect to attack because the planes were bunched at all the airstrips. So sabotage was very much in the minds of the military at that time.

Dr. Marcello: Well, what was a typical day like in the Army during that six-month period, if there was such a thing as a typical day? Start from the time you got up in the morning until the time you came home in the evening.

Mr. Sykes: We had to report at 7:30. So we would get up about 6:00 out at the beach house where we lived at Kawaiiloa, have our breakfast and drive . . . by this time we had our own personal cars. We would then drive to Schofield Barracks, go in, check the duty roster, and see if anything had happened that was unusual. Usually it was just the same old stuff. Then we would either go out for gunnery practice, or we would take trips around the island pulling the 75's that we had at that time. They were old ~~French~~^{British} 75's. And (chuckle) they weren't really the best thing to defend the island with, but that's what we had. Well, right at this time, the new 105's were beginning to come in. I think there was one or two batteries of 105's, and they were very good guns. But we had the ~~French~~^{British} 75's, and we would take them around the island and set up at different positions and get used to the area and know what we were to defend, and then we would come back and spend the day going to class or hearing lectures, and eventually Well, we would train the men, too, take them out on different days. Now we'd take them out to the rifle range, have them

practice on the range shooting a rifle, shooting machine-guns, throwing hand grenades. And we had some physical fitness drills which we all needed because the Army should be physically fit, and we tried really to stay in pretty good shape. Wednesday afternoons we went home and everyone put on their bathing suits, went out on the beach, and just had a wonderful time riding the waves on our air mattresses and diving for seashells and things like that. We did that even in the afternoons on other days when we got back to the house.

Mrs. Sykes: The air mattresses were in poor shape by the time we were through with them.

Dr. Marcello: Well, would you say then that the Army was kind of on a . . . would a "semi-alert" be a good word to use, or was it just kind of business-as-usual?

Mr. Sykes: Business-as-usual as far as I was concerned. There were other units on the island that were alerted, I believe. But my unit was not alerted, being an artillery unit. The infantry was the one that would take care of any uprising or anything like that. We would come in as secondary helpers against the threats of saboteurs or something like that, but the infantry and the MP's were the ones that were supposed to handle that.

Mrs. Sykes: When were you assigned the 255's?

Mr. Sykes: No, it was the 105.

Mrs. Sykes: Well, what was the gun?

Mr. Sykes: The 240 howitzer. We were assigned these 240 howitzer, the World War I howitzers, and they hadn't been shot, I don't suppose, over twenty times, and we were assigned to them or they were assigned to us, whichever way you want to put it, oh, I imagine by November 15th, and we hadn't had time to put them together because they came in five parts. Trucks had to pull them. The barrel itself weighed 10,300 pounds, and you can see that it was a pretty good-sized fieldpiece. And once you put them in position, why, they stayed there. It just wasn't a pick-up-and-move proposition with them, but we had just gotten these howitzers just before the war started, so we knew very little about them. Of course, no one else knew anything about them either, so we weren't any worse off than if someone else had had them, but we did have a lot of trouble finding out all the . . .

Mrs. Sykes: . . . but I think that's an interesting point that he had never been to his gun emplacement.

Mr. Sykes: . . . Oh, no. I'd never seen . . .

Mrs. Sykes: . . . by the time the war started.

Dr. Marcello: You'd never been there.

Mrs. Sykes: No, we had just been assigned these guns, so we took them out right there at Schofield Barracks on the artillery range, and we would set them up on what they called the field mounts, and it was an all-day process

setting them up and taking them down in daylight. It was a tremendous job because of the weight. These were massive hunks of metal that we had to fit together.

Mrs. Sykes: Isn't it correct that when this gun was in place it could fire on either side of the island?

Mr. Sykes: Yes, now that is on the permanent mount that we placed them on eventually.

Dr. Marcello: Well, this is kind of the purpose of a howitzer in many cases, is it not? Were these howitzers?

Mr. Sykes: Yes, they were howitzers, 240 howitzers. The shells weighed 360 pounds, and they had a range if I remember now, of around 20,000 yards, and that's quite a ways. We did place them in a U-shaped valley where they were protected from any direct fire. Nothing but aircraft could get to us, or other howitzers, so we could fire over the mountain range into the ocean on submarines, and we could tear up any airfield or landing strip.

Mrs. Sykes: It is a grim fact that he did have to take that gun up the night of December 7th in the blackout.

Dr. Marcello: You've mentioned that you had ^{British} ~~French~~ 75's, and you had these World War I vintage fieldpieces. Just how well was the Army prepared? Suppose there had been some sort of an attack on Pearl Harbor, I mean an assault, let's say. Just what could the Army have done there?

Mr. Sykes: We could of fired those 75's . . . we could have done

a lot of damage with them because we did know them, we had shot them a lot, and they had always (chuckle) held together, and we just kept firing them and firing them. I think that they would have lasted until we could have gotten support if that had been the case. But we had left the 105 howitzers at Fort Sill. We had been trained on them. We knew what they were, and it was quite a letdown to come down and get the ~~French~~^{British} 75's. But for shorter range and smaller projectiles, less explosives, it was a good gun but not like the 105. The 105 was a dandy!

Dr. Marcello: And that of course eventually became more or less the backbone of the Army.

Mr. Sykes: Yes. In just a short time all 75's disappeared, and nothing but 105's were on the island.

Dr. Marcello: You also mentioned that a good deal of your activity revolved around Schofield Barracks. Describe the physical layout of Schofield Barracks if you can.

Mr. Sykes: Oh, it was a beautiful place with bougainvillea on the houses. It's a beautiful vine over there, purple or lavender color, and there were trees all up and down the avenues. You can't describe it because it was laid out in such an odd way. There were parade grounds, I'll say that, because they always had to have a parade, it seemed like. And every time new

officers would come, the wives would get there, and then the wives would be in the reviewing stand, and we would have to have a parade.

Mrs. Sykes: An "aloha" parade, we called it.

Mr. Sykes: Right.

Mrs. Sykes: Whether you were coming or going, we called it an "aloha" parade.

Mr. Sykes: Everyone had to have an "aloha" parade. They were a lot of fun.

Mrs. Sykes: Schofield was an old post. The quarters were old, but they were very nice, and we had friends living on the post. We hoped, of course, to get Army quarters later on. In fact, we had just gone to Honolulu to purchase a lot of rattan furniture to furnish our quarters, but (chuckle) then the attack occurred.

Dr. Marcello: Oh, you mean even despite these plush surroundings that you had at the beach, you still wanted to get closer to Honolulu just for the convenience.

Mrs. Sykes: Well, we wanted to get a home for ourselves, of course, eventually. We expected to be there quite awhile.

Dr. Marcello: Was there housing on the post itself?

Mr. Sykes: Oh, yes.

Mrs. Sykes: Yes.

Mr. Sykes: It was located close to where the Bachelor Officer Quarters were.

Dr. Marcello: Was that pretty good housing?

- Mrs. Sykes: Yes, it was. The Army personnel was building up tremendously, you see. That's why we were called back into the service, and there were not enough quarters to house all the Army personnel at that point.
- Dr. Marcello: About what percentage of the Army was at Schofield Barracks? Was the bulk of it there?
- Mr. Sykes: Oh, no. That was the artillery post. There was infantry there. There were two infantry divisions. The Army's changed completely since then. At that time there were infantry divisions, and artillery was part of those infantry divisions, a certain part, under the command of the infantry commander, and he would call for artillery support whenever he wanted it. We were to be sure that we could get into position and give him this support. So we were an integrated group, I guess, with the . . . let's see, there was the 25th, the 24th Infantry Division, and the 1st, I believe. I believe there were three infantry divisions there, and artillery made up part of these divisions. Of course, the division was a self-contained unit, you see. It had its own quartermaster, that is, a division that is moving. Now things have changed a lot since the time I'm talking about. In that day they could just move everything they needed. Every man did his job, and that way we could keep moving.
- Dr. Marcello: What'd the wives do while these guys had this duty on base?

Mr. Sykes: Swam!

Mrs. Sykes: We had a wonderful time! We'd do a lot of sightseeing. We'd go into Honolulu shopping. We'd go into the base--the Army Post, it was called then--and do our shopping. We took hula lessons at the Officers' Club. We also took a Red Cross course. We were glad later on, as it happened, that we'd had that, and we used to go in once a week to take that course, and then we'd wait anxiously for the husbands to get back at night, and we'd have our swim and visit with friends.

Dr. Marcello: Were prices relatively moderate in the Hawaiian Islands?

Mrs. Sykes: No, they were high.

Dr. Marcello: They were still high even then, also?

Mrs. Sykes: They were high, yes. It was not high, of course, compared with now, but everything had to come from the mainland, so prices were high.

Dr. Marcello: Well, describe one of these evenings. Awhile ago you mentioned that usually the evenings were spent, perhaps, swimming early in the evenings, and then later on there was a party or a ball or a dance someplace on the base.

Mrs. Sykes: Yes, that's right. We'd go back to this base. There were many parties, as Red said, especially when anybody was coming or leaving. And the general would have his party, and then the Officers' Club would have their party, and we'd go to the movie on the base a lot, and

then a lot of evenings we'd spend making these formal calls, and then the officers would return those calls on the beach. Our social life was simple, of course, on the beach. That was the part that was the most fun, and we enjoyed it the most. And then we had other friends who had houses up and down the beach, and we'd go to visit them, and then we had some friends who were stationed in Honolulu, and we'd go in to visit them. We had one gala night at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel, and we were glad we got that in.

- Mr. Sykes: There was one thing we did that was real interesting. We would go out in the evening with flashlights and take our shoes off and walk in the water in the waves at the edge of the beach and collect these glass balls that broke . . . that would float over from Japan. They were floats used in fish nets, and when a storm would come over there, some of these glass balls would break and float for thousands of miles, and finally a few of them would wash up on the shore.
- Mrs. Sykes: They'd go up to the Aleutian Islands, I understand.
- Mr. Sykes: Yes, and come clear back down. And we had a lot of fun . . .
- Mrs. Sykes: . . . In fact, that's what we were doing on the sixth of December. That's how we spent that Saturday night. We often think about that. If we'd been looking the right way, we might have seen the lights a long way off and

what was coming on, but that's where we were the night before the attack. We were out covering the beach looking for these fishing floats that were floating in from Japan.

Dr. Marcello: Is there anything else from the social life and so on that you remember and that ought to be a part of the record?

Mr. Sykes: Well, I had to wear a tux to a boxing match, and I didn't feel like standing up and yelling for a fellow in a tux.

Mrs. Sykes: Well, we had a wonderful time. Of course, our association was almost completely with Army personnel. We had had no opportunity to meet Honolulu people and, of course, we did after the war started. I worked with them and got to know the island people very well, but up until that point I suppose if we had just served our time without a war, we would not have met any island people.

Dr. Marcello: Did you ever get to see Pearl Harbor itself very often?

Mrs. Sykes: No, we didn't ever go . . . we had a good friend, my high school friend, oh, I guess the husband and the wife also had been in high school with me, and he was an officer on the Oklahoma. And we had had a date to visit with them and have dinner on the ship three weeks before the attack, but Red was sick and in the hospital then, and we didn't get to go and I was awfully sorry. But

we didn't ever visit at Pearl Harbor before the attack, as I remember. But we could always see the ships, and we could see Pearl Harbor and see all the ships that were in the harbor as we would go into Honolulu.

Dr. Marcello: Now you say that you did get to Pearl on several occasions?

Mr. Sykes: I know one night I was . . . there were two naval officers that lived next door to us out on the beach, and they asked us if we would like to go out on the PT Boats with them for a mock attack. And we jumped at the chance, and three of us went on this one PT Boat, and we just had a wonderful time. It was quite an experience to be traveling along at forty or fifty miles an hour in those boats and have one of them change course and look back and see one climbing right up on your stern because maybe they didn't see you because of mist or something. But nothing unusual happened, and we just had a wonderful experience out there. At night we had a sneak attack on some destroyers, and we went in with the motors muffled and idling. We were going along probably five miles an hours. And we could see the silhouettes of the destroyers on the horizon. We got in closer and they opened those motors up and we took off--each one headed for a destroyer--and just about that time the destroyers' searchlight picked us up. I'm not enough of a naval man to know whether we would have gotten in or if they would have gotten us,

but it probably would have been fifty-fifty on it. The torpedoes that they had on board could have been released and also the destroyers could have, I guess, knocked us out of the water with their deck guns. But it was quite an experience, and we were glad to have had it.

Dr. Marcello: Other than this contact that you had here, did you have very many business contacts with naval personnel?

Mr. Sykes: No.

Dr. Marcello: This makes up a very interesting question, it seems to me. What sort of a liaison was there between the Army and the Navy? Obviously there should have been some sort of coordination, it would seem to me.

Mr. Sykes: There was, but I wasn't at that level. (chuckle) The liaison was in the Ala Moana Crater. Now this was an underground, bombproof place in solid rock where the Army and the Navy both had their nerve centers. Now, we had G-2 and G-3 in there. G-3 was the action end of the Army, and G-2 was the information end of it. Now down the hall probably sixty or seventy or a hundred feet, I would say, there was the Navy intelligence. If we wanted something we would either get on the intercom and ask them for confirmation of it, or if we wanted to, we could just walk down the hall and talk to them about it.

Dr. Marcello: Now this brings up something interesting, also. How often did they ever come to you for information.

Mr. Sykes: Now this is all after Pearl Harbor. This is two years later that I was in this position. We passed information back and forth all the time. There wasn't any problem at all. The only problem that we had was in getting the Navy to . . . we still had the Navy Air Corps and the Army Air Corps, and if we had an unidentified plane coming in or a group of planes coming in, sometimes the Navy wouldn't claim that they were their planes until it got down to a pretty . . . it was kind of touch and go. One night I was called back to the battery command post, and the general said, "If they come any closer and no one claims them, fire!" And I passed that information to the Navy intelligence. They immediately claimed them. They were some C-54's coming in from the mainland with naval personnel.

Dr. Marcello: Now you say that the intelligence posts and the nerve centers were at Ala Moana Crater at the time of the attack.

Mr. Sykes: This was after the attack. Out in the field we didn't know about a lot of the things that went on in higher echelons.

Dr. Marcello: One of the things I was getting at here is that I've read on several occasions that in many instances there was a lack of liaison. And it wasn't because of any rivalry or anything like that, but it was mainly because that both the Army and the Navy considered each other

professionals. And it was kind of like unprofessional for, let's say, somebody in the Army to say, "Well, what are you doing over in the Navy about such and such and so and so." Now each, I think, assumed in many cases that the other one was doing its job, that they both were professionals, and that they were doing their job. And I was wondering if, perhaps, this was the sort of attitude that maybe you as an officer had. Or did you ever have the attitude, you know, "Well, the Navy doesn't know what it's doing" or something like that.

Mr. Sykes: No. I felt like they knew what they were doing as a whole, but, of course, every organization is made up of individuals, and some of the individuals were more cooperative than others, and vice versa with us, but when you get up into the higher echelons I feel like that the Army had so much to do itself that they took care of themselves. They did their work and if there was some time left over, then they would talk with the Navy. That's just my opinion, and probably it was that way with the Navy.

Dr. Marcello: Like I say, in other words each assumed that the other knew its business and was doing what it was supposed to do.

Mr. Sykes: Right.

Dr. Marcello: Well, how about Pearl Harbor itself? Was it ever off limits to anybody?

Mr. Sykes: Oh, yes. You had to have a pass to get in there or be in uniform, and even in uniform you had to show your ID card.

Mrs. Sykes: And there was signs saying that you couldn't take pictures at certain places.

Mr. Sykes: Oh, no. You couldn't take your camera in.

Dr. Marcello: This was even several months before December 7.

Mrs. Sykes: Yes.

Mr. Sykes: Well, I think it was that way all the time as far as I can remember. You could go into Honolulu Harbor, however, and take pictures, but of course, you wouldn't get anything except merchant ships, Pearl was off limits as far as a camera was concerned. And the workmen who went in there all had to have badges.

Dr. Marcello: I assume that Pearl was just a beehive of activity during this period. Is that correct?

Mr. Sykes: Yes, at times. I only saw it a few times, and at those times it was busy particularly when an aircraft carrier came in or big ships. The sailors had a lot of work to do cleaning the ship up and getting it ready. Then they'd get their shore leave and . . .

Mrs. Sykes: You'd see lots of Navy personnel.

Dr. Marcello: Did you ever get to see Battleship Row? What were your impressions of it?

Mr. Sykes: Oh, (chuckle) that was quite a sight to see all those ships lined up there. For a person not used to seeing battleships, it was really something to behold. Tremendous guns! They made the guns that I had look small by comparison. Sixteen-inch guns shot projectiles that weighed . . . I don't even know what they weighed. I guess a ton or more of explosives. But they were something to see.

I remember something that I did see one time. We had an alert. I don't recall what it was, but there was an alert called. And I had to go to the battle command post, and on the way up there I saw three Naval ships. One was a battlegroup, and two of them were cruisers. And now it comes back to me. The rumors or the whatever caused the alert was the Japanese or some Navy--I think it was the Japanese Navy--was going to send ships in to attack Oahu. I don't believe they named Pearl Harbor. They just were going to attack Oahu. And I did see those three out there in the distance. The covers were off the guns, and they were ready for action, and you could tell that they could take care of themselves. It was quite a sight to see. I had used field glasses, and I watched them from my high observation post. And I enjoyed it since there was no action that came from it.

Dr. Marcello: Is there anything else that you recall from the physical standpoint of Pearl Harbor itself?

Mr. Sykes: No, I was not there enough to be able to tell you much about Pearl Harbor itself.

Dr. Marcello: Awhile ago you mentioned an alert. How often did you have alerts? When you first got there, how often did you have alerts? Let's say within the first month or two.

Mr. Sykes: Probably, I think, in the third month we might have had an alert. It's hard to remember. We had several alerts. But most of them--the alerts--were . . . the infantry was more concerned with the alerts more than we were. And that's why we didn't participate so much.

Mrs. Sykes: Of course, the alerts were just for practice not because . . .

Mr. Sykes: Right. We had two for sabotage. One of them was a matter of one day, and one was, I think, for several hours.

Mrs. Sykes: They were frequent enough that we were not at all surprised when they would call one on Sunday mornings. We were chagrined but not at all surprised.

Dr. Marcello: Now when you say they were frequent enough, how many were there? Were there two a week or three a week?

Mrs. Sykes: No. I would say once a month at the most.

Mr. Sykes: Yes. They would say, "The 24th Division is on alert today," or something like that. It wouldn't be the whole post. One time it was, but that was unusual.

Dr. Marcello: What was the usual feeling or the usual attitude of the military personnel when there was an alert? Was it taken seriously?

- Mr. Sykes: We took it seriously, but we didn't like it. We'd rather go on with our everyday activities rather than have to . . .
- Mrs. Sykes: We certainly didn't like it if it interfered with our social life. (chuckle)
- Dr. Marcello: Of course not.
- Mrs. Sykes: That was the wives point of view.
- Dr. Marcello: I see. Well, what did you do on an alert?
- Mr. Sykes: Well, I have to speak for the artillery.
- Dr. Marcello: Yes, I'm speaking of you personally.
- Mr. Sykes: Of course, we didn't participate in any corralling of individuals or anything like that. We would protect all of our hardware--guns, trucks, everything that we had. We did have rifles and pistols and things like that. We would see that they were all accounted for and stored and that the trucks were out where no one could bother them. And all explosives were guarded. In fact, there were underground shelters where they were stored, and the guard would be doubled on that.
- Dr. Marcello: How about Wheeler Field. Did you ever get to see Wheeler Field very much?
- Mr. Sykes: Oh, yes. We went right by it a lot of times going to Honolulu.
- Mrs. Sykes: It was adjacent to Schofield Barracks. They were virtually part of the same post.

Mr. Sykes: It was under a different command, but you could hardly tell when you left Schofield and went into Wheeler.

Dr. Marcello: Now were these planes always in the process of maneuvers and this sort of thing, or was there quite a bit of activity at Wheeler Field from what you could observe?

Mr. Sykes: A lot of fighter plane activity. Now this is where the P-40's and the P-36's were. Now possibly some light bombers were there, too, but I can't recall now. But most of the bombers were at Hickam because of the size of the runways and the area that they had for landing and taking off and storage. But Wheeler was the main fighter base. They had several others. Actually I saw P-40's land on the golf course. They made those boys land on the golf course and also on this little Haleiwa strip right there by our house. It was a very narrow and short strip, but they never had any problems there. They'd set them down, and they'd take them off. And they took great delight in catching us out on the beach and just coming in about nine or ten feet above us, you know. And everyone would just lie down flat because you just didn't know whether there was danger or not. You just couldn't help it. Those fellows were good in those P-40's. There's no doubt about it, but they sure did make us mad sometimes. There were a lot

of Navy planes, too. Kaneohe was the Naval air station.

Mrs. Sykes: Ewa was the Marine air station.

Mr. Sykes: That's right, Ewa was Marine. That's it. That's where the Marines were. Then they had the F-6F's and the S-BD's, I think, at Kaneohe.

Dr. Marcello: At this particular time, did the air bases that you were able to observe have all the planes lined up in those nice neat rows like we were told they were at the time of the attack?

Mr. Sykes: No. They had them in revetments. Each one had its revetment. These revetments offered three-sided protection. And these were just all around, and I never did stop and count, but I just suppose that each plane had a place for protection from an explosion. But now these were outside or away from the landing strip. So that would put them out where in the event of sabotage they could easily be damaged much more easily than if they were out on the runway in plain sight.

Dr. Marcello: Well, this was the point I was leading up to, and again one of the things I'm trying to do here--this is my own belief--that I'm trying to downplay the idea that there was some sort of a plot or some sort of a plan that this whole thing was set up. Those planes were lined up for a specific purpose, and like you say it was

because it was much easier to guard against sabotage when you could look down the whole line and guard these planes rather than when they were in these revetments. I assume they were using sandbags or something like that.

Mr. Sykes: It was dirt piled higher than the planes so that if a bomb exploded on one plane, it wouldn't damage the other plane except from falling debris.

Dr. Marcello: But on the other hand, it was pretty easy, like you say, for a saboteur to just sneak around the corner and lob some explosives or something in one of those revetments.

Mr. Sykes: Yes. That could be done because, as I say, they were out on the perimeter of the airfield. They had to be because of the activities. Those fighters were pretty hot, as they said, and it took some navigating to land them and take off.

Dr. Marcello: Well, how about Hickam Field. Did you ever get to see Hickam Field at all?

Mr. Sykes: Yes. I (chuckle) was down there just prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor. I got sick while I was down there. I was in charge of unloading a boatload of lumber. And I got sick about the second night, and they sent me to the hospital in Hickam, and I said I wanted to go back to Schofield Hospital, and I did. But I did get to see Hickam. It had all new buildings,

a brand new hospital, and I would have been the first patient in it if I had gone. But I wasn't interested in being the first patient or the last one. So I went on to Schofield. But they did have nice quarters and nice buildings, good runways, good hangers.

Everything was first class as far as I could tell. And they kept everything just spic and span, you might say.

Dr. Marcello: I would assume that at Hickam Field the planes were lined up also. Is that correct?

Mr. Sykes: Now I don't know.

Dr. Marcello: Now that we've covered most of the background material and so on about what you did prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor, let me just throw out this general question to both of you. As you got closer and closer and closer to December 7th, did you detect any changes occurring on the island, that is, as far as the military aspects are concerned? In other words, did the alerts increase, were people a little bit more edgy, did the restrictions increase, was there anything of this sort? Was there a curtailment of social activities? Did you see any noticeable changes at all? Try not to place yourself in 1971, but try and think back no more than a week prior to the attack. But can you think of any noticeable changes that took place in that respect?

- Mrs. Sykes: No, I can't at all. As I mentioned a little earlier, we had been invited to dinner on the Oklahoma just a week before the attack. So I presume the social life was as usual. We didn't go because my husband was sick. We were busy making our plans for Christmas, and we had already mailed all our packages home for Christmas. We were waiting for a boatload of Christmas trees to come from the mainland.
- Dr. Marcello: Did you ever have any contact with any Army intelligence people? Anybody from G-2?
- Mr. Sykes: No. I do recall that there was a rumor that there was going to be an alert about four days before December 7th. And then I believe this was put off. We didn't know why, but I guess about December 6th they did have an alert against sabotage, and that's why the planes were placed. And that's the only thing that I can think of. There was no uneasiness or anything like that.
- Dr. Marcello: Was this an actual alert on December 6th, or was it simply a practice alert?
- Mr. Sykes: No. It was an actual alert. Someone had heard something evidently. I don't know what it was, but it was an alert because they had moved the planes in where they could be easily watched.
- Dr. Marcello: Here again you're speaking of the planes at Wheeler Field.

Mr. Sykes: Right.

Dr. Marcello: Wheeler was close to Schofield where most of your activities took place. But, again, generally speaking--and this is something I want to reemphasize-- it was mainly business-as-usual even right up to December 7th, practically. Your routine didn't really change a whole lot.

Mr. Sykes: No. When an alert came we thought, "Well, another alert." And that's just about all. We would do our job on the alert, and that was it. They'd say, "All clear now," and we would go on about our regular duty. And we thought, "Well, just another alert," although the artillery was not alerted.

Dr. Marcello: Well, how close were you keeping up with world events?

Mr. Sykes: We had a newspaper. We would read the newspaper every morning and evening.

Mrs. Sykes: Oh, we were following that, yes. From a very personal point of view because while we didn't expect an attack there, we knew that if the war would break out that we could be affected immediately.

Dr. Marcello: Did you ever talk much about it, or was it something that you cared to put in the back of your mind?

Mrs. Sykes: No. We talked about it, especially about this business of sightseeing, you know. And the advice of the old Army women was, "Now see everything you want to see on

this island because you don't know how long you'll be here." So there was a general feeling, I think, among all the military that there was going to be some change but never did I ever hear anyone say that we were in any danger at all on the island.

Dr. Marcello: Again, if there was going to be any danger, all eyes were turned elsewhere. Perhaps the Philippines was considered a danger spot.

Mr. Sykes: We thought that any attack would be on them first. It seemed the logical thing to us at that time.

Dr. Marcello: This was really true in a way because they did hit the Philippines practically at the same time that they hit Pearl Harbor. Nobody was really wrong, but like you pointed out, nobody ever expected that they were ever going to hit the Philippines. Let's go back to December 6th. This was a Saturday, of course. What was it like on December 6th? Can you remember your routine on the 6th?

Mrs. Sykes: Except for that evening, I know it was a beautiful day. The weather was lovely. I can't remember any bad weather that we had anytime. It was just a beautiful place, and it was an idyllic life, it really was. We were on a beautiful side of the island, not really a busy side of the island. We didn't see a lot of traffic along the beach and never any tourists. There

were never very many people on the beach. We'd see Japanese fishing people go by occasionally. The Japanese were great fisherman, and we'd see them going by our beach once in a while but not too often. And as I remember that night, the Navy friends next door came over and had dinner with us. We did spend the evening at our beach house. And then we left to go. The couples had divided up, and we left to go to our different parts of the island and walk along the beach and look at these fishing floats.

Dr. Marcello: Were you living still fifty miles away from Honolulu, or had you moved to new quarters now.

Mrs. Sykes: No. We still lived in the beach house.

Dr. Marcello: I see. You were there the whole time then, practically.

Mrs. Sykes: We lived there six months; we would have been there nearly six months when the attack came.

Mr. Sykes: We were actually moving in the next month.

Mrs. Sykes: Yes, we were planning to move in the next month. But we were still living in this beach house, and that was about fifteen miles from Schofield Barracks. Schofield Barracks was thirty miles from Honolulu, and we were another fifteen or twenty miles.

Dr. Marcello: Now was this north of Honolulu?

Mrs. Sykes: Yes, it was.

Dr. Marcello: In other words, were you more or less kind of on the path that the Japanese planes took when they came in? They came in from the north.

Mrs. Sykes: Yes, we really were. Wouldn't you say we were? They came in from the north.

Mr. Sykes: But they went over the mountains on the other side.

Mrs. Sykes: Did they?

Mr. Sykes: Yes, they didn't come . . .

Mrs. Sykes: So we didn't hear them.

Dr. Marcello: In other words, they didn't come directly overhead or anything like that.

Mr. Sykes: Oh, no. I would have heard them because I did hear them later, and I would have noticed the engines. I don't know why I can tell one engine from another, but I can, or could.

Dr. Marcello: What else did you do on the night of December 6th? You said that you had had dinner with another couple, and then you had visited various other officers and families in the area.

Mrs. Sykes: There were three couples and we were all living in the same beach house. It was a large house with a little guest cottage, and Red and I lived in it, but we all ate our meals together.

Mrs. Sykes: And we went out and hunted these glass balls, these floats, you know. Then I think we came in about 1:30

or 2:00 that night and went to bed.

Dr. Marcello: Now here again, this was essentially the routine.
There was nothing out of the ordinary.

Mrs. Sykes: Not in the least.

Dr. Marcello: Do you think the Japanese picked the greatest time in
the world for an attack, a Sunday morning?

Mr. Sykes: Oh, absolutely!

Mrs. Sykes: I think they deliberately had that figured and beautifully.

Dr. Marcello: Why?

Mr. Sykes: Well, we called it the "Pineapple Army," but be that as
it may, I think all of the Army and Navy in that day and
time, in those circumstances, had the weekend off, and
the Navy personnel had shore leave, and the Army
personnel had leave from their quarters and barracks
away from the post, and they were just scattered. An
attack at this time would create havoc even if it didn't
do as much damage as they did because the people just
couldn't get to their posts to perform the jobs that they
were supposed to in the event of an attack.

Mrs. Sykes: I can't recall you ever having duty on Sunday for any
reason, do you?

Mr. Sykes: No, we didn't.

Dr. Marcello: Well, this is something, as I said, that I wanted to
get into the record for two reasons: (a) like you
mentioned, a lot of people would have probably been
away from ships and (b) I would assume that anybody

who had been out on that Saturday night--especially among the enlisted personnel perhaps, or even a good many of the officers, I suppose also--and who had come back onto base in the wee hours of the morning probably were in no condition to fight at the crack of dawn or at eight o'clock or nine o'clock on Sunday morning. In other words, I'm sure there was a lot of partying and parties and so on that went on on a Saturday night as would be the case anywhere.

Mr. Sykes: Right.

Mrs. Sykes: That's right.

Dr. Marcello: Well, nothing else happened then on that Saturday night?

Mrs. Sykes: That was everything. You know, this may be like another accident. They say your memories before it are blotted out. (chuckle) Really, I can't believe that we have ever discussed what we did the night before except for finding those glass balls and their identity with the Japanese. Other than that, you know, we never thought very much about what we did that day before.

Dr. Marcello: Okay, let's talk about Sunday morning, and I suppose we can really get into the meat of the interview at this particular point. Mrs. Sykes, why don't you start off.

Mrs. Sykes: Well, we had just gotten up for a late breakfast. I presume it was about eight o'clock.

Mr. Sykes: Not really. It was a little earlier than that, I believe. I was up earlier.

Mrs. Sykes: But we girls were in cooking breakfast, and we looked out, and coming in from the road were three command cars, and my first reaction was "Oh, an alert on Sunday morning. How unfair! How could this possibly happen!" So we called our husbands, and they said the same thing. Well, they left to get ready right away, and we went ahead and finished the breakfast for we had no indication that it was anything else. And finally the driver came up to the door and said to me, "Does the lieutenant know that Pearl Harbor has been attacked?" And, of course, I was just aghast! I couldn't even believe it. I asked him to repeat what he said. He said, "Just step out here and look!" And he pointed up in the sky and said, "Those are Jap planes." And at that time there were planes high above, and they were just circling around. He said, "You see the Rising Sun there? Those are Jap planes." It was just unbelievable! I just couldn't imagine that it could be, but like anything else, you just immediately decide what you have to do next. I didn't discuss it with my husband or any of the other women with theirs. We just knew that we had to get ready to go on the post with them, so we immediately began to throw things together to take in. And do you want to tell anything

about your reaction at the beginning there?

Mr. Sykes: Well, there was a little biplane before that . . . I got up early. I was the early riser usually in the group, and I got up early and went out to try to find the paper, and there wasn't any Sunday paper, and I thought "Golly, nothing to read until you don't know when." And then I heard some explosions, and I thought, "Well, are they having service practice today," that is, artillery firing you know. And I heard some more explosions, just very distant. We were a long way off, but we could hear them. I don't remember if the wind was bringing them to us or not. I just happened to think of that. It possibly did. But anyway, then I went in and got Ruth to fix breakfast, and I remember she was fixing me an egg, and this command car pulled up in the yard, just flew through the gate and up in the yard, and the driver was as white as a sheet. And I said, "What's the matter?" And he said, "Doesn't the lieutenant know that we've been attacked?" And I said, "You mean we're on alert?" He said, "It's worse than that! It's the real thing!" And we were just dumbfounded. We just kind of mulled it over in our minds, I guess, for a minute or two and

then we got the others up. I don't believe they were up. We got them up and by that time another command car was in the yard, and then the planes came over. In my memory the Jap planes dived on the two fighter planes at Haleiwa Airport, which was just about 300 yards south of us right on the beach.

Dr. Marcello: Now were these fighter planes that were there?

Mr. Sykes: These were the two fighter planes that were sent out from Wheeler Field to go out there, and the mechanics evidently stayed with them. The Japanese came right over, and I could tell from the sound of the engines that they were not our planes. I couldn't describe the sound at all, but I knew they weren't the plane engines that I was used to hearing because they went right over our house every day, and you could distinguish very easily as to what plane it was almost. And we looked up and saw them, and you could almost see the pilots looking over at you. And then we got under cover until they got away, and, of course, everyone thought that every Japanese plane was going to attack him, you know, but they were looking for bigger game, of course. Anyway we jumped in the car. We got in our car, and I don't know what the other two did.

Mrs. Sykes: They all took their private cars. The three officers were in different batteries. That's how they happened

to send three cars, but we decided not to go with their car because all the wives . . . of course, they didn't want to leave us on the beach, so I remember getting in the car then and starting down the highway, and we were driving so fast that I said we'd be killed before we ever get there. Then we could see all the troops coming out. You could see troop carriers.

Mr. Sykes: No, weapons carriers.

Mrs. Sykes: Weapon carriers. We'd meet them coming out, and I made the remark to Red that those men looked frightened to death. I thought they were all just going to pieces. They were looking up at the sky like this. I said, "What are they afraid of now?" And Red said, "They're looking for strafing on the road." And that had not occurred to me that that was a hazard. And, of course, they had been strafing the roads there.

Dr. Marcello: And there you were amongst all these weapons carriers.

Mrs. Sykes: That's right, that's right! And I hadn't realized at all the danger we were in, and I was worried about the fact that they seemed to be so frightened by it, and I wondered if they would be able to stand up to their task.

So we got into Schofield Barracks in about fifteen minutes, but maybe it didn't even take us that

long, and I drove Red immediately to his headquarters and let him out and didn't know when I'd see him again, if ever, and I didn't know where to go, and he didn't know what to tell me, so I drove immediately to the field artillery officers' quarters to my friend's house. And when I got there it was a completely deserted section. Here were all these officers' quarters and not a living soul anyplace. I went into her house--the door was standing open--and I could see that the covers had been jerked off the beds and everything in great disarray. She had two small children, but there was nobody there, and I looked up and down the street, and I couldn't see a living soul, and that was a moment of terror. I didn't know what to do or where to go, and I couldn't imagine what had happened to the people. So I went to the phone and called the operator, and I said, "Do you have any idea where the women are supposed to go, where they're taking the artillery women?" "No, no idea." So I went on outside then, and I looked down the street to the end of the street, and I saw women getting in a car. So I drove down there, and it was the wife of my husband's commander, Mrs. Keliher, and I saw who it was. And I said, "Where are you going, Mrs. Keliher?" And she said, "I have friends in Wahiawa." This was a little Japanese village up on a

hill. She said, "I believe we can go up in the hills there, and I believe that'll be a good place to go." So we started out and she said, "I believe we ought to get gasoline in our cars because that'll be a hard thing to get." So we stopped at a filling station and got gasoline. And we'd just started on the road up in the hills, and we went through this little town and started up in the hills, and she couldn't seem to find this house she was looking for, but about that time a woman, white woman, came out in the road, and she flagged us down. And she said, "I'm Mrs. McEldowney and some of the Air Corps people are coming to my house, so come on in here. I'll be glad to have you." And this was at the Wahiawa Agricultural Experimental Station, and she was a woman equal to the task because she'd been through the Boxer Rebellion in China, and she was a great organizer, and so she took us all over like an Army general. And when I got there, there were about fifteen women whose husbands were officers on Wheeler Field and Mrs. Davidson, the wife of the commanding general of Wheeler Field, Mrs. Howard Davidson, was there with her young children. And as we went into the house then, Mr. McEldowney was listening to the radio, and he said, "The rumor is that they are landing on the north shore, and I'll go down and find an overhanging

bank. So he ran down into the valley looking for an overhanging bank. And I heard voices yelling in the next field, and I thought, "That's it. They're here already." It turned out that the men were calling the cattle and trying to round them up, for this was about ten o'clock, I guess.

Dr. Marcello: I'm sure there were all sorts of rumors.

Mrs. Sykes: Oh, all sorts of rumors! They even said they were landing at the north shore. So we went back in the house then, and Mrs. Davidson then was trying to organize us, and she told us the story of the great destruction at Wheeler Field, and she mentioned the fact that sabotage had been the order for the day, and the planes had all been bunched, and that's why they were so vulnerable.

Dr. Marcello: Now had the attack been completed by this time? Or was the attack still going on at Pearl itself?

Mrs. Sykes: No, I think probably it had been completed, don't you, because I think the whole attack only lasted about two hours.

Dr. Marcello: There were two waves of planes as I recall.

Mr. Sykes: I think the primary attack had been completed as far as the bombing was concerned. I think strafing of military personnel and implacements was taking place because I saw . . . I'll tell you in a minute about the

fighters that I saw.

Mrs. Sykes: So we spent the day there then. It seemed to me the day went quickly although we were so apprehensive, and the only person here I'd ever seen before was Mrs. Keliher. So then the night came very quickly, it seemed, and the prospect of the blackout which was a very ominous thing, and the minute it got dark we could see the fires burning. The whole sky then was lighted up in Honolulu, and we could see the ships burning, and we were getting a radio communication all that time. They were telling us what they could about what they knew. Of course, they didn't know too much of the details. So we prepared then to spend the night. We fixed some kind of meal--I don't remember what now--during the blackout, and I suspect there were twenty people there, and we didn't take off our clothes, and we lay down on the floor and tried to sleep. But then three or four times during that night they got us up and said, "We hear planes. We'll all go down under the house." So we'd get up in the dark and we'd start . . . so many of the houses in Honolulu are built on a hillside. This house was built on a hillside and was up on high stilts, so there was sort of an overhang, and we could get under the house. So we'd slide down this steep bank and go down there under the house, and we'd stay down there,

just huddle under it, and we'd hear planes and expect any minute to see strafing or hear bombs, but we didn't so we'd go back up. I remember there was one woman who had a tiny baby. She was the only one. And after the first trip down she said she couldn't make that trip down any more. She'd just have to stay on top and take her chances, and she had a Japanese nurse with her, and there was a lot of talk about that. There was a lot of objection to the Japanese woman being there. Of course, she'd been the woman's nurse all this time. And then, too, there was a lot of apprehension about our chances of being out here in the middle of this Japanese town. So there was a teenage girl who was visiting the Davidson family from Washington. But she was an aggressive sort of person, and she just said she would take charge. Then we had one man with us besides Mr. McEldowney. There was a striker. That was the name given the Army personnel who worked, you know, for a fee as a general's aide. No, not an aide, he was a household servant, really. But the general had left him there with his family. So the striker and the teenage girl took turns standing guard with a pistol. We had one pistol. And they sat on the porch all night. We didn't sleep because we all were very nervous about what could happen from the

Japanese people who lived in the surrounding area.

Dr. Marcello: All this time you were more or less out of communication with your husband. He didn't know where you were. You didn't know where he was.

Mrs. Sykes: Well, I didn't have any idea.

Dr. Marcello: You didn't have any idea at all where he was . . .

Mrs. Sykes: . . . where he was. Now he said that he knew from Colonel Keliher, his commanding officer, and he said that he knew. He said that I went by to tell him that. Now I can't remember that, but he said that I did go by to tell him where I was.

Mr. Sykes: He said that you were with her. That was all. I didn't know where you were, though.

Mrs. Sykes: So three or four times then during that night, we went through this long trip sliding down this hillside to get down under the house. And the next morning then Mrs. Davidson was equal to her task as a general's wife. She took us under her wing, and another very thoughtful thing that she did . . . of course, we didn't know what hazard there would be to leaving the house where we were, and all of us were, of course, more concerned about what our families were thinking and what agony they had gone through, and we were all so anxious to let them know that we were safe. So she said, "I will go to the radio station," although we all felt that that was a hazardous place to go because we

felt like it might be under attack. She said, "I'll take the name of everyone here and your husbands' names, and give me your address." And she took the name of your husband and children, and she said, "I'll send them all to my mother in Dayton, Ohio, and she'll relay the message." And she did. When our families got messages from Mrs. Parnell in Dayton, Ohio, they had no idea how she happened to be involved, but she did send them. Then the next few days, because I had had this Red Cross course and because I didn't have any children, I went in with several others in that same capacity, and we went into Wheeler Field, and we helped with some of the nursing there. The hospitals were already filled, and the Officer's Club had set up a temporary hospital, and we worked in the kitchen and helped them as volunteer nurses as best we could.

Dr. Marcello: What did Wheeler Field look like?

Mrs. Sykes: Well, we could see some evidence of the bombing. We could see the planes, but we didn't drive around any. You see, (chuckle) we restricted our movements as much as we could, so I couldn't see much of the damage that was right there at the field. So we stayed there five days then, and I, of course, wondered what had happened to all my friends, and I found out later that they had a very difficult time because a pre-war

plan had been put into operation. They loaded all the Army dependents onto buses and waited until after dark and then sent them into Honolulu. It was a five hour trip in the blackout, and they were quartered in schools. So I felt like I had a better place to stay.

Dr. Marcello: Now all during this time had you ever seen your husband at all?

Mrs. Sykes: No, no, not at all. Then finally about the third day, I believe he called me then.

Mr. Sykes: Well, I was in that wreck.

Mrs. Sykes: Yes, you told me you'd been in a wreck, and I was upset at the time (chuckle). Do you want to tell him about your first day?

Dr. Marcello: Mr. Sykes, let's just go back a little bit again and more or less begin where your wife had started. The command car came out to the cottage and was taking you back to your unit, I assume.

Mr. Sykes: No, we took our personal cars. We sent the command cars on back.

Dr. Marcello: That's right.

Mr. Sykes: Yeah, we took our personal cars. And I remember I was trying to get my wife in the car. She ran back in the house and said, "I want to get something." She got her silver and brought it and put it in the car. And we left with it. That was the only thing we took with us. And we headed for Schofield. I remember on the way,

just as we had left our house, we passed this airfield and there were the two fighter planes sitting there with the engines warmed up and ready for the pilots when the pilots did get there. I found out later that the pilots were at Wheeler Field and on their way out. Evidently we passed them as we were going to Schofield because that's the only road that they could come on.

Dr. Marcello: Now were these the two pilots that were in the air and that did what little damage was done to the Japanese?

Mr. Sykes: Right.

Dr. Marcello: These were the two pilots.

Mr. Sykes: They were the two officers. Now there were some others.

Mrs. Sykes: Well, these were the two that were mentioned.

Dr. Marcello: These are the two that were mentioned in the movie, Tora Tora Tora.

Mrs. Sykes: That's right.

Mr. Sykes: Right.

Mrs. Sykes: They made several trips that day. They came down to refuel, and they went right back up.

Mr. Sykes: They went back to Wheeler though.

Mrs. Sykes: Yes.

Mr. Sykes: Then I remember Ruth asked me, "Well, what do you think it is?" And I said, "Well, I don't know. I'll tell you

when we get over the hill, and I can see farther down there and get some view of Wheeler." And we went over the hill and I saw some of the damage and the smoke coming up from Wheeler, Hickam, and Pearl. And I said, "It's the real thing." I was watching the sky all the way through the windshield as well as I could to see that there was no strafing because if a plane came down I would have gone into a pineapple field or cane field to get off of the road.

But we got there without an incident. I'd got out of the car and let my wife go. And I ran into our barracks. On the first floor was the orderly room, supply room, the day room, and everything that we used just during the day. The barracks were upstairs. And I ran in and I heard the men talking about who had been hit. There was confusion. Everyone was talking at the same time and telling their version of it, you know. And I heard them mention some names about people that had gotten hit. One fellow that was hit told them not to come pick him up because if they did that they would get shot. And several of them were injured just slightly. One was killed in my battery--only one. But several were wounded to some extent. First, I went to the day room and got my pistol, helmet, and my field equipment--field glasses

and everything that I thought that I would need. And then I went to the supply room to get some ammunition. On the way I passed--this is kind of a funny thing--the pool room where the men played pool and there was a lady laying on the pool table. And I asked if she was hurt and if I could help. And they said, "No, no, she's having a baby." And I said, "Well, this is no place for me." And so I went on, and I never did hear what happened about the birth.

But anyway, I went on up to the motor pool after that, and I found when I got there that the men were just standing around talking and not doing one thing. And there were a lot of empty sacks there and piles of sand, so I had them fill the sacks with sand and started stacking them for what protection they would afford--better protection than nothing. So I was having them put up a sandbag barricade.

Then a command car came up with a major in it, whom I knew, and he said, "What are you doing?" I told him and he said, "Come on, I need you." I got in his command car with him. I told the sergeant, "I'm going with the major now, so if you need me find out where it is he's sending me. So he said, "Well, you're going over to the ammunition depot." Well, that didn't set too well with me but I went. I got over there and

he said, "You're in command of all of the ammunition vehicles coming in to get ammunition. See that they don't pile up here and keep them dispersed so that in the event of an attack that not more than one or two of them are hit." You know, as few as possible. Anyway, I was uneasy because I felt like if they came back they would try to blow up any ammunition that we had, and I didn't feel too safe.

But I could see from where I was--it was kind of on a hill--I could see the smoke from Wheeler, which was relatively close to me, then Pearl and Hickam. I could see them burning, and there would be explosions, and black smoke and flames would shoot up every once in a while. And while I was there, five P-40's came in to land. And some of their wheels were hanging down. I guess the hydraulic systems had been shot. You could see tattered wings. And they landed and I don't know how they did it so quickly, but it seemed like they just rolled to the end of the runway, turned around, and took off again. But they did get gas and ammunition, and they went right back--three went back-- hunting Japanese and doing just as much damage as they could. I admired those boys. As I recall now, I think two planes came back later on while I was there. I was there a long time . . . well, most of the day.

Dr. Marcello: What were your thoughts when you saw all this damage and so on, even from the distance?

Mr. Sykes: I don't remember now. I just know that it was chaotic, and I couldn't comprehend anything, you know. It was just beyond me. I saw a P-36--that was one of the older planes--fly over at about 1,500 or 2,000 feet. It had an American insignia on it--everything. You could see it. And all of a sudden, the plane went into a nosedive and disappeared over the hill from me, and then there was a big explosion. Smoke and flame went up, and then the noise came to me. The pilot had been shot by one of the Americans--one of us shot it. Someone with a machine gun or a rifle had just gone berserk and was shooting at anything that went by. I was, of course, sorry that this happened, but I knew that this was just the beginning of this.

The command car drove up--I knew the officer--and he said, "The Japanese have landed on the north shore, and the 24th Infantry is in contact with them, and we don't know whether they're going to be able to hold them or not." Well, this was one of the rumors. I don't know where he got it, but he passed it on to me. And another rumor that he passed on was that there were saboteurs on the island, and they had on blue denims, and there was a red spot on their left arm. And he said, "If you see any of them, capture them." And I

didn't expect to see any of them because I was just there at the ammunition dump at the gate. And after he had gone, I looked around, and there was a man coming up out of the bushes in a blue denim uniform or garb, and I loosened pistol and he came in kind of close to me. I saw that he was a white man. He wasn't Japanese. And I halted him and kept trying to get around to see his left shoulder, and he kept turning and following me. And finally I told him, "Turn and let me see your left shoulder." And he did and there wasn't any spot on it. I said, "Come on up here." And he did. I said, "What are you doing?" He said, "Well, I was in the prison at Wheeler Field, and when the bombing started they just opened the gates and we all ran." (Chuckle) "And I just ran up this gulch, and I didn't know where I was going or anything, and I just came out here." And he said, "I want to get back to my outfit." So I turned him over to the MP's. I called an MP up and had him take him, and I don't know where he went.

But I stayed there until about . . . I was relieved around four-thirty or five o'clock, and I went back to the battery and got some food. And I saw two of the women that we had known come by. And I asked them how they were, and they said they were alright under the

circumstances. But they asked me if I'd seen their husbands and I said, "No, I haven't." And we were glad to see each other, of course.

But then I went back up to the motor pool, and we began to get things in order to move our guns out. Now the guns that we had were so big that they were moved in parts. And the carriages that we moved them on were old, so they had to travel slow. They did not want our guns on the highways when the fast automobiles or caravans were going by because we would hold them up. So after everyone was in position, well, then we were supposed to move out and go into position. And as I said earlier, we had only had these guns just a few days and didn't know too much about them. And I had been in the hospital part of this time, and I didn't know as much as the other people did about these particular guns.

Anyway, the battery commander--I was second in command--said for me to bring the guns or to start off with the guns for this one particular valley, and I had never been there. I didn't even know where it was. I didn't have a map. And so we started out, and it was dark by this time. We were driving blackout. And so I had them travel so we could see each other and keep in sight of the vehicle in front but just as far

apart as they could because we were afraid of another air attack, for in dropping flares they would see a lot of vehicles. They would strafe them. So we were going along pretty good--no more problems than usual--when a plane came over, and so everyone hit the ditch. We jumped out of our cars, got into the ditch, and I saw the plane go over. It went directly over. Then everyone was shooting at it. It was one of our planes. It was a DC-3. And one machine gun tracer hit it because I saw the sparks fly from it, but it didn't hit a vulnerable spot. And it went on, thank goodness. We got back in our cars. Now my men weren't the only ones that were shooting at it. I don't know whether any of them shot at it or not, but other people all around would shoot at any plane that came over.

Dr. Marcello: I assume anything that walked, talked, or crawled was fair game at that time.

Mrs. Sykes: That's right.

Mr. Sykes: Oh, there were a lot of funny things that happened--comical things. After it was all over they were comical. But we got back in our vehicles and took off, and we were supposed to drive just eight miles per hour, our maximum speed. Under these circumstances I was pushing them much faster than this. I didn't know whether anything was going to break down, but under the circumstances we had to just take a chance on it. So

we were going fifteen miles per hour which was double the speed that we were supposed to. And one time we got up to twenty-five with some of them. But we had an awful time keeping track of each other in the dark, in blackout, and still stay far apart. We got out on the highway, and I guess I got a little less cautious, so I let them close up a little bit--the convoy, you know, get the vehicles closer together--so we could travel faster. It'd just be a lot better.

Anyway, we went on down and got near Pearl Harbor and just as we got there a bus . . . we were stopped. We were stopped because of an apparent air attack. We heard the airplane engines, and we thought that we were going to be bombed or strafed. And there were a lot of explosions over at Hickam Field. We were just opposite Hickam, close to Pearl. And the explosions lit up the area, and we could see the planes. They flashed the lights on, and there were some planes up there. They were our Navy planes. And when they flashed the lights on them . . . the planes were trying to land. They were too high. They couldn't do it. So they tried to go up, and everything on the island went up after them. And they knocked down several of our own planes right there. And they were machine gunning. People were just . . . well, crazy, you might say. It

was terrible. They were shooting at anything that went by. And this bus stopped there, and someone said that that was a busload of women. I got on the bus and asked if anyone was there from the 89th Field Artillery--any wives from that--and two of them spoke up and said they were. And I asked them how they were, and they said they were alright. They were scared, but they were alright. Well, I was glad to have that news.

We went on and eventually they did. But we had to go on. But I'd had to go to a turn. I'd never been up to this place at all. I didn't know where it was. But in going to the turns and asking . . . there were MP's at every turn, so I could ask there. Then I would send the convoy on up and I'd get in a command car and pass them and get ahead of them until I got to the next place, and that way I was able to go in the right direction at least. Finally, the battery with just the men in the trucks passed us, and they went on up and left men ahead of us so that it made it easier for us to come up. But they had people with guns out there just . . . it was terrible. Some of the people that had guns were too young to have them. I don't know whether they authorized them to have them. But anyway they had them.

Mrs. Sykes: You mean civilians?

Mr. Sykes: I think one Boy Scout had a gun. I'm not sure. But they stopped us, and they stuck the rifle in my driver's face, and I grabbed the rifle and shoved it away from the driver's face and told them who I was-- a lieutenant in the United States Army. And that kind of quieted them down. And they let us go on through. There was one place at one spot where we stopped that everytime trucks would come by, just as their motors were fading in the distance, there would be a lot of shots. And we supposed that it was the Japanese snipers shooting at the trucks as they went by. We didn't know. We just supposed that because everytime a truck would go by and would just get to where we could hear the engine there was a lot of shots. And we had to go right up there. And so we were ready. I told the relief drivers who were riding in the cabs with the driver, "Now when we get up there, if there's any shooting at all just shoot and mean it. Don't hold back. But make every shot count." We didn't know what it was. We went up by there and no one shot at us, I was glad to say.

Mrs. Sykes: Now this is a mountain road you were going on.

Mr. Sykes: Yeah, we were now getting into the mountains. We had been on a relatively flat area up until then. But

now we started up into the mountains where we were to put our guns in position.

Dr. Marcello: This was in this valley which would be protected from Naval gunfire, for example, but at the same time your howitzers could lob shells over the mountains out toward the ocean.

Mr. Sykes: Right. Exactly.

Dr. Marcello: How long did this trip take altogether? Do you recall?

Mr. Sykes: I think it took about four and a half hours.

Dr. Marcello: To go about how many miles?

Mr. Sykes: Approximately twenty-five. We didn't go into Honolulu. We were on the close side of Honolulu. So we went up the valley, and it began to rain. It had been a moonlight night before, but it began to rain. Up in these mountains it just rains all the time, and the farther we went, the wetter it got. We took the guns up, and I don't know how we got the guns up where they were. They were so heavy. And when we got there and the space was so limited to move around with a truck and a great big carriage behind it and it was so wet and muddy and slippery that it was just miraculous that we did get all of them up there. But we didn't get the guns put together until the next afternoon, I think. It took us that long to get them completely assembled--one of them. We didn't have the other one assembled until the day after because there was so much

weight, and we had just our hands and trucks to move the equipment with. It just took that much time.

Dr. Marcello: Now by the time you got there and you were in the process of setting up these guns, had any semblance of order come about yet, or was there still mainly just plain chaos?

Mr. Sykes: No order at all. Everytime we came in contact with someone we were afraid they were going to shoot us.

Dr. Marcello: Or they had a new rumor, I'm sure.

Mr. Sykes: Yeah. I got out one time and helped an MP at a junction. He had more than he could do and I was waiting for my convoy to come on up, so we couldn't cross this street until we had an opening. So I got out and helped him, and it was a little touchy at times there because people were excited. They didn't know what they were doing, and you didn't know what they were going to do either. And that was the thing that kind of bothered you. But we got our guns in place--one of them that is--the next day and test fired it. It held together. We were glad of that. We didn't know whether we'd put it together right in the dark. We'd had these guns fifteen days--two weeks--something like that. And we'd put them together on field mounts, but these were what they called Panama mounts. That is, they could turn 360 degrees

firing in any direction. And so we didn't know whether they were together right. We put them on, checked them again, rechecked them, and then with the major's permission we fired it, and it held and we were right.

Dr. Marcello: In the meantime now, Mrs. Sykes, what were you doing?

Mrs. Sykes: Well, I was waiting there at the agricultural station and was very anxious to get back to Schofield Barracks.

Dr. Marcello: Okay. And let's just say there was a week now before you saw your husband again.

Mrs. Sykes: Yes. I didn't see him until I got back to Schofield Barracks, but then we got the word. We had communication then. They said they were digging slit trenches in front of all the officers' quarters on the base, and as soon as those slit trenches are dug they'd permit the dependents to go back. And about the third day I went back to my house on the beach because I had a leg of lamb in the refrigerator. And, of course, by that time there was some problem about how to feed all these people. I was still with the McEldowney's and Mr. McEldowney took me. We went back and saw the awful sight of the breakfast still on the table there after three days, and lizards and ants were all over it. It was pretty bad looking. And so, of course, we never did go back to the beach house to live again.

That was the end of the idyllic life on the beach. But at the end of five days I did go back to Schofield Barracks and stayed there. And life was pretty grim there. There were three of my other friends whom I'd lived with on the beach there with me. I think it was about a week before our husbands came in.

Mr. Sykes: Yes, something like that.

Mrs. Sykes: I saw you the first time. But he'd come in once in a while for just a short time. I was staying in Lieutenant Wolverton's quarters. His duty was on the post, so he'd come back at night. He'd have about thirty minutes off, and he'd be able to come back at night and see his family. He said that was the most hazardous thing that he did because he really was very apprehensive the time he was walking those two blocks at night that somebody would shoot at him. And all night long you could hear the guards walking up and down, and we could hear them challenging people, so we felt that this was right in the middle of the war when we could hear that all night. And, of course, then we were very nervous about whether we were going to leave or not. All the wives were trying to figure what could we possibly do that we'd get to stay here because the word had already come out that Army wives would be evacuated as soon as possible--the

pregnant ones first, then the ones with children would go, and then all would go out just as soon as transportation was available. And we began to try to think of every way we could to stay. We thought about this Red Cross course, you know, and thought that maybe we could find something that we could do. And then in about the third week I got word from friends in Honolulu--a man who was with the intelligence in Honolulu--that he'd heard about an Air Corps project that was opening up and that they were going to have a woman's air raid defense, they called it. And it turned out to be an information center operating under radar, which was a word we had never heard before. And when they told it to us they said, "Don't ever say it out loud." It was the most secret word that you could imagine. So that was the only reason then that I was able to stay. We went into Honolulu every day and trained there.

And then on the first of February I moved to Fort Shafter in Honolulu and worked in this air raid defense for the next two years until our son was imminent. And then by that time the war had moved on out and then there was no more danger of my being evacuated, so I lived in Waikiki then. We were on the island then for four years. But I had a fascinating job there because I

lived on this base and worked in this underground area. And this work went on on a twenty-four hour basis and we plotted. We were using a plotting board, and we were in contact with radar stations all over the island. And we plotted all the aircraft coming and going. We were right in the middle of knowing everything that was going on. At first it was a very scary thing because this bombproof shelter wasn't ready, and we had to go down to just a shed where this thing had been set up in a hurry, and we had to wear those old-fashioned Army helmets then, and we had to carry a gas mask with us every time. And when we'd see a plane coming across the board and it would be unidentified, we thought, "This is it!" And we were on the plotting board when we saw all the planes go off for Midway and, of course, that was the decisive battle. There was one grim experience when I was working side by side with an Air Corps wife. She saw her husband's plane being plotted across the board. She knew he was going off on a certain mission. And then they lost the flight before they should have according to radar, and that was the last his plane was ever heard of. So it was an interesting job to be there and feel like we knew what was going on. But the main thing was that I was staying in Honolulu.

Dr. Marcello: This brings up a couple of interesting questions and something I should have asked earlier but forgot about. And that's the radar. Did you know anything at all about the radar while you were on the island?

Mr. Sykes: No, not until my wife had this job.

Dr. Marcello: Well, the Army had six mobile radar stations on the island that were operating at less than full time, I'll put it that way.

Mr. Sykes: No, I didn't know a thing about it.

Mrs. Sykes: It was a word that was new. Had you ever heard of it before?

Mr. Sykes: No, I hadn't.

Mrs. Sykes: I certainly hadn't.

Mr. Sykes: I didn't even know what it was.

Mrs. Sykes: Then, of course, we heard the story that has been since published about Sergeant Lockard, who had been manning the board that night and that he stayed on duty longer than he was supposed to and saw the planes coming in, and he couldn't get anybody in authority to get excited about it.

Dr. Marcello: I think they told him that . . .

Mrs. Sykes: They were expecting the B-17's.

Dr. Marcello: . . . the B-17's, right.

Mrs. Sykes: That's right. Of course, but then the equipment was crude, and they didn't know much about the operation of it.

Dr. Marcello: I understand it was always breaking down, and there weren't too many trained personnel to handle it.

Mr. Sykes: No.

Mrs. Sykes: That's right. That's right. And it wasn't too accurate a thing. I saw it operating. There were a lot of variables to it because different stations would report it in a different way. And even the officers would identify the planes and they weren't always sure, so it wasn't an entirely accurate thing.

Dr. Marcello: You're speaking about the use of radar six months after the war had started now or even longer than that perhaps.

Mrs. Sykes: Well, I worked for two years after the war had started.

Dr. Marcello: Oh, I see. It was still variable, to use your words.

Mrs. Sykes: Yes, yes, yes. That's right. I don't know whether it is today or not. I presume that it is because there's so many things--the curvature of the earth--that affect it. I'm sure they've improved it a lot since then. But it was the interpretation of what the radar information provided. It depended a lot on the way it was interpreted by the officers there and by the operators, too.

Dr. Marcello: How about rumors. What were some of the wild rumors you heard. You've talked about the Japanese landing here, there, and everywhere. Obviously there must have been other rumors besides those.

Mr. Sykes: Those were the main rumors--that the Japanese paratroopers had landed. That's the rumor that got to us up in the valley. Some fellow came up there and told us that paratroopers were landing. Well, the major said, "Sykes, get these men deployed." Well, I was one of the few people that had had any infantry training whatsoever in the battery. So I deployed them and told them what to do, and being artillerymen, they weren't too familiar with the infantry tactics. But we did. And I went along and found one of them sound asleep and woke him up. And after awhile we decided there wasn't anything to it, so we went on back and had a hot cup of coffee. But I went down the valley for something. I can't recall what it was. As I was coming back up, a bunch of girls came running down the side of the valley, and they were a lot of prostitutes that had run up this valley when the bombing started. And they saw all these soldiers up in there, and everyone thought this was going to be a wonderful place to be. But I put that off limits in a hurry and much to the chagrin of the soldiers.

Mrs. Sykes: I thought maybe this might be interesting to you. This was one of the things that was put out for our protection after we were working in this radar information center.

We were all issued one of these things and we were instructed in case of a landing by the Japs on the island that we were to immediately put that arm band on to identify the fact that we were not Army personnel, and that was supposed to be our protection. It seems ludicrous to me now, and it even did to us at the time. (Chuckle) I don't know who thought that up.

Dr. Marcello: This arm band says, "Non-combatant Hawaiian Department."

Mrs. Sykes: That's right.

Dr. Marcello: That's what the Army was known as there, was it not, the Hawaiian Department?

Mr. Sykes: The Hawaiian Department.

Mrs. Sykes: That's right. Hawaiian Department. I doubt if that would have been much protection, especially since we were doing the work we were. (chuckle)