Basic Detail Report

Supply Birthley Cliff!

Dear Cliff:

Thank you for your good letter and the marvelous catalog! Also for what we all agreed was the most "Cliff" article we've ever read. His most insightful paragraph, in my estimation, was the one where he said your work made his unconscious belch, and "I don't even believe in the unconscious!" The pieces and the drawings are so very interesting - how I'd love to see them - perhaps you will have another show out here soon? I won't miss the next one.

In your letter you asked about Cliff Polvent and your relationship. Hence, this letter. I would have phoned you about it, but since you are seeing an attorney, figured it would be better to put in writing my recollection of the whole affair. I just hope what I can recall will be of some help to you.

As I recall, the summer of 1945, just before I was 15, your ship got hit, you returned to Bremerton or Seattle and your first night of leave you got drunk and got into a fight for which you were put in the brig on board the ship. This was before the war ended in August. The next thing we knew you either phoned or wrote that you had married a riveter you met while in the brig and you were sending her home to Phoenix to stay with us until you could get a leave.

Then I remember going to the bus station with Dad and Georgia to meet Betty Flanagan. She was with us only a few days when Georgia told me she thought Betty was pregnant. At the time she asked Betty and she said her period was late but it was due to the traveling. In no time at all it was obvious even to me and I wasn't all that precocious. Georgia confronted Betty with it and Betty told her she

letter

Date

December 11, 1974

Primary Maker

H. C. (Horace Clifford) Westermann

Medium

Typewritten letter

Description

Is responding to HCW's letter about his relationship to Clifford Polvent. The letter details her memory of the events in 1945 when HCW married Betty Flanagan. HCW sent Betty to stay with his family in Arizona until he was discharged. During her stay, it was discovered that she was at least 2 months pregnant. When confronted with this information, Betty confessed that she had been raped by two men when she was on her way out to the West Coast from her home in New Jersey. Martha feels that Polvent couldn't be HCW's son since his ship had only been in dock for a month and Betty was "farther along" (later in pregnancy) than that.

Dimensions

a-c: letter: 11 x 8 1/2 in. (27.9 x 21.6 cm)