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FRANK WARD HUSTACE JR. / 1914-2008

Victoria Ward estate heir had affinity for island life

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By Mary Adamski
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Many clients remember Frank Ward Hustace Jr. as an old-fashioned hometown lawyer, waiving the charge for legal advice to struggling businessmen and acquaintances in modest financial circumstances.

He was in private law practice for 50 years, continuing to see longtime clients at the age of 93.

Hustace was better known as an heir of the Victoria Ward estate. He was a director and secretary of the board of Victoria Ward Ltd. until 2002 when the family company and its 65-acre Kakaako property were sold for \$250 million. He was the grandson of Mellie Ward Hustace, one of seven daughters of Victoria and Curtis Ward, whose estate originally encompassed land from Thomas Square to the ocean.

Hustace, 93, died Wednesday at home.

"He was one of the last of old Hawaii; he was related to almost everyone who is part-Hawaiian," said U.S. District Judge Samuel P. King, who attended Central Grammar School with Hustace. "My father appointed him land commissioner and told him, 'You're so upright, you don't make a deal with anybody.'"

Hustace served in the Cabinet of territorial governors Samuel Wilder King and William Quinn as manager of public lands. He resigned shortly after statehood when Quinn became the first elected governor.

"He had strong feelings about place and the importance of Hawaii being a place for everyone," said Mitch D'Olier, chief executive officer of Kaneohe Ranch Co. and former CEO of Victoria Ward Ltd.

King said Hustace "was oluolu, as we say in Hawaiian. He didn't put on airs, except for his bread."

Hustace wrote that his goal to produce "true French bread" became an obsession leading him to classes at the Cordon Bleu institute in Paris and at the King Arthur Flour bakery in Norwich, Vt. In obituary information he prepared, he gave himself a 95 percent grade, saying his homemade bread was better than anything he had tasted in Honolulu.

Food was his avocation, either as the cook at home or in search of favorite dishes at Chinese restaurants. He set out for Chinatown almost daily from his office in the Garden Office Building, an oasis of tropical plants and a fountain since demolished for construction of a condominium.

"He loved the old-fashioned things that not everybody liked: pork hash with squid, beef tendons with turnips," said his

secretary Linda FitzGerald.

Frank Hustace III remembers accompanying his father to lunch in Chinatown: "Someone would hail him on the street and get his advice. Restaurant owners would refuse to give him a check; in exchange he would pass along free legal advice to help with their leases or tenant problems."

Hustace graduated from Punahou School, earned a law degree at Harvard University and received a Hawaii license to practice law in 1940. During World War II he served as provost judge for the Big Island and with the Army Judge Advocate General office.

He is survived by wife Constance; son Frank Ward Hustace III; daughter Patricia Kenyon Hustace; brothers Edward C. of the Big Island, Walter of New Mexico and Cedric of Indiana; and four granddaughters.

A private memorial service will be held at Oahu Cemetery.

The family suggests that memorial donations be made to Waimea Country School, P.O. Box 399, Kamuela, HI 96743; Montessori Community School, 1225 Nehoa Ave., Honolulu, HI 96822; or Hawaii School for Girls at La Pietra, 2933 Poni Moi Road, Honolulu, HI 96815.

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