

WORK

\*  
Mr. William Baskerville  
Fourth Street  
Oxford, North Carolina  
Time: Approximately 3:30 p.m.  
Date: September 9, 1981  
Age: 76 (Born 1905)

QUESTION: Mr. Baskerville, where were you born at?

Oxford, in 1905.

QUESTION: What is your present age?

76.

QUESTION: Can you tell me what Street you were born on in Oxford?

Spring Street, I don't know the number.

QUESTION: That's over near D.N. Hix School.

It was right down next to the Seaboard Railroad, that's where I was born.

QUESTION: Can you name some families that lived in your neighborhood at that time?

Yes. Barnett Poltry, Neil Robinson, Ms. Betsy Robinson, Ms. Steele, Mr. Pickman.

QUESTION: Can you tell me what some of those neighbors did and where they worked, just briefly?

Mr. Pickman was drug store runner. He run a drug store.

QUESTION: Where about?

Right there beside Capehart Cleaners.

QUESTION: Was Mr. Pickman Black or White?

White.

QUESTION: You lived in a black and white neighborhood?

Yes.

QUESTION: Was your father born in Oxford?

No, he was born in Bowling, Virginia.

QUESTION: When did he come to Oxford?

mixed

Check Baskerville. Good man to follow

I've forgot the year that he came.

QUESTION: About what age were you when he came to Oxford?

I reckon father was in his 40's when he came here.

QUESTION: Where did he meet your mother?

He met her on the job over there at Judge Graham's.

QUESTION: What was your father doing over at Judge Graham's?

He met her there. She was working there.

QUESTION: What age was your mother?

She was younger than father.

QUESTION: Where was your mother born at?

She was born down there on Spring Street.

QUESTION: Where about?

She was born on the Dorsey farm.

QUESTION: Do you know Mr. Dorsey live?

No, I don't know his first name.

QUESTION: Okay, well how many of her sisters and brothers was born on that farm with her?

Won't but one and that was Mary Lee.

QUESTION: Is she living now?

Yes, she live in Jersey.

QUESTION: What's her age?

She is around 79 years old.

QUESTION: Do you remember your mother's father and mother?

Yes, I remember my grandmother. Her name was Meda Smith.

QUESTION: Can you tell me something about what your grandmother told you.

She caught it hard. They were really treated real rotten.

QUESTION: Was she born in slavery?

Yes. Dorsey farm was slaves.

QUESTION: Is the Dorsey Farm what we refer to now as the Hancock farm?

That's right.

QUESTION: That's in front of the new Max Factor between Highway 158, the Henderson Road and I-85?

That's right. That was the Dorsey Farm.

QUESTION: Did your mother talk about how hard they were treated, how they were fed?

She said they was treated mighty bad.

QUESTION: Did they have to have relationships with the masters and all that stuff?

Yes, they did that. She said they were treated real bad. Yes, she use to talk about it.

QUESTION: Mrs. Meta Smith, how old do you think she was when she died?

She was about 85 years old.

QUESTION: Did she ever live with you all?

No, she use to live right below us.

QUESTION: What kind of work did she do when she came off that farm?

She couldn't do anything then.

QUESTION: Can you tell me about your mother and what kind of work she did?

She worked for Judge Graham mostly farming, help get the potatoes in, and do anything on the farm, except when you use to get potatoes in you use to have to get on your knees. They would give you bags to put on your feet and under your knees and crawl and make a heap row and throw the potatoes out in the heap row.

QUESTION: What do you mean by heap row?

Well the heap row was where they piled them up and the man nearest would come along and pick them up in the crates.

QUESTION: The ladies would do all the digging?

Well, ladies and men would do it. I worked there myself.

QUESTION: So Judge Graham's farm was next to the Horner School?

Yes, right behind it, between there and where Green Acres was. And down there on this side of where the Tennis Court is, going straight on through over there in Green Acres. Back in there it was some back there in the woods. That was the Graham's territory too, then they had a big farm right straight back of that.

QUESTION: Your mother was familiar with that whole area because she was born on that farm and your grandmother might have been born over there too?

Yes.

QUESTION: Did you ever ask them did slaves build them walls over Horner School on the Henderson Highway to hold the road up because its hills?

No, I never did hear them say anything about that.

QUESTION: You never heard how those walls got built over Horner School?.

No, I don't know.

QUESTION: So your mother worked for Judge Graham and after she stopped there she became a housewife and passed.

Yes.

QUESTION: What school did you go to when you were a little boy?

Mr. Reverend Mayo use to have the school down there in the old lodge building. Right next to Luke Henderson, right there in the same spot that Luke Henderson live now.

QUESTION: Reverend who?

Reverend Mayo. He use to be the Episcop<sup>t</sup>le preacher up here.



QUESTION: He had the school in his house?

He had it in the old lodge. The center caught on fire and burned up. Well we had to come over there.

QUESTION: You never went to school at Mr. Gregory's house?

Yes, I went to school there too, Mrs. Lucille taught me there.

QUESTION: Mrs. Lucille who?

Lucille Lyons she taught me at Mr. Gregory's house?

QUESTION: What grade were you in when you went to school in Mr. Gregory's house?

First grade.

QUESTION: Have you ever seen or heard of Professor Patilla?

Yes, Professor taught me. He was my first teacher, Buster Carrie did too, he come in there. I was there when he was there.

QUESTION: What about Mrs. Hunt, was there a teacher by the name of Hunt?

No, Mrs. Annie Lassiter.

QUESTION: What about Mrs. Annie Rogers?

Yes, she was there.

QUESTION: How old was she?

I don't know how old she was.

QUESTION: Was she a Brandon then?

Yes, she was a Brandon.

QUESTION: Did you know her husband Payton Brandon?

Yes, he was a carpenter.

QUESTION: Was he good?

Excellent. The best there was in Oxford, I think.

QUESTION: Didn't he teach Mr. Howell?

Jimmy Howell, he use to be the other carpenter.

QUESTION: They were relatives?

That's right.

QUESTION: And then he taught Ransom Cousin?

He sure did. He taught all them boys.

QUESTION: When you were a kid you would walk from Spring Street, which you lived on Spring Street, which now is Spring Street all the way through, but it was Spring to Herndon Street. When you were going to school was the old Post Office where it is now?

That's in the same place.

QUESTION: Did you ever know that the Post Office was between Capehart Cleaners and Union Bank?

All I ever knowed it was in one place.

QUESTION: Now, did you say the Bank was there?

No, the Bank was on the corner of Herndon Avenue, right beside old lady Walters who owned the restaurant right there. Right on that corner, Herndon Avenue.

QUESTION: Now let's talk about the First Baptist Church. That church was new when you were a little boy walking by.

That's right, it hadn't long been built cause we use stop there and sit down in the shade.

QUESTION: How far did you go in school?

Fourth grade.

QUESTION: You went to the fourth grade and then you stopped and started working?

Yes, I had to go to work.

QUESTION: Did you have a brother?

Yes, Dave.

QUESTION: What did he do?

He worked for Judge Graham's milk dairy.

QUESTION: What did he do over at Judge Graham's milk dairy?

He milked the cows and worked on the farm.

QUESTION: How far did he go in school?

Dave went in nearly about the fourth grade too.

QUESTION: How much older was he than you?

Dave is around about 79 years old.

QUESTION: Okay, he is about 4 or 5 years older than you? So when he quit school he went to work for Judge Graham?

Yes, he use to be the judge up there.

QUESTION: And he worked in the dairy?

Yes, farmed and everything.

QUESTION: Where did your father do?

He raised hogs, farmed. He had a truck farm, cotton and stuff like that.

QUESTION: Where did he farm at?

Out to Burgess farm, out yonder on the Henderson Highway. You know where those Burgess's live out there, well out there at his farm. That was about three or four miles from town, I reckon.

QUESTION: Where else did your father work at?

He use to work on the railroad.

QUESTION: Doing what?

Pumping one of them old hand cranks.

QUESTION: What do you mean by hand crank?

You know them little hand cranks where use to pump, it was two men over here and two men over here. That's what he use to do.

QUESTION: What did you do when you quit school?

I went to work at Judge Graham's for a while too.

QUESTION: Let's go back to your mother's brother, Mr. Alex Smith and tell me , where he worked at and what kind of work he did.

He worked at Horner School, that was his first job.

QUESTION: What did he do at Horner School?

He was the butler there.

QUESTION: So that mean when people came in he showed them where they would be staying?

He washed dishes and all that of that stuff.

QUESTION: About how many years did he work there?

Around 30 years. He worked there a long time.

QUESTION: Who else worked over there?

Ms. Sally Edmonds, she was a cook too.

QUESTION: Did she have a restaurant in Oxford too.

I don't believe she did at that time or not. She might but I can't dig it out.

QUESTION: But she use to work at Horner School?

Yes, she worked there at the time my brother worked there.

QUESTION: Now we are going to leave Horner School and go to the Girl's College.

Hopgood College.

QUESTION: Okay, tell me about the Hopgood College.

Well there was a bunch of girls there and they had a ice house down there. The ice house was behind the college. When the ice froze over, they would go and cut it. It was right there on Henderson Street and King Street.

QUESTION: Explain to me what you mean by freeze over.

In the winter time the river freezes over. They dug out a place like a pond. Some way or another they had it fixed there so it would freeze over. They would cut all the ice and bring it up there in back of the college and put it in the ice house. The ice house was at the back of the college. That's where they cut all the ice down at and bring it up here.

QUESTION: Who worked at that ice house?

Old man George Scott, he was the one who cut it. He ran the ice house for the Hopgood College.

QUESTION: Who worked at the College?

Mrs. Phyllis Epps worked there.

QUESTION: Was she the house lady?

I don't whether she was the house lady or the cook but she was one or the other. I believed she cooked.

QUESTION: Did Mr. Carter work there?

Gus Carter? Yea, Gus worked there too. Gus was one of the right hand men there.

QUESTION: What about Mr. Oscar Morton?

That's right, he did work there. I don't know what he did, but he did work there.

QUESTION: Won't he the man that handled live stock, the cows and horses and stuff?

I don't know what he did, but they had cows and horses over there.

QUESTION: I heard that was what he did.

I don't know but I do know he worked there. When you spoke about him it come to my remembrance.

QUESTION: While we are in that area, have you ever heard of a lady by the name of Mrs. Nancy Lee that lived over on Henderson Street who was a midwife? Who was the midwife in your area?

Oh you are talking about Mrs. Cynthia Young was a midwife.

QUESTION: Where in your area?

No, she was between there and Raleigh Street. Her home was over on Raleigh Street.

QUESTION: Was she black?

Yea.

QUESTION: Can you tell me anything about Mrs. Cynthia Young, her husband or anything.

She was good. Dorsey Young was her husband.

QUESTION: What did Dorsey do?

He worked down to the factory. Down there to Imperial Tobacco.

QUESTION: Okay, did you ever go to the Hopgood College at anytime?

Yea I've been to Hopgood College to carry groceries and things like that.

QUESTION: Who were you working for?

R.S. Montaque.

QUESTION: Was he black or white?

He was white.

QUESTION: So you worked at the grocery store?

Yea.

QUESTION: How did you delivery grocery.

On a horse and wagon all over town. Yea, I know Oxford.

QUESTION: What age were you when you started delivering grocery?

I started delivering when I was fourteen years old.

QUESTION: Was that after you left the farm?

Yea.

QUESTION: Now Spring Street, they had a spring down there didn't they?

Yea.

QUESTION: Where was the spring at?

The spring was way over on the hill further, right there in that bottom there, right across the street from Roberson Place and we was living right here like this and Spring Street, the spring was right over here from us, right next to the railroad.

QUESTION: So that's where it got it's name from, Spring Street?

Yea.

QUESTION: What was right up the street from you?

My people lived back up in there.

QUESTION: Wasn't there some kind of business up in that area?

No.

QUESTION: Now Hopgood College, it was for girls?

Yea, nothing but girls.

QUESTION: What I want you to tell me about now is downtown Oxford, how it looked and how high the hill was going up toward your house toward Gilliam.

It was really steep. They have cut it down now.

QUESTION: In the winter time it use to be too impossible for cars.

They couldn't make it. Sometime they would have to turn around and go back.

QUESTION: Now was Hillsborough Street the same way, going from Williams Cleaners straight up to where the monument is?

Yes, that use to be a hard hill on Hillsborough Street. It was terrible.

QUESTION: Has the monument been there every since you can remember?

It certainly have.

QUESTION: Did your grandmother ever tell you that monument was there all of her life, or did your mother?

No.

QUESTION: Did you ever hear why the man was pointing south?

No, I never asked nobody that. I heard them talking about it.

QUESTION: Have you ever heard anybody say how Oxford got its name?

I did hear somebody say something about one time but I forgot.

QUESTION: Now I want you to tell me about all the streets.

All the streets was nothing but dirt. Nothing but ice too, I had to wear boots up to my hip to get along through the street. Sometime I had to get off the wagon. That's right, had to get off the wagon to make the horse pull along. ✓

QUESTION: What I want you to tell me now is how many businesses uptown were owned by blacks when you were a little boy. I want you to start any where you want to start.

Grady Harris was one.

QUESTION: Were there any other black businesses on that side of the street?

He was the only one on that side of the street.

QUESTION: Well what about the side where Halls Drug Store was on?

Won't nothing over there but white folks.

QUESTION: Okay until you get to where William Breedlove is. Now what was there?

It was some business right there but I can't think who run those businesses.

QUESTION: Did Mr. Johnson have a business up in there?

Yea, Johnson did have a business in there.

QUESTION: What about down in the basement, was there a restaurant down there.

It was a restaurant but I can't remember who run that.

QUESTION: Did Mr. Harris move his restaurant to the back of where William Breedlove is now?

Yes, he moved there. He had to move that place that he had on Main Street cause somebody else had bought it. So he moved down there by the old jail.



Mr. William Baskerville

Page 13

QUESTION: Did Jack Kingsbury and his wife run a restaurant there?

Yes, they had a restaurant.

QUESTION: Did you ever see Jack Kingsbury?

I've seen his wife.

QUESTION: Around what age was she when you saw her?

I reckon his wife was about remind of Ms. Stella Walls.

QUESTION: Who helped her in the restaurant?

           Cheatham, Lewis Cheatham's brother, and Nancy Cheatham she use to go up there and help them. ✓

QUESTION: Where did these Cheathams live?

Nancy Cheatham lived down there where we lived. It was a little house sitting up there on the hill that you go up Bryant Street, they lived there. Bryant Street goes on across Spring Street. The only black house sitting there was theirs. ✓

QUESTION: What happened to Mrs. Kingsbury?

She died.

QUESTION: Did she have any relatives here?

I haven't heard of any.

QUESTION: Did her husband have any here?

Not to my beknowing.

QUESTION: Where did they live?

They lived right there in the back of the jail.

QUESTION: They lived where?

They lived there, right behind the Cafe. They had a house back there, the house was attached to the Cafe and they had a polly parrot there. Everytime somebody would come there, he would know about it. He would tell you everytime anybody would come by there.

QUESTION: Did you know the jailer? Did they have a black jailer here in Oxford?

Yes, I forget his name. My daddy use to talk about him all the time.

QUESTION: Was he a Moss or a Moore?

I don't know.

QUESTION: What did your father say about him, did he sleep in the jailhouse?

I believed he died. After he died I heard my daddy say that they would never get another black jailer her<sup>r</sup> no more. He had heard it you know. I asked him one day, I'll never forget it, I said why do you say that? He said they will never get another black, the white people are going to take over.

QUESTION: Was there ever a black policeman or police chief back then.

No.

QUESTION: Was there a black magistrate back then?

No.

QUESTION: Did you ever hear of any black lawyers?

Never heard of any.

QUESTION: Can you tell me where Ed Ridley worked at?

Ed Ridley run a market here, right there where the firehouse is now.

QUESTION: Who worked with him?

Old man Major Sandford and Dave Marrow. Dave Marrow was the delivery man. He used to drive the horse and buggy.

QUESTION: Were the only butchers in Oxford?

That's right, they was the only butchers in Oxford. They didn't have anymore. Everybody, white and black went there to get their meat or else they didn't get none.

QUESTION: And what was upstairs over that? Was it an Opera House?

Let me see, it was something up there. I just forgot now what it was.

QUESTION: It was an opera house where everybody went to have dances. The school went up there for plays. What about the buggy factor<sup>y</sup>, the wheel factory?

The buggy factory was across the street over there.

QUESTION: What was on the corner over there, a hubba cot factory or something? Right there where Hancock building is?

That was a buggy factory too, they had two buggy factories here.

QUESTION: Do you know any of the people who worked in the one right by the railroad track?

Mr. Fields, Pete Fields daddy and his brother worked there. I think his brother worked in the other one, Burns Fields daddy.

QUESTION: Did Mr. Marrow work over there too?

Yea, he worked there too.

QUESTION: Where Mast Drug Store is now, can you tell me what was first there when you were a little boy?

That was the stable where they rent horses.

QUESTION: What was there after they rented horses as a stable?

Continuation of Mr. William Baskerville  
302 Fourth Street  
Oxford, NC

QUESTION: Let's go back, can you tell me where the first blacksmith shop was in Oxford?

The first blacksmith shop was around there on, what do you call it behind the dime store?

QUESTION: Behind the restaurant.

Yea, up in there.

QUESTION: Who ran that?

Bailey, I forget the man, his daddy had the restaurant.

QUESTION: Was it Lonnie Hicks?

Lonnie Hicks and Bailey use to run it.

QUESTION: Was Peter Owens in there?

Yes, Peter was in there.

QUESTION: Saudi Dobbs?

Yes, I know Peter was but I don't know about the other one.

QUESTION: Did you ever know Lonnie Hicks?

Yes, Lonnie Hicks use to belong to the same Church that I did.

QUESTION: Was he in there too?

Yes. Lonnie Hicks was the head knocker.

QUESTION: He was the head man?

Yea.

QUESTION: Have you ever heard of, what was the funeral home man name that had a shop downtown?

Ed Smith. They was the big shots down there and Peter Charleston was right up stairs from them.

QUESTION: Who?

Peter Charleston. He had a plumber shop.

QUESTION: Who is Peter Charleston?

You don't know Peter. He had a plumber shop. He would take his buggy and go around and fix spekets and things.

QUESTION: Where was his shop at?

Right up stairs there, right there where Moses Sherman is, right on that end, right there.

QUESTION: He had a plumber shop and he was a black man?

Nobody but him.

QUESTION: The only plumber in town?

The only black plumber it was in town.

QUESTION: Was there a white plumber here?

No, he was the first plumber.

QUESTION: Now where did he live?

He lived there.

QUESTION: Did he go to church in Oxford?

I don't know if he went to church or not.

QUESTION: He didn't have any relatives?

I never heard of none.

QUESTION: How long did he live?

I don't know how long Pete lived, but he lived a long time.

QUESTION: What age was he when you learned him?

When I come to remembering him, he was like an old age man then. I don't even know where he come from.

QUESTION: Would it be hard if I would go around now and ask people do they know Peter Charleston?

No it wouldn't be hard. These old people my age would know him.

QUESTION: They would know him and know he was the first black plumber.

Yes, he and old man Davis come in there, he was the next, James Davis daddy.

QUESTION: Who is James Davis?

You know James Davis where died here a couple years ago where married the Bass girl don't you? Mary Bass's daughter. James Davis use to run a cafe over here in South Hill Virginia.

QUESTION: And he was black?

Yes.

QUESTION: And he came in here with Peter Charleston?

Yes, came in here with Peter Charleston. They was running a plumber shop.

QUESTION: Where did James Davis live?

James Davis lived in South Hill. I'm talking about Little James, I ain't talking about the man's daddy.

QUESTION: I'm talking about the man that's dead.

Oh, old man Davis, he died.

QUESTION: Did you know where he lived at in Oxford?

No.

QUESTION: And he was a plumber?

That's exactly what he was. There was two plumbers, they worked together, Peter Charleston and old man Davis worked together.

QUESTION: Now, what else did Ed Ridley do? Where did he live, on Raleigh Road, and ran the meat market?

Yes, he lived on Raleigh Road.

QUESTION: Now, can we talk about William Ridley, the one that cut hair?

He was the one that cut hair.

QUESTION: He ran a Barber Shop?

Yes.

QUESTION: Did anybody ever tell you there was a Bar there on Wall Street?

Yea, there use to be a bar on Wall Street, Big folks use to run it?

QUESTION: Who is Big Folks?

Well, we use to call them Big Folks Ridley, Ed Ridley. Ed Ridley was running the bar.

QUESTION: And he ran the bar?

Yea.

QUESTION: Well did they have a place on the corner down there that was a rooming house or something?

Yea.

QUESTION: What was the name of it?

I forget the name of it. I did know the name of it but I forgot it.

QUESTION: Was it called the Bamba?

Yes, it was the Bamba. That's what it was called.

QUESTION: They rented rooms there?

Yea. It was about right there where the Armory is.

QUESTION: Did you ever meet Dr. Shaw?

Yes sir.

QUESTION: Can you tell me something about the man, his character, was he a good man?

Well, Dr. Shaw was pretty good in a way but he always tried to make it hard for the poor man.

QUESTION: What do you mean make it hard?

Well the time the welfare came out they had all these people working on these welfare jobs, digging ditches and things, barefeeted and half naked, he didn't want to give the people the food. I went over there to see him once or twice and he wanted to hold the food back. He just didn't want to give it to black folks. He was the head of food program with the Taylor crowd.

QUESTION: Who were the Taylors?

Lee Taylor and all of them. They was the head of all that.

QUESTION: Was they white or black?

White.

QUESTION: Did you ever know where his farm was?

Yea, his farm was out here on the Stovall Road where Harris's Inn is.

QUESTION: Did you know who lived out there or who farmed his land for him or anything?

Harris use to farm it.

QUESTION: And then after he got tired, he sold the property to the Harris's?

Yea.

QUESTION: What do you think about Dr. Shaw, do you think he was one of the greatest men who has ever lived in Oxford?

I don't think so. Not to my thinking.

QUESTION: What do you think, what do you say?

He founded the school it's true but I know how he treated us black folks cause I was one of them.

QUESTION: What else did he do, did he want you to look down to him?

He wanted you to look down to him all the time.

QUESTION: So are you saying that he dealt only with big shots?

Yea.

QUESTION: So he would help people that didn't need help?

That's the story. He and William Ridley was good friends.

QUESTION: Can you tell me a little bit about how he handled his businesses, didn't he own all those buildings downtown?

Who that Shaw? Yea, he show did.

QUESTION: Do you know who the first black doctor that your parents or anyone else told you that was first in Oxford?

Well our first black doctor was Dr. Bowie.



QUESTION: Can you tell me a little about him?

He was alright, a fine man.

QUESTION: Did he do a lot for Oxford when he was here?

Yea, he done a great deal for Oxford.

QUESTION: Was he a business man?

Well he had time for you if you did have some money and didn't have no money. He was from Jersey. He would wait on you. It won't like it is now.

QUESTION: Do you know who the next black doctor was in Oxford?

Bob Jamison?

QUESTION: Can I tell you who the next black doctor was in Oxford?

Who?

QUESTION: Have you ever heard of Dr. Ford?

No.

QUESTION: Dr. Dilliard?

Yea, I knowed Dr. Dilliard.

QUESTION: Who did Dr. Dilliard marry?

I don't know.

QUESTION: Did he marry \_\_\_\_\_ Jenkins daughter?

I don't know. I'll tell you what I know.

QUESTION: What about dentists? Who was the first black dentist in Oxford?

Dr. Hicks.

QUESTION: Do you know Ms. Betty Owens?

Yea, I know Ms. Betty Owens.

QUESTION: Did you ever hear of Dr. Burke?

No, I haven't heard anything about Dr. Burke.

QUESTION: Dr. Burke was the first black dentist in Oxford.

I can't remember him. I'll just tell you what I remember.

QUESTION: Did you know where Ed Smith's funeral home was up town?

Yea.

QUESTION: Where was it at?

Right up there where Firestone place is now.

QUESTION: Dr. Burke was in that same building up stairs. Didn't Shepard start out up there too?

I don't know if he started up stairs or not.

QUESTION: Was he in that block uptown too?

I just don't remember.

QUESTION: Did Ed Smith have a shoe shop?

Yea, shoe shop and he was a undertaker too.

QUESTION: What type of guy was he?

(EDDIE I CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHAT HE SAID HERE)

QUESTION: Did you ever hear talk of another undertaker before Ed Smith?

In the undertaker business?

QUESTION: Yes. Did you ever hear of a Hester, or a Caldwell?

No, that don't sound familiar.

QUESTION: What about movie theatres, did you ever hear of Young?

Yea, John Young.

QUESTION: Tell me about him.

He was up there where the cemetary is, right in that street there.

QUESTION: How was he?

He was pretty good.

QUESTION: You ever heard of Ms. Meta Cooper?

Yea.

QUESTION: How was she?

She was a friend of ours. She was alright.

QUESTION: What did she do?

She run the cafe.

QUESTION: Was she a nice lady?

Yes she was, good to people.

QUESTION: Was her restaurant beside the graveyard where the street is now?

Her restaurant was right in there beside John Young.

QUESTION: Can you tell me where the first laundry was in Oxford that you remember?

I know Capehart Cleaners was right there where it is now.

QUESTION: Was Oxford Laundry downtown where the club is now?

No, it won't that far down I don't think.

QUESTION: Do you remember who worked at Capehart Cleaners?

Ed Boyd, Dewey Parker and them worked there.

QUESTION: Can you tell me anything about the Churches in Oxford? Did they have large congregations in those days? Since you are a Reverend, what do you think about the churches back in those days?

Well they was a little bit more spirtual back then. You take some of those churches back there when I was younger, I had to go because my mama and father carried me. There was a church that use to sit down there on Hillsborough Street where I use to go and I enjoyed it.

QUESTION: What church did you come up in?

Methodist Church. I use to go to the Methodist Church right there on Hillsborough Street, right there where Ray use to be. That's where I come up at.

QUESTION: You came up in that Church?

Yea, Reverend Iceson was my pastor. The churches back there in them days, they look like to me they was more friendlier than they are now. They aint friendly like they was when I came along.

QUESTION: What about the relationship between whites and blacks back in those days when you were a little boy?

We run along together. I would go over there and sit down and eat them and they would eat with me. They would come over my house and we played together. I would go over there and they would say "come on in here William and get you some dinner." Take Neil Ross and Henry Ross, all of them are big bacco (tobacco) guys at Imperial and Adams. They would invite us in and we would sit down and eat together.

QUESTION: Can you tell me anything about the hospital, how it looked a long time ago up there at the white Granville Hospital, was that the first hospital in Oxford?

No, we had one somewhere else, I'm trying to think of where it was. It was a whole building somewhere.

QUESTION: Did you ever see the old Granville Hospital before they built the new one?

Yea.

QUESTION: How did it look?

I thought it was built kind of like a big house.

QUESTION: Where did the blacks go to the hospital before Susie Cheatham?

They went to Durham.

QUESTION: Where did people get water from?

We use to carry water from up there at the courthouse clean down to Spring Street

QUESTION: From where?

From the courthouse.

QUESTION: Where did you get the water.

It use to be a water factory right there where you go down in the basement on that side.

QUESTION: Back where the jail is?

Yea, on that side they had a pump there and we use to pump water.  
Not only me and all them people in the red house.

QUESTION: What happened in the winter time?

We done the same thing. We carried water.

QUESTION: Everybody that lived in that area?'

Yea, old Nance and Earl Hodges them. Earl use to live on the hill  
over there at the railroad. We all use to just tote water from  
way over there.

QUESTION: Did you ever know Mr. Rook Garrett?

Yea I knowed Rook.

QUESTION: What did he use to do?

He use to work for the a city a while I think.

QUESTION: Did he ever light the gas lanterns?

Yea and my daddy did that too.

QUESTION: Did what?

He use to light the gas lanterns?

QUESTION: How did he tell you it was done?

He didn't say, but I knowed he had to go and light them cause he  
lit them all around town. I don't know how far he had to go cause  
I suspect old man Garrett went part and he went part.

QUESTION: How did they keep the toilets cleaned out? Who did that?

Old man Ivory Daye hauled that stuff in a dump truck. That stuff  
would be stinking all over the whole street. I despised to see  
that thing come along.

QUESTION: Did old man Couch work with him?

Nay, Fred Smith worked with him. Fred Smith drove one too. He  
had a red mule.

QUESTION: Red mule?

Yea, red and black mule.

QUESTION: Where did Fred Smith live?

He use to carry that stuff all on the hill over there and dump it in holes.

QUESTION: Where?

Back over here where the dogs pens is over there. Haul it out there and dump it in holes.

QUESTION: Would they go around and clean out the toilets?

Clean out the toilets with shovels and throw it up in the truck.

QUESTION: Were they working for the city?

Yes, the City cleaned toilets out free.

QUESTION: And Ivory Daye and Fred Smith?

Yea.

QUESTION: Do you know where Ivory Daye lived?

Yea, he lived right there on the other side of Fairbo. A house use to sit up there right beside the poolroom.

QUESTION: Is there anyone related to Ivory Daye that's living now?

I don't know where all those children went, I think they went up North somewhere. They got big jobs up north.

QUESTION: What about Fred Smith?

Fred dead. That was Ola Smith's brother. You know old Will Smith that use to run the undertaker parlor.

QUESTION: Can you tell me anything else that blacks did working for the city? Who was the first people to work with the water department and that stuff.

Old man Lewis Robertson. He was the water man. He run a pump, he looked after the pump.

QUESTION: Where did he live?

He lived down here on Orange Street.

QUESTION: Was he black or white?

Black.

QUESTION: He was the first man that worked with the water department. How did they do it?

They had one of those old big pumps built in the ground. They had one right down here I think about it all the time. That thing use run all night long.

QUESTION: Where was it at?

Down there in that pasture in the back of Elvin Peace.

QUESTION: Were the first buildings that had water city buildings?

Yea, that's right and the pump house was down there on Orange Street by Elvin Peace.

QUESTION: So Mr. Lewis Rogers kept the pump running.

Yea, he kept them going. He and old Neil, his brother Neil. They had one, two, they had three pumps. They had one down yonder at the ice plant, sitting down there in that field. That's where we was getting our water.

QUESTION: The ice plant was off Orange Street on Sycamore Street?

And over there to Mary Potter School. That would be Railroad Street. I'll never forget them things.

QUESTION: And that's where the pump house where the water came from?

Pumps would take care of the town.

QUESTION: Until they came in and put water lines from the water in Tar River. Okay, what about the lights, just where were lights at when you first remembered?

I had lamps myself.

QUESTION: Do you know where the first house or first building you seen lights in when you were growing up?

No. We used lights.

QUESTION: Have you ever heard of Albert Albright?

Yea.

QUESTION: What did he do?

He worked for the Carolina Power and Light Company.

QUESTION: What did Ms. Meta Cooper's husband do?

Jerome Crews, he worked for the water department. He died.

QUESTION: What about Ed Jones?

I don't know.

QUESTION: Did he ever work for the telephone company or the light company?

I don't know, I couldn't tell you.

QUESTION: All you know is he worked for the city?

Yea.

QUESTION: What else took place when you were a young boy that I need to know in Oxford or how Oxford has changed.

Well we won't paying nothing much for water bill, about \$1.50 and then now would charge you about \$17.00 or \$18.00.

QUESTION: Who put the streets in Oxford?

R.J. Lassiter and old man Fred Parham.

QUESTION: Where did they get their help from?

They brought it them up from South Carolina and Georgia. John Assgill came here with them. Do you remember John? Well he come here with Lassiter. John come in here as one of the top men. He was a forman like.

QUESTION: He was one of the men that helped lay that asphalt?

Yea.

QUESTION: Okay, where did they start first?

Seems like to me they started down the hill and come up Main Street.

QUESTION: Did anybody ever tell you that there was a well in the center of town where Planters Bank was?

There was a place there where they use to water horses at in the center of the street.



QUESTION: Can you tell me a little about Aft Mangum, what kind of guy he was and what he did for the city?

He run a barber shop down in the basement. He waited on white folks. He didn't wait on no black folks.

QUESTION: Did he help blacks any?

I don't think so.

QUESTION: Okay, Dr. Toney, you knew him real good. What type of guy was he.

I thought Dr. Toney was alright.

QUESTION: What about Dr. Anderson?

Dr. Anderson was alright, he was my friend, my close friend.

QUESTION: If you had to pick one or two people in Oxford back when you were growing up, who do you think contributed more or tried to work for Oxford to make it better? Who would you think?

What do you mean, right now?

QUESTION: Yes and back then?

I don't know, I really hadn't thought about it.

QUESTION: What did Ed Littlejohn and his family do?

They did a good job as far as I know of.

QUESTION: What about Mr. Littlejohn that ran the store on Orange Street, what type of man was he?

Well he was pretty good.

QUESTION: What about the Coopers? Did Jam Coopers daddy run a store?

Yea. I thought a lot about him.

QUESTION: Well tell me about Mr. Cooper.

He use to be a pretty good man, Jam's daddy.

QUESTION: Where did Mr. Cooper work at?

I'll tell you he use to be a American Tobacco Company man. He use to work for them some but Mr. Cooper stopped and started down there in the store. I thought a lot of him.

QUESTION: Did you ever know Chester that worked for Mr. Hancock?

Yea, Chester Cooper.

QUESTION: Did you know any of his friends who worked around town for these people?

Jason Ridley.

QUESTION: What did he do?

He worked around up there for Lassiter, you know. They called him James Ridley. That was his real name.

QUESTION: Where did he live?

He stayed up there at Lassiters.

QUESTION: Was he from Oxford?

Yea.

QUESTION: Who was some of his family?

I never knowed his people. I knew him and Cora Washington and all them, but Cora Washington she come from Henderson.

QUESTION: What about Mr. Lucinus Green, was he a good man and hard worker around here?

Yea, he was a good man.

QUESTION: Do you know who he worked for when he was young?

No, when I come to know him real good, he was in school, working at the school.

QUESTION: What other kind of work did you do?

I worked everywhere, at the laundry.

QUESTION: Did you meet a lot of people when you worked at the laundry?

Oh yea, I was the top man.

QUESTION: And you were a painter too?

Yea, I use to contract all around Oxford for white and black.

QUESTION: Was Oxford a half way good town to make a decent living in?

Yea, I made it.

QUESTION: What about other blacks that had businesses, Dr. Anderson had rented houses and stuff like that.

He had some houses but I don't know where they went to. He had one house down there next to Burke. It was a nice old big house and he had three houses or four houses down there on McClanahan Street. I just don't know what come of them.

QUESTION: Did you ever hear of Fountain Branch?

Fountain branch was right down there where Fred Douglas live.

QUESTION: Well how did it get it's name?

They use to baptize down there.

QUESTION: What Church?

They use to have a little Holy Church, right up on the hill there, right where that Norman boy live. They use to have a one room Church up there, my wife's church. They use to baptize there. You could hear those folks singing from there on down to the branch to baptize folks. It use to be something going on then. My wife would like to see that now, wouldn't you honey?

WIFE: Naw

QUESTION: Where did that branch get its name from?

I just figured they named it that because when they go there and found some branches.

QUESTION: Was it a building there with a fountain?

No. Nothing but a branch. There won't no houses down there then.

QUESTION: Was there a street in there?

Yea, street won't nothing but branches.

QUESTION: Where is that Church at now?

My wife is still going to the church. They built a big Holy Church.

QUESTION: That's where the Church was?

Yea, Mr. Peter Gregory use to be the pastor there.

QUESTION: Was Mr. Dan Willis with them then?

No, he won't with them then. Old man Peter Gregory, Ed Gregory's daddy was the pastor.

QUESTION: Did Oxford have a band?

Yea they had a band. Old man Teen Gregory, Charlie Gregory and all of them.

QUESTION: Who played the horns?

Ad Gregory, Teen Gregory, Charlie Gregory, they had a good band. Won't nothing wrong with it.

QUESTION: How was Mr. Gregory's family, were they a good family in the community?

Yea, I think so.

QUESTION: Did you ever know William Ridley's mother, she taught school? Did you know she was a school teacher?

No, I knew him but I didn't know her.

QUESTION: Did you know the Austins who lived up in Brown Town?

I knew Henry Austin and all of them. Ms. Austin taught me part time in the Graded School.

QUESTION: Did you ever know where her school was on Raleigh Road or Peace Street, in that area or was there any schools in that area?

Not that I know of.

QUESTION: Did you ever know how Peace Town got its name?

They got from old man Lee Peace didn't they, so I heard.

QUESTION: Lee Peace?

You know old Lee Peace use to be the President of the Post Office?

QUESTION: He was what?

He use the president at the Post Office.

Interview  
with  
LUCY BRANDON BORD

by James Eddie McCoy

Transcribed by Sally Council

The Southern Oral History Program  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

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[INTERVIEW BEGINS ¼ INTO TAPE, SIDE B]

LUCY BRANDON BORD  
AUGUST 5, 1981

JAMES EDDIE McCOY: This afternoon I'm visiting with Mrs. Bord. I'm Eddie McCoy. I'm discussing with Mrs. Bord about black history. Today is August the fifth, nineteen eighty-one. Time is two-thirty in the afternoon.

Mrs. Bord, how old were you when you first came to Oxford?

LUCY BRANDON BORD: Five.

EM: Where did you first live?

LB: Fourteen Sycamore Street.

EM: When you first—?

LB: You're talking about Oxford?

EM: Yes. You was five when you came to Oxford? You lived on Sycamore Street?

LB: Right. Fourteen Sycamore Street.

EM Fourteen Sycamore Street.

LB: Right.

EM: What school did you go to? And describe that school.

LB: Well, then, it was Oxford Colored Graded School.

EM: [CHANGE IN AUDIO LEVEL] ... school located where Mr. Gregory's house is?

LB: Right. I went to school in that house.

EM: OK. Did you ever hear talk of a school on Lewis Street, up on that hill, called the First Graded School?

LB: On Lewis Street?

EM: Yes.

LB: No.

EM: You never heard of a school up there?

LB: No.

EM: The Hillary School?

LB: Oh, I have heard of Hilliard, Hilliard School. H-I-L-L-I-A-R-D. I think that's it. Hilliard School.

EM: How do you spell it?

LB: I think it's H-I-L-L-I-A-R-D. Hilliard School.

EM: Did you know that school was—I heard was a white school and they moved uptown somewhere. Did you know where they moved it to?

LB: No, no.

EM: OK. Well, Mr. Patillo was a teacher and a principal in that school. Did you ever hear of that?

LB: No, I never heard of him being a principal or teacher at Hilliard School but he was a principal and a teacher in the school I attended.

EM: Mrs. Payne's mother and Mrs. Annie Hester went to school over at Hilliard School. It was called the First Graded School.

LB: I see. Well, I can't go back that far. I don't know.

EM: Did you ever know why they called that branch Fountain Branch?

LB: No.

EM: No one never told you that?

LB: No.

EM: Tell me something about your first and second grade in that house.

Describe the house and what it's—.

LB: Well, it was pretty much like it is now. Now, that—I believe that was an annex to another part of a school.

EM: Oh, yeah?

LB: Uh-huh. And they had an upstairs to it and we had to go up and down the steps and we had a teacher to each grade, very good teachers. And Mr. Patillo was principal when I first started. He lived on Lewis Street, he and his family. But he was principal of that school.

EM: Name some of your classmates that's around here now. Could you remember one or two?

LB: You don't mean first graders?

EM: No.

LB: Just anywhere along the way?

EM: Just someone that went to school with you in that building.

LB: Oh, in that building. Lord have mercy! If I make no mistake, I believe William Baskerville went to school—now, let me see if I can think of anybody else. My, my, my. Right off-hand, I'll be dogged if I can think of anyone else, you know, who's alive. That's what you're interested in?

EM: Yes. What year did you go to that school? Do you remember what year you was attending school in that area?



LB: Well, let me see. I guess there from maybe nineteen and eleven. I guess it's under nineteen eleven or nineteen and twelve as a beginner. And then I went seven years. We finished seventh grade there.

EM: Oh, OK.

LB: Had a nice commencement and what-have-you.

EM: Describe across the street from the school. What was across there, the houses and the buildings and the playgrounds?

LB: Like where the school is now?

EM: Yes.

LB: Oh, that was a big apartment house, old but a two-story apartment house. And that was the first thing. That was there for several years. And there were nice people living there. But it was an apartment house. I think some lived upstairs and some downstairs and like that.

EM: Did Mr. Otha Cozart ever live over there?

LB: If he did, I can't recall it.

EM: Any of the Greens?

LB: Yes, some Greens. Oh, yes. Big family of Greens.

EM: Uh-huh. Do you know the name of any of them?

LB: One was named [Ruth] and one of the sons was named Billy.

EM: Billy worked for who?

LB: Mr. Ed Smith, an undertaker. Now, wait a minute. Undertaker and—.

EM: Shoe shop.

LB: Shoe repair—right.

EM: Was Billy a good shoe repairman?

LB: Now, I don't remember that. I'm sure he was because he worked with Mr. Smith a long time. I don't remember—I'm a little—you know, I don't remember about—.

EM: What else was on that side? Was Little Zion Church over there?

LB: I believe it was.

EM: Mrs. Bord, did you ever hear talk of a lady named Mrs. Spencer? She was a nurse and came here to build a hospital across the street.

LB: Right. In that old big house, that same big house.

EM: Describe it. What did she do?

LB: I don't know.

EM: Did she remodel the house and tear it out or did she build from the ground up?

LB: I don't think she did much of either. Now, I tell you—you see, being a teenager—now, by then, most likely I was in high school, you see? And you know how high school kids are. You see, they just aren't too interested in development of a neighborhood or anything like that. But she—I think it was clean and all like that and I think she did fairly well.

EM: But you've heard of her?

LB: Oh, yeah. Yeah. She had some kind of a hospital in that building.

EM: What happened? Did you ever hear talk of what happened to Mrs. Spencer?

Did she get sick? She left here? Or what?

LB: I believe she left. Now, I'm not sure because I wouldn't know her if she'd walk in now. But I believe she left.

EM: Could you tell me what happened to Lizzie Green that lived in that house across the street? Was she in your class?

LB: No, no. She was older, much older.

EM: What about Ruby? Was she in your class?

LB: Ruby Green. [Rulen] That's what they call it. No, she—they didn't go to school much. I guess she would have been if she had attended school. And Lizzie was much older. She was a daughter, but she and Billy were along together, grown.

EM: OK. You went to Mary Potter. Were the streets paved when you went to Mary Potter or were they dirt?

LB: What a question! I imagine they were dirt streets. I'm sure they were. Now, what streets do you mean?

EM: Over on McClanahan Street.

LB: Oh, on McClanahan Street?

EM: Yes, over there in front of Dr. Shaw's house.

LB: I think they were paved. I believe they were paved. I'm almost certain they were paved.

EM: What year did you get to Mary Potter? What year did you graduate from Mary Potter?

LB: Twenty-four. And at that time, you see, we had a class—let me see, five from twenty-four would leave nineteen nineteen, wouldn't it?

EM: You know Mr. Alston, then? Henry Alston?

LB: Oh, yes.

EM: Wasn't he over there in your class?

LB: He wasn't in my class. Henry went to Mary Potter, but—like all the other kids, you and all the rest of them, but no, he wasn't in my class. He was behind me.

EM: Did you remember the Sunday morning the boys' dorm burned up?

LB: Slightly.

EM: Do you remember the dorm beside—?

LB: That burned?

EM: Yes, beside Dr. Shaw's house?

LB: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

EM: Did they ever tell you where they got the material at, or how they built that building?

LB: Uh-um.

EM: No one ever mentioned it?

LB: Not to me. Me, I really wasn't interested.

EM: OK. What did you do after you graduated from Mary Potter?

LB: Well, I married the next year.

EM: Did you stay in Oxford?

LB: Yes, I did.

EM: You made Oxford your home?

LB: Right. And two children were born later. And then I went to North Carolina Central and did my college work.

EM: Did—could you tell me who was the first black doctor in this city that you heard of?

LB: Yeah, that I heard of, now. I have to put it that way.

EM: OK.

LB: Dr. Booher. B-O-O-H—I believe—Booher. I believe it was B-O-O-H-E-R. I believe. I forgot his first name.

EM: Would you thing it's B-O-U-I-E?

LB: No, no.

EM: How you spell it?

LB: I believe it was B-O-O-H-E-R. But people spell proper names differently.

EM: OK. Did you remember his daughter and son?

LB: Uh-hum. But I couldn't call them. I mean, I couldn't name—give you their names right now.

EM: Do you know where his office was or where he lived?

LB: Uh-huh.

EM: Where did he live?

LB: He lived up there—the land now belongs to [Friendly] Village.

EM: That's where his office was or that's where he lived?

LB: No, that's where his house was.

EM: Was his office where—?

LB: I think his office was further uptown.

EM: What his office where they built—where Goodrich—Goodyear's place?

LB: I guess it was something like that. I don't remember, to tell you the truth.

EM: How long was he here?

LB: I don't remember because he'd been here a long time before I came around.

I don't even remember.

EM: Who was the next doctor that you heard of?

LB: That came after Dr. Booher?

EM: Uh-huh. Was it Dr. Ford, that married the Witt? Robert Witt mean anything to you?

LB: Uh-uh.

EM: James Hunt married Miss Witt. James Hunt's wife was a Witt. And his wife's sister met Dr. [Witt] in New York.

LB: Is that right? And they came here?

EM: For a while.

LB: Dr. Witt came here?

EM: Dr. Ford.

LB: Dr. Ford. Yeah, that name rings a bell, but don't ask me any more about it.

EM: OK. What about Dr. Dillard?

LB: Uh-hum.

EM: Tell me about him.

LB: He was my brother-in-law.

EM: How did he—just give me a little bit—?

LB: He married my sister and they lived here a short while.

EM: I need to know—this is very important from you—why did he and your sister leave Oxford. Because Dr. Toney—I heard from someone else that he was living in Henderson, heard your brother-in-law were leaving town and he thought that he would do better in Oxford than he would in Henderson. Now, I want you to verify—.

LB: I guess you're about right. I guess you're just about right. He certainly did live in Henderson for a short while.

EM: He did?

LB: Yeah.

EM: OK. Because you have to verify this because I heard it and you can verify that he did start in Henderson first before Oxford.

LB: Uh-hum.

EM: And when your brother-in-law left town—.

LB: Now, I wouldn't put it the day after my brother-in-law—.

EM: I understand. OK.

LB: But he didn't come while my brother-in-law was here.

EM: OK. Could you tell me a little about Dr. Dillard?

LB: Well, everybody said—you know, I think members of a family ought to be very modest—everybody said he was a good doctor.

EM: Uh-huh. Where did they do?

LB: When he left here—now, let me get that thing straight.

EM: Did he go to Alabama?

LB: No, it look like to me he went to Columbus—wait a minute, let me think.

EM: Florida?

LB: Where did he go? I believe that was when he made his move to Columbus County.

EM: Where is Columbus County? In North Carolina?

LB: Yeah.

EM: He went back home?

LB: No, no. His home was Goldsboro. They stayed in Columbus County several years. Then he moved back home, Goldsboro. And he had a good practice. Everywhere he went, he had a good practice.

EM: Still living now?

LB: No, no. He died in the forties.

EM: Let's go to dentists. Who was the first black dentist you ever heard of in Oxford?

LB: Now, the first one that I remember being here was a Dr. Burke.

EM: OK.

LB: Billy Burke. B-U-R-K-E. And he was just as nice as he could be. He lived down about where the service station is. Don't some—don't Negro ( )?

EM: Didn't he live with Mrs. Owens? With Betty Owens? Would you buy that?

LB: Well, that was the house.

EM: He lived with Mrs. Betty Owens?

LB: Right. But, you know, it's a filling station there now. You don't know either, but anyhow. I forgot who runs that filling station. Across from the bus station, the bus stop.



EM: Do you know why he left Oxford? Did he get married or did he have children?

LB: Who, Dr. Burke?

EM: Uh-huh.

LB: Oh, he was married when he came here and he had a kid after they came here.

EM: Did you know his wife's name?

LB: Let me see, what was her name? Mrs. Burke, Mrs. Burke. I don't know but they were the finest people at all. but anyhow, she was from Dallas, Texas, and she just wanted to go back home. I think maybe Oxford was, you know, just a little small and all, but they were lovely people and we hated so bad for them to leave. I believe both of them have passed now.

EM: Uh-huh. Yeah, I have he went to Dallas, Texas, too. And then Dr. Hicks was the next one.

LB: Right.

EM: Tell me about the druggist, the pharmacy that was here.

LB: We had so many, I don't even remember their names.

EM: OK, what about Mr. Ransom?

LB: Eugene? Uh-hum. He was nice, but Eugene—yeah, he ran a little—a drugstore and almost a—uh-hum.

EM: Can you tell me about William? They call him Doc William. He was a—he ran the drugstore, too. Was he a doctor or was he a pharmacist?

LB: Dr. Williams. Yeah. Oh, he was a pharmacist.

EM: They just called him Doc? How—do you know anything about him? No one can tell me.

LB: No, I don't remember. But he was very good.

EM: He was?

LB: Uh-hum.

EM: OK.

LB: And all of them used the same place, up there where the beauty parlor is now. On the corner there, under Dr. Toney, where Dr. Toney's office was.

EM: Uh-huh. Did you ever know who owned any of those businesses down that street? Did anyone ever tell you who—any blacks ever owned all those buildings?

LB: Dr. Toney owned the whole thing.

EM: But before Dr. Toney, did you know?

LB: Oh, I don't know.

EM: Dr. Toney built those buildings hisself, from ground up?

LB: No, he didn't. I can tell you who—now, that building where the beauty parlor is in—you know what I'm talking about? The beauty parlor?

EM: Yes ma'am.

LB: That was built by a group of men, which nowadays you would call, I guess, a professional [gang].

EM: Were they black?

LB: Yes.

EM: Do you know any of those guys that built that building? Could you give me—?

LB: That helped? My father ( ) was one. Reverend Henry Jenkins.

EM: Henry?

LB: Jenkins. J-E-N-K-I-N-S. He was one. And this Dr. Dillard, which was son-in-law, I believe. And Alf Mangum. And I believe Dr. Shaw. Reverend Lee Johnson. That's about as far as I can go. There were several more.

EM: These—this was the group of men that formed a corporation or organization to build that building?

LB: Well, they were already organized, I think. But I think they wanted to do something, you know, maybe invest.

EM: OK. Now, do you want to go—what we call uptown in Oxford, now, and tell me a little about the blacks that had businesses up there? Did you know Mr.—?

LB: Now, Ed Smith had his undertaking establishment and his, you know, shoe business. That was uptown. That was in there near Jones's Drugstore.

EM: OK. What else?

LB: And, let me see, across the street, I would say, over—let's say, over Penny's Furniture Company—somewhere along in there, upstairs Robert Shepard had his funeral home. The dentists, Dr. Burke and Dr. Hicks, had their offices upstairs there. And looks like to me somebody else. But anyway, those.

EM: Dr. Burke was up there?

LB: Oh, yes. He was up there first. Then, when he left, Dr. Hicks took his office upstairs there.

EM: And who else? And Dr. Hicks?

LB: Uh-hum. Now, you know where I'm talking about?

EM: Yes. And who else?

LB: I named three.

EM: Shepard Funeral Home.

LB: Right. And Dr. Hicks—I mean, Dr. Burke and Dr. Hicks had that dentist office up there.

EM: OK. They was on that side of the street.

LB: Right. Close together, upstairs. And then, don't forget, Mr. William Ridley had a barber shop down Wall Street. Do you call it Wall Street now?

EM: Yes ma'am.

LB: Uh-huh. I think they still—I believe a boy still owns some property. I'm not too sure.

EM: You want to tell me about the jewelry store Mr. Ed Cannady owned? Did you remember that, or was that one—was there a jewelry store that you—?

LB: Now, I don't remember no jewelry store, but it look like he did repair jewelry, watches.

EM: OK.

LB: Was that his name, Ed Cannady?

EM: It might have been Tom or William.

LB: I don't know. You find out what his first name was, but he repaired jewelry.

EM: Did anyone ever have a person—did the Cannadys have a newspaper? You ever heard of that?

LB: No. Now, let me tell you a little bit more about that side of the street. I'm over on Williams's—I 'm over on Jones's side, now. There was a group of Negroes who had shares—what do I want to say?

EM: Stock?

LB: Who owned—yeah. Who owned that building in there somewhere. My father was one.

EM: Name him.

LB: My father. Reverend Lee Johnson. Dr. and Mrs. Shaw.

EM: OK.

LB: I'm trying to think of somebody else. I know about them. Just put et cetera, et cetera. I can't think of any more right offhand.

EM: But your father and Dr. Shaw.

LB: Dr. and Mrs.—Mrs. Shaw had her own separate shares.

EM: What about—?

LB: And did I call Reverend Lee Johnson?

EM: No.

LB: Reverend Lee Johnson. All right, now, what did you say? What about what?

EM: What about Dr.—what about Mr. Mangum? Was he into that group?

LB: No, I don't think he—.

EM: He wasn't in that one?

LB: No, no. He wasn't in that.

EM: OK. You got Lee Johnson, Dr. Shaw, Reverend—?

LB: Dr. and Mrs. Shaw and Reverend Henry Jenkins.

EM: OK.

LB: I know there was several more. Oh yeah, Mrs. B. H. Rogers. She lived down Raleigh Road.

EM: Who?

LB: Mrs. B. H. Rogers. R-O-G-E-R-S. I believe those are about all. There was some more, but it look like me those are about all I can think of. They have to stop it. That'd be all of them.

EM: OK.

LB: Wait a minute. I can think about somebody else who had more businesses up there. Oh, I can't right now. Go [ahead].

EM: OK. What about—did you ever hear talk of a black lawyer in Granville County? Was there ever a black lawyer back then?

LB: Look like I can't recall. Do you have a name of one?

EM: I heard that a Tom Cannady was a lawyer at Oxford or Durham.

LB: Well, that was before my day. I didn't know him.

EM: OK. Did you ever hear talk of a boarding house in Oxford? Did you ever hear talk of a Cooper lady or someone running a boarding house?

LB: Meeder Cooper.

EM: Meeder Cooper? Tell me about her.

LB: Well, that was on Penn Avenue. Uh-huh. She had a prosperous business.

EM: She did?

LB: Yeah.

EM: Did you know anything about her husband, Mr. Cooper? Was he a linesman?

LB: Yeah.

EM: For a telephone company or a light company?

LB: I believe it was the light company. I'm not sure. It might have been telephone. I don't remember which, but he was a good one.

EM: Did he come from Burlington/

LB: He came from out of town. I don't know where, but he came from out of town.

EM: Do you know anything about Mrs. Meeder Cooper? Where she went to church at or what type of lady she was?

LB: I believe she was Presbyterian. I'm ( ) satisfied she was Presbyterian.

EM: She was? What type of lady by running a boarding house did she—was she fair to her people, work with them?

LB: Yeah, she was fine. Just as smart as she could be.

EM: What about Mr. Cooper?

LB: Well, of course, he was a fine person.

EM: Uh-hum. Did—?

LB: Well, he stuck more or less, you know, to his trade. Of course, that was a job, then, almost twenty-four hours a day, you know. If anything went bad, I believe, they would electrocute.

EM: Electric people?

LB: Looked like to me they were. I don't know. Better say linesman—you won't get it wrong.

EM: Uh-huh. Did he have a gup that worked with him?

LB: Yeah.

EM: What was his name?

LB: Mr. Albright.

EM: OK. Where was Mr.—didn't Mr. Albright and Mr. Cooper come here together from Hillsborough?

LB: I don't remember.

EM: OK.

LB: They came from out of town.

EM: Wasn't Albright an electrician here in this city?

LB: That's what I'm trying to figure out. I guess that's what they were doing, both of them.

EM: Do you remember any repairs, or any houses he repaired?

LB: No, because, looked like to me, as well as I can recall—I was a little girl. It looked like to me, whenever I'd see them, they were just climbing poles, you know.

EM: Did Mr. Albright marry a lady from this town?

LB: I don't know. I better leave that alone.

EM: What about Miss Hunt?

LB: Uh-hum.



EM: Huh?

LB: I don't know about that. I'd better leave that alone.

EM: You don't know anything about that?

LB: I know—I knew her. But as far as their marital relationship is concerned, I'd better leave that alone.

EM: OK.

LB: I'm getting up. I'll be right back. Go ahead and ask me a question.

[TAPE RECORDER IS TURNED OFF AND THEN BACK ON.]

EM: Mrs. Bord, tell me the restaurant that you ever heard of in Oxford that people ate at or known about. Or where did the whites eat when they went downtown? Or where did the blacks? Was it two different restaurants or was it one restaurant?

LB: Well, there was one uptown on Main Street and that was known as Greely Harris's restaurant. He was a Negro but he ran the business and, as far as I can recall, he had all white patrons.

EM: Could you tell me whereabouts—a idea where that restaurant is located?

LB: Along, as well as I can recall, along about where the—what's the name of that store?

EM: William Breedlove's Furniture Store?

LB: Oh, no. Wait a minute. Uh-uh. It's on Main Street. What's the name of that little drugstore right there near Central Carolina Bank?