

TRANSCRIPT—DOUG CLARK

Interviewee: DOUG CLARK SR  
Interviewer: Bob Gilgor  
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START OF TAPE 1, SIDE A

BOB GILGOR: This is March the 5<sup>th</sup>, and this is Bob Gilgor interviewing Doug Clark at his home at 213 Crest Drive.

Good afternoon, Doug.

DOUG CLARK: Good afternoon, Bob.

BG: How are you today?

DC: Great.

BG: Good. I appreciate your taking the time to let me interview you. Thank you.

DC: Thank you for coming.

BG: It means a lot to me. You're an icon in the community and it's wonderful to have you as part of the show. I want to ask you three broad questions—well, maybe two. One is, what was it like growing up in Chapel Hill, and when did you grow up in Chapel Hill?

DC: Well I was born sixth month, eighteenth day, '36, on Graham Street, Chapel Hill. My parents, John Hester Clark Senior and Rebecca Sellers Clark. And I have one other brother, John Clark Junior. That's when I was born, on Graham, I don't know the house number. That street at that time was a dirt street, too.

My parents moved from Graham Street to Knolls Development, it was called then. Which was three blocks, four blocks from Graham Street. At that time this was really in the country. There wasn't any city limits. And that's another dirt street.

My parents at that time, my mother worked at the university laundry. And my dad worked at the South Building, and he moonlighted at night at the Carolina Inn. My brother John, and myself, we moved here when I was four years old. My brother John was six.

We used to go to school at Orange County Training School. Now it's called Northside. We walked to school. They didn't let us ride in the buses, then. They had maybe two school buses. And they just had consolidated the schools from the county into the city. And those two school buses picked up kids in the county. And we had to walk to school, from here—rain, sleet, snow, or what—to Orange County Training School.

BG: What was that, a mile and a half, a mile?

DC: I would say maybe a mile, a good mile. If it was straight it probably would be a mile. If it was criss-crossing, maybe a mile and a quarter.

And all the streets were dirt except for Franklin Street at that time. And when I was small, the pavement street started from Robinson Street on Cameron Avenue. Then you have Franklin Street, then Rosemary Street, and all of the . . . Graham, and the north part of Robinson Street was dirt. All of Potter's Field, Sunset, was dirt.

And we had to walk to school. It's funny how when we leave from down here—we were like on this far end with Southwest Lane right across the street up here. And then had ( ) right across behind the car wash and all--.

BG: Across the railroad track.

DC: The railroad track. It was amazing how all the kids would get up in the morning. And they would start walking, like little ants coming from different areas. And everybody, by the time they get to Hargraves Center, it was like a line of kids, black kids, going to school. As you passed by houses, kids would come out and everybody's talking and playing all the way to school. Rain, sleet, snow, or what.

We didn't have anything like—well they had taxicabs here, but it was Tar Heel Taxi and was white. They didn't—most of the blacks usually didn't go to school. And didn't have no street buses. There were very few cars in the neighborhood.

But you know, I believe my brother and I—and which I've often said—we came through the best times of probably all times. I guess why I saw this is because, when we came along in this neighborhood

here there wasn't even any street lights down here. My daddy, my mom and all of them they lobbied to get street lights. But the five houses down here had to pay extra with their light bill for those street lights.

And then, there wasn't but two phones in the neighborhood. We had one, and down the street William Scott had one. If people were calling the neighborhood for somebody, you had to go to the window and holler out and tell them the telephone was for them. But the neighborhood was just that quiet then. People could hear you calling somebody five or six doors down without you really having to go that far down. And that was the old hand phone, where you had a hook on.

We didn't know that we didn't have a lot. We thought we had a lot. And then in the fifties, when TVs first came up, TV stations used to come on at six o'clock and go off at eleven. And you always tell when they give you the ( ) because the TV channel would sign off with "Dixie." And we thought that was great, with TV. And as kids, all this entertainment we had. Really structured you with the church. You went to the movies. And you went to Boy Scout meetings. And you went to all activities at the school, for basketball, football, baseball.

They had a baseball team, the local team, the Chapel Hill ( ) they called them. All these guys came out of World War II and they started a baseball team. They used to play at Hargraves Field. That was our entertainment on Saturdays and Sundays. People used to go to see baseball.

Chapel Hill was such a close-knit area. You knew everybody and everybody knew you. Black and white. Because everybody was connected with the university in one way or the other.

But especially the black neighborhood was so much fun. My neighborhood was like ( ) Avenue. My mom and dad, next door from where I live, from where they live now, where they built a house in '56, we had two basketball goals we built. Beside their garden. And that was the neighborhood basketball court. On Sunset Drive, beside William Prince Taylor's house, they had a basketball goal that Harold Robinson, Frank Robinson, Prince Taylor, and James Atwater built. We all done it ourselves. In Potter's Field area, in James Atwater's house, and Sam Atwater's house, they had a basketball court outside. That was where all the kids in that neighborhood played.

So we started doing things like playing each other. Like we were some big cross-town rivalry or something.

BG: So those who played Potter's Field--?

DC: --would play Sunset Drive. ( ). That's what we would do.

And we made some things happen. That was before, right then they started going to Hargraves Center and they had one old raggedy goal over there. We had to fix that ourselves, the kids, to even play on.

But it was so close that everybody--. At Chapel Hill, it's amazing, the school at Lincoln, I heard somebody say there was about 360 kids in the whole school, seventh grade through twelfth. At that time, everybody busted their heads—we had good basketball teams, good football teams, good baseball teams, good dramatic club, good band, good glee club. But what it was, everybody had to double up on everything. In my case, I played football, baseball, basketball. I was even in dramatics club as a stage manager. And I was in the band.

BG: That's a lot of activities.

DC: Yes. Every time the bus left I was on it [laughs]. But we had so much fun. Everybody competing against each other. It was such a close-knit neighborhood with our parents. For instance, if one day my mom says I got a doctor's appointment. I would start maybe at the Hollywood Grill or the M&M Grill. ( ). All their heads would look up and they would say, "Doug, what are you doing out of school?" This was people who worked there. "Why are you not in school?" They were concerned with what you were doing. The neighborhood was just that close-knit.

It's not like today. These kids, twelve years old or what, they're out here, you don't know who's in school or out of school or what.

BG: So you couldn't miss school without your neighbors telling you about it?

DC: Not ( ). But that's all right. But you know what? This is the exciting thing about it: all the happenings were in school. You wanted to be in school because so much was going on. And your teachers were so great. And all the happenings in this town for kids then was at school. You didn't ever want to get kicked out of school. Most of the kids, if they would get on punishment, the principal would have them help the janitors shovel coal—they had coal stoves there. But nobody wanted to be home, because you were home alone. And can you imagine back then, half of them didn't have TVs? A few of them had radios. But couldn't that be boring? You had no entertainment. You got to wait until school was out, and then meet

everybody at Hargraves Center or whatever for you to enjoy the rest of the afternoon. You were sure enough isolated if you got kicked out of school.

BG: You were by yourself.

DC: That's right. And then, you didn't even want to get sick. You would go to school sick.

BG: You mom and dad were both working during the day.

DC: Right. Everybody's mom and dad was working in the day. Everybody was. I used to look at people like Mr. ( ) and Mr. Joe Black that worked for the city, the waterline. This is something you would see in a movie you thought. But it used to happen when I was a kid. The waterlines, they would dig going down Merritt Mill Road. I leave in the morning. ( ) And all of them had outdoor bathrooms on Merritt Mill Road. These guys in the morning, you pass by them, they're singing, all of them got picks and shovels, digging the water line. With that hard dirt going down Merritt Mill Road. They didn't have back holes and all that at that time.

And you see the kids, they look at all the progress that they made back then, comparing to what it was then. And this is ( ) was singing gospel tunes and they're just singing and throwing that pick and that hard clay. This ain't something that somebody told me. This is something I seen.

And you look at—Mr. ( ) had five or six kids. And these kids were going to school. And the rest of the people who didn't work for the university worked for the saw mill. I'll never forget this guy, this foreman, this white man was standing over them like they were prisoners or something. Like he didn't know how to dig a ditch—everybody can dig a damn ditch! Excuse my expression [laughs]. I never figured this white man—I don't know his name—but he had part of his fingers cut off. But he would be there all day sitting over guys while they dig this ditch. They wasn't prisoners. This was their job. These black guys knew more about digging a ditch than the white man. It's like they had to have overseers.

But I look at how my dad used to work at the South Building. He didn't have the time to see many games. He saw a few parades the band had, and all that. My dad would go to work in the morning, go to the South Building to work, before working for the post office. And then he would leave there and go straight to the Carolina Inn. And he probably wouldn't get home until nine or ten o'clock.

BG: What did he do at the Carolina Inn?

DC: He was a waiter. But at that time, like I said, there wasn't that many blacks around. He was doubling up on jobs. My mom worked at the university laundry, and she went from there to the university cleaners. And then during World War II, she sold insurance for North Carolina Mutual Insurance Company. And then she stopped working for North Carolina Mutual Insurance Company and she started nursing. And that's what she ended up retiring as, as a nurse.

And I guess I look at my brother and myself—my brother, there's a lot more I can tell but it's not coming to me now.

BG: Let's go back to your mom and dad. It doesn't sound like they were ever home.

DC: Well, most black families weren't at home.

Well, number one, on Tuesday night, we had a Boy Scout meeting. That was at the Hargraves Center. My mom and dad, what was asked of me and my brother John: come home after school, do your homework. I had to get into ( ). He had to get into ( ). Then, you can play. And then on Tuesday night, you went to Boy Scouts. Friday and Saturday nights, all black kids, you could go to the movies. But you didn't want to get a punishment because you couldn't go to the movies.

They had a chapter picture at the movies on Friday and Saturday--.

BG: Serial movie.

DC: Yes. With ( ) and Tarzan.

BG: What was the name of the movie?

DC: Hollywood Theater.

BG: All-black?

DC: All-black. Owned by a white. Ok. Next door to it, they had a place called—Jeff ( ) and his wife—I can't think of her name—they had a place, a soda bar. That's where all the kids communicated after basketball practice and all, that's where you went at night. Hollywood Grill and M&M Grill, that was for the older guys—they were selling beer, but this place didn't sell beer. That's where everybody would get—after basketball games, after football games—at the theater, which was right next door to the ( ). But later on, the Baldwins, they ran this place. And this was our place, our soda shop for hotdogs and hamburgers, ice cream and stuff like this.

BG: What street was that on?

DC: Franklin Street. Right in Carrboro. This was your social life on Sundays when your parents prefer you to go to the movies on Friday night. Because Sundays they wanted you to go to church. In order for you to stay out on Sunday late in the afternoon with your girl, you go to Sunday school and you go to church. They had the Hollywood Grill and they had the M&M Grill. The Hollywood Grill was right where the cab stand is right beside McNall's—this building is still, I don't know the name of the restaurant.

Anyway, kids would walk on Sundays. The walk would be from Hollywood Grill to ( ) all day long on Sundays. Kids parading to see where and who, "This person went uptown the other day." You can't miss by walking.

But after we got out of church, the first place we would go was Milkberry, right across the street. They got all the business from all the churches. You bought all ice cream and milkshakes there on Sundays but you couldn't sit down in there to eat it. Then, Colonial Drug Store opened up later on, with Big John holding up that. That's where everybody, every black in town filled all the prescriptions there. There wasn't a chain drug store there. On this end of town, that's where everybody got their prescriptions filled. OK. That's where all the people used to walk, all the young kids. And older people were getting their prescriptions filled. And Big John had a soda fountain, he sold ice cream and stuff like that. But you couldn't sit down as a black person there to eat.

BG: I also heard that Big John had a way of getting change--.

DC: I'll tell you what happened with me. I used to work, when I started my band, we always got paid in checks by fraternities, sororities. He was the onliest one who would cash that check on Sunday for me. ( ). So Monday when I went to school—because all the guys in the band at that time were in school so I didn't have enough money for them because I couldn't get out of school to go to the bank to cash the check. But not only that. Big John was good to the black neighborhood back then for prescriptions, giving good ( ). ( ) thing that happened to Big John was when Blue Cross Blue Shield moved next door. And all these white people used to eat in Big John's. And then you had undesirable rednecks from Carrboro go to the same drugstore. And I think he was trying to satisfy too many people when integration came along. He didn't want to lose his white base, but he lost his white base. In other words, when integration came along, he didn't want to integrate the place. He couldn't see ahead. He thought Blue Cross Blue Shield was going to be there forever. He thought he could do without the black community.

( ) thing I disliked about what Big John done—he had some boys, three kids. Black folk on the outside had signs trying to integrate the place. He had his sons on the inside walking with signs like, “Nigger, nigger, black as tar, stick his head in a molasses jar,” stuff like that.

Worst thing you can do in a case like that in a black neighborhood is make the black churches mad. All these ministers got a pulpit. And so all black folks stopped going to Big John’s. They just stopped going. They boycotted him. Big John got so big that downstairs, he put up a pawnshop. Because he had such a tremendous business.

OK. Blue Cross Blue Shield built a new building. They were on 15-501. Here’s Big John, he just built this big fine house out in ( ) Acres. Big John went broke and everything. Couldn’t even put drugs in his drugstore. He sent one of his sons to pharmacist’s school, he was right in the middle of doing all that. Big John got as humble and as liberal as hell after that.

BG: How did you know that he got liberal?

CD: Well, even he wanted to come to ( ) and sing with my band. He wasn’t no singer, but he thought he could. And we invited him. He was trying to do everything to try to mend fences. But at that time other places had opened up, other drug stores, chain drug stores. There wasn’t no comeback for him.

BG: That was after Harold Foster and others sat down in 1960. He didn’t integrate until what, after ’64?

DC: After Blue Cross Blue Shield left. I don’t know what year that was, when they were on the boulevard. ( ). But see what happened: all these white rednecks in Carrboro and all them, they didn’t ( ) these new drug stores in Carrboro. They wanted what was convenient for them. Instead of trying to satisfy everybody, he was trying to satisfy a few. And he was in the heart of the black neighborhood. If you’re in the heart of the black neighborhood, who do you satisfy?

BG: You satisfy black people.

DC: I guess that’s why way back to the Jews, most would go in the black neighborhood. I asked one friend of mine, a Jew friend of mine, I asked him, “Man, why you all sell these ( ), all these live colors and all this stuff and y’all are in the black neighborhood.” He said, “because y’all are the onliest ones who buy this stuff.” And I thought that was real—they sold what black people wanted and they made a whole lot of money.



You think back: the average white man would never open a business way back in the black neighborhood. It was always a Jewish person. I mean for the jewelry stores and the clothing stores. I remember here in Chapel Hill, way back. There was a store call Berman's Clothing Store. They sold some of everything. ( ). But they catered to blacks. If you're prejudice, you better put it in your pocket and not let anybody know you are. And especially in Chapel Hill. The university was liberal up to a certain extent but they still had prejudices. But in travels and things, they wasn't as bad as most places I've been. And I think what it was, was that everybody in Chapel Hill working for the university. White businesses trying to tell you how—they don't want you in your place but they want your money.

I'll never forget. A black kid at Chapel Hill Tire Company. I had some tires put on. A man told me it would be forty-two dollars. I went back up there, it was seventy-seven dollars. He said, "we done this, we done that." I said, "but I didn't ask you to do this." He said, "well you needed this, you needed that." I said, "we agree on—that's all I could pay." We argued, he didn't want to give me my keys back. I laid the money up there. So he took ( ) from me. Mr. Jennings. My thing is, people are going to make you pay for something that you didn't order. At that time, I stopped doing business with him. I ride all the way to Durham to the regular tire company. The regular tire company, ( ), they treated me like a king. And I carried a lot of my friends on over there with me.

My point is, a lot of these businesses, like the North Brothers, some of the last ones to integrate, the North Brothers used to be right on the end of Church Street and Franklin Street and they had an Exxon station there. There was two Exxon stations kind of close together. For years after integration, they didn't want you to use the bathroom. They didn't want you to use their bathroom. They had white and they had black. And way back when they had white, women, and then black. And half the time the black bathroom would be locked. The North Brothers owned that.

But other than that, the university was pretty decent compared with--. I didn't work for them so I can't speak for other people in Chapel Hill. I know some of them didn't have things go good for them. But Chapel Hill as a whole, I think with me as a kid, and most of the black kids, you're talking about integration. Well, we never experienced it. We didn't know what integration would be like. We were so used to being separate.

But we knew it wasn't fair when we got a book in school that's got a new back on it. The teacher said to turn to page 14. It stops at 10 and skips to 24. That means the page it out, the book's been rebound, fixed up, and they give them to the blacks. After they wear them out at Chapel Hill High School, they give them to the black students. But it looks new on the outside.

BG: What about your desks and lockers and things like that?

DC: They didn't have no lockers. I didn't see no lockers. Your desks was where somebody had written all over it and carve their initials in it [laughs].

BG: From the white school?

DC: Yes. Hand-me-downs. And half the time, when we were at Orange County Training School, the boilers and the heating system was always messed up. And you can forget air conditioning, we didn't have air conditioning at Lincoln or Orange County Training School. You opened the windows and that was it. Not even fans back then. No.

But I tell you, I have enjoyed my life in Chapel Hill, I really have. I enjoyed the kids. What I really hated when I was coming up and I don't see now. All the way from Ham's Restaurant, all the way to Carrboro were the railroad tracks. Most of the black people used to own that property. Very few people owned property owned that time in between there. From what I can understand from Ed Caldwell and others, there was a man named Mr. Baker that used to own all that property. Franklin Street wasn't paved. And when they paved it they had to tax the people on the property. Some of them lost their property because they refused to pay taxes for something that they didn't agree to see. And some of them lost their property again on Franklin Street because it's got to be commercial property and they weren't making enough money to pay their taxes from the university. They were just getting paid slave labor—I mean slave salaries. You know. They didn't make enough money to even feed their families, much less pay their taxes. On Franklin Street they fixed it to where it was a commercial zone and the taxes were high on Franklin Street ( ). Because they wanted the property.

BG: Do you remember about when that happened, when they started losing that property ( )? Was that in the forties or fifties?

DC: Well I think it's a period over the years. From Henry ( )'s wood job all the way in Carrboro—he owned a big spot there. Oh, boy, I don't know all the property owners. Blacks' history. From

Franklin Street, they started taking houses from Franklin Street and putting them on Graham Street, you know the big houses. And there used to be a wood yard, right there on the corner of Graham and Franklin. Chapel Hill Funeral Home used to be there. Before they moved it on Graham Street, it used to be on Franklin Street. The Scarborough buildings, they had a whole section in there, about six or seven units. All black buildings that used to be in that. Scarborough was black. You want some water?

BG: No, thanks.

DC: Scarborough owned Scarborough Funeral Home in Durham. And they used to have a funeral home in Chapel Hill, too. Before they moved to Durham. They had them in both places.

W. O'Kelley. He had dry cleaners. And he owned the funeral home back then, W. O'Kelley's Funeral Home. My mom can talk more about that than I can.

But seeing so much when I was small, and seeing so much since I was grown—and we were right at the end of silent movies, into talking movies, when I was a little boy. I remember going into to the old theatre up there on the corner of Graham Street and Franklin Street to the theater when they added chairs to the silent movies. Then I remember when they built, they start doing the Hollywood Theater.

You've seen so much. And I used to go every summer out in the country with my uncles. I had a fantasy about animals and I love horses and mules and stuff like that. In the summer I'd go to my uncle Johnny's, uncle George's and my grandma Mary's house and help them ( ) the back up. And I never forget I went out there one week and the horses ( ) was all very bored because I didn't have—my cousins ( ) anybody to play with and there was a lot of older people.

When we came to town on the wagon, came through Carrboro, people would throw rocks at them and all of that--.

BG: White people?

DC: White people in Carrboro. And they come to bring the goods to sell, you know, the stove. And when they get ready to leave, right up here on Merritt Mill Road, they had an ice house, where they sold ice, right at the corner of Franklin Street. The Hackners used to run that. And they'd buy a seventy-five pound block of ice. [tape stops] And my uncles, after they'd sell their goods to the stores and all, before they get ready to get back to the country, they'd go by and get some ice. They'd get a big old block of ice, about a seventy-five pound block. And they'd put it in the truck, they have all these sacks and stuff

they keep from melting in the summer. We strike out to go back to the country. On through Carrboro, on across the University Lake.

And it was an amazing thing, I was wondering how they were going to keep this ice. He had a hole in the ground. And sacks, he had the ice in there, and he put it in the ground, and surrounded it all with sawdust that come from the sawmill. And the sawdust would keep that ice from melting. And a big thing back then, people didn't have electricity. ( ). And they would come up for lemonade and stuff like that. Once a day, at night, they had lemonade. And that block of ice would last about a week.

I'm just looking at how people survived then. Especially farmers and people like that, they didn't put enough food [silence] you won't have nothing. Because tenant farmers and all that back then, it was just hard on people that was farming. I look at uh, way back when my dad and my uncles, my Uncle ( ) Clark and my Uncle ( ) Clark, they would always have two, three pigs every year. So they're killing in the winter and put it all in the smokehouse where you'd have the fat back and the ham and the tenderloin and all that during the winter. That was some meat. And then way back you'd always find guys going hunting on the weekend. And I didn't realize they were going hunting and rabbit hunting and going squirrel hunting. There wasn't no deer in this area back then. Some of them would go 'coon hunting. And a lot of them would go fishing. And I realized later on, they were going fishing and hunting for food to put on the table. That was supper. You caught that fish that day, you clean and eat it at night. Even those rabbits. Before the week or so you got them cleaned and skinned.

Because they just didn't have the money. My dad was telling me when he started working the South Building, he worked on Sundays, he made eight dollars a week. And that's a half a day on Sunday, at the South Building at the university. He said he had to pay E. E. Brown, whom he rented the house from, fifty dollars a week. That's two dollars a month for rent. That's six dollars for him to--.

BG: He made eight dollars a week and he had to pay fifty dollars a month--.

DC: A week.

BG: A week? Rent? That's two hundred dollars a month. He's making thirty-two dollars a month.

DC: I'm sorry. Let me back up. He's making eight dollars a week. And he had to pay fifty cents a week. So it's dollars. That's what he had to pay then.

BG: He paid two dollars a month for the rent. And made thirty-two dollars a salary a month. Eight dollars a week.

DC: Yes. [tape stops].

BG: What kind of house did you live in, Doug?

DC: On Graham Street, we were fortunate. We had a bathroom, it was on the back porch, with running water. That was in the ( ). But we didn't have a bathtub. We had to heat the water ( ). And we thought it was a luxury, all this luxury we get when we moved to on ( ). Because listen to this: my mom and dad moved here, I think it was 1941. The university fixed it where anybody who worked for them—custodians and all—they'd build a house for them. They would finance it if they wanted it. OK. We came down here. Every house ( ) on the side. Had water, separate tanks. Bathroom. ( ) warm house. Underpinned and all. It was nice back in those days. My dad and momma, I saw later on, I saw the deed to the house, guess what it was: they paid eighteen hundred and their mortgage was fourteen dollars a month. [laughs] Moving up, wasn't it?

BG: How long did it take them to pay off the house?

DC: I don't know exactly how many years it was they paid off the house. But they wasn't making no money you'd make today with expenses, the way things were. And I look at how my dad was just a workaholic. To give a good example, he didn't care about extravagant things. He was in World War II, he drove a truck, an ammunition truck. Most blacks did, because they'd get blowed up [laughs]. So everybody in his squadron, all the blacks they drove ammunition trucks behind the German lines to supply the troops.

BG: So they gave the high-risk jobs to blacks in the war.

DC: Yes. My dad came home back in the early fifties. All the soldiers coming home. Some of them buying cars. My daddy wouldn't buy a car. We used to want him to buy a car. My dad rode a bicycle back and forth to work every day. When he went to church, he would ( ) Hall River Baptist Church in Chatham County. His brother, Uncle ( ) would take him to that, to Church.

BG: Did he have a car?

DC: Yes, my Uncle ( ) did. He and his brother were very close. Anyway, later on I got married and I moved into this house here. My parents had built the house in '56, next door, and they rented this house for a while. I got married and a couple years after I moved in here. And stepping up a little bit, back

in 1964—I'll never forget—I had already taken a 1954 Chevrolet and customized it. I put bucket seats and a ( ). New headlining. New mufflers. New paint job. New everything. Plus I had a two—[tape stops].

END OF TAPE 1, SIDE A

START OF TAPE 1, SIDE B

DC: I was coming from Durham, and my dad used to have a two-hour lunch break. He would come home for lunch riding his bicycle. Oh, it was one of the worst storms. It rained like mad. And I was coming through that. And I hit this thing. Turns out it's my dad. I didn't hit him but I came close to it because it was raining. And I came home and thought about it: I said, "I need two cars like I need a hole in my head." So I told my dad, I said, "Look, if you get your driver's license, you can have that Chevrolet." I didn't think he was going to get his license [laughs]. And from then on my dad has had a car. And that car got to be—everybody would see that car, they would see John Clark, they would see my dad.

And not only that. I took that car way back when people were putting gears on the floor. I took it off the car ( ) So it's a cool car, you know where I'm coming from? So my dad drove that for years.

BG: I'll bet he loved it.

DC: Oh, he did, he did. Everybody just, "Here comes John Clark," you know. The car was in mint condition when I gave it to him.

BG: Tell me about who ran the household growing up. Did your mom give discipline, or your dad? Who paid the bills? Who was the house of the house?

DC: Hey, my mom was the boss, but my dad paid the bills [laughs]. My dad took care of all of us and made sure that we were all taken care of. If my mom wanted a car or something like that she had to pay for it. He took care of house notes and all that, and food and stuff. My mom took care of clothes for us and made sure we had everything. And bought food, too, I guess. The system they had worked out.

BG: Did she give you discipline?

DC: I think my dad whipped me one time, but my mom whipped me many times [laughs].

BG: What was the whipping? You said your mom whipped you many times. What was it like?

Did she use a switch, a ruler?

DC: Mostly a switch or a belt. And I got to look at it: I mean, I think that's needed a lot now. I think that's why everything is so messed up now. It helped me a lot. Even when you was in school, ( ), you got to pay a little ( ). And not all that. In this neighborhood, it was so close-knit, if you did something wrong at school it would get back to your parents, you would get a whipping at home and at school. You hear a lot of people saying it but it's true. And if you do something in the neighborhood, some other parent's going to call and tell your mom.

BG: Did any of the neighbors ever give you whippings?

DC: No.

BG: Relatives?

DC: No.

BG: But school and home.

DC: School and home. My dad had a way of talking to you, and would straighten out things. My mom was more a fireball. You know. You got one that's quiet and one that completes the difference. But we needed it. We needed it. I was the outgoing one in the family. My brother was kind of laid back.

BG: Did your family or your parents talk about getting an education?

DC: This is what I'm saying about this: all your parents wanted you to get an education. But they didn't have the way they had the grants. My brother, he went to A&T and my dad ( ) to get him there.

I wasn't such a good student myself. I kind of had a learning disability for a while. I was trying to fight to find out what I was going to do. I paid a lot, too, on how I was going to find my niche in life. Something to do where I wasn't going to get in trouble. I stayed away from the guys that were stealing. Because drugs were not in. Men were drinking. Somebody breaking in somewhere, I stayed away from that crowd. You know. But I wanted to find something to do; didn't know what I was going to.

So I started a band in high school. But I was only into this to make a little extra money. I had no idea that it would come out the way it panned out. We started the band to make a little money [tape stops]. OK, during World War II they built Hargraves Center—I was a little bitty kid—and my daddy go off to the service. I'm looking at all these young guys coming in. And one of my cousins, Robert Sellers, is in pre-flight school, the Navy's band. They would leave—every morning about seven o'clock in the morning—and march rain, sleet, or snow from right up Roberson Street all the way up to Cameron Avenue all the way

in front of the South Building and do their drills for the pre-flight schools. And they would turn around and go back. This was twice a day, every day.

OK. And I used to see this drum major--.

BG: Would they be playing in the band? Would they be playing music?

DC: Sometimes they would. But mostly cadences all the way down. And they would go all the way down and do this twice a day. And I would see the drum major and all and I loved that.

When my brother was right in the seventh grade, right after World War II they started a high school band here. I was too young to be in but John started on clarinet and he played.

BG: Was he older than you?

DC: Yes. John was two years older than I. And they had a drum major named ( ) Edwards. Which I just thought he just had control of that band. I just thought he was super "bad." And everybody was trying to get horns for their kids and wanted them to be in the band. And that's what I was talking about: Chapel Hill, there was always something interesting going on in the school. It was so exciting for the kids. So everybody got in the band. Then they started having parades: Homecoming parades, Veterans' Day parades, Christmas Parades. And they'd always have Lincoln High School's band. And if it wasn't for the band, they wouldn't have no parade.

OK. On a parade day—this is something I wish they could really show again—all these families would dress up their kids with their hard-earned money for the uniforms. Back then they didn't have uniforms, it was black and white—white shirt, black pants, and whatever black top the family could find, and black shoes. Or whatever shoes you got. And the May dress, moms and dads would fix this all up. And do you know, people would actually—these parents, black people wouldn't work while that parade was going on? And white people. Everybody would be outside on Franklin Street.

That parade—later we started playing football at Lyons' Park in Carrboro—that parade used to leave old Orange County Training School, come down Church Street, go down to the post office on Rosemary Street, then come down Franklin Street, then march all the way out to Lyons' Park, which was behind the old courthouse in Carrboro. And the parade route would be just full of people. But they had all the businesses—white businesses and black businesses—that would try to have floats in the band. Big deal for Chapel Hill. White didn't have nothing like that, didn't have nothing like that.



BG: That was Homecoming for Lincoln?

DC: Yes. Football. I mean the students and everybody. But let me go back to the main event. When I was a little kid, during the Charlie Justice days when they had the excellent football and Charlie Justice, ( ), Jim Kemp and Jose Rogers and all--. All the little black kids, we used to go ( ) soda drinks all day. OK. You got fifteen drinks, a soda in a bottle and a bucket. You can take two buckets or you can take one bucket. You got fifteen drinks. A drink will be ten or either fifteen cents a drink. You made fifteen cents a bucket. You get a penny a soda every one you sell. [tape stops]. OK. You got fifteen sodas, you got a penny a piece, that's fifteen cents a bucket. You would take two buckets. So right there that would be thirty cents you'd make.

Back then at the Carolina football games, everybody would drink liquor. I mean there's fights in the stands then with the students and the parents and the families. The action was in the stands more so than on the field. You would do that. Then on Sunday morning—after the game we would scour the stadium. We would find pocketbooks, coats, money, liquor—people got drunk and left the rest of the bottle. Everybody was going through the stands after people leave. You pick up stuff. If you find liquor you bring it back home to your parents. If you find money, you keep. You might find a nice coat jacket that somebody left. And the next day, every Sunday morning, you go back to the stadium and pick up bottles. And guess what you got for the bottles? Three cents a crate. So if you made a couple of dollars, that's a whole lot of crates. That was considered a lot of money. There was a whole lot of hard work in that. This was every football game.

Basketball, we didn't get into the games of basketball. And they played at Old Woolen Gym. They had a couple big old windows and something like a scaffold. We'd go down there in the cold snow—I didn't go but about once—and look at the game. They had pretty good teams back then.

Oh, getting back to—the pre-flight school, they used to play—Carolina didn't have a marching band—they used to play for all football games at Carolina, the pre-flight school did. They had one black section at the stadium for all black people, people who worked for the university.

BG: Was that in the end zone?

DC: Yes, the end zone. Right by the field house. And you look over in the white section, right behind the home team, it was all black sailors. That's where the band played. They were liberal in doing that. All black sailors and they played for the game.

Now, after the game is over, we had people—the visitors always sat on the right side of Kenan Stadium—but every now and then on the right side you had some rednecks or something always getting drunk and calling you names. ( ). I tell you--.

BG: They never let you forget.

DC: In the '40s. This was back in the '40s. You grew up with that type of experience. But most of the time, all of the games, very seldom a black person paid to get into the game. Didn't have to pay. You knew somebody at the game and they'd just let you in. Especially if you had a white dinner jacket on they knew you were working for ( ) or for the Carolina Inn. ( ) let you in.

BG: I understand that around '49, '50, '51, that one of the football players from Carolina arranged for scrimmages between Chapel Hill High and Lincoln High. I wonder if you were around at that time.

DC: Yes, Chapel Hill High School, right. They would go down to Old Emerson Field, the Navy Field, every Sunday and play each other. They did. They did do it. I didn't play with them. They were playing tackle with nothing on. I mean, hey, I wasn't about to take that damn punishment [laughs].

BG: Do you know who it was who arranged for that?

DC: I think it just accidentally started happening. Let me give you a good example. When I was in high school—right where the square is now, that's where Chapel Hill High School used to be. And right behind that, where the ( ) House is, way back in the back, there used to be a ( ), which was a big old tin can building. And so the coach—he knew that I played at Chapel Hill High School with a couple more guys—what the coach would do—we couldn't broadcast it ( )—they let us go in there and play basketball. We didn't play the white kids but we played on the inside. That was going on about 1950, 1951.

BG: Is this the tin can, or the high school?

DC: No. That's the tin can at the high—there was a tin can, too, at Carolina.

BG: And they let you in there too?

DC: Oh yes. We slipped in there, too, but we get run out of there most times. There was always an old foreman or somebody, you know, a redneck Carrboro guy. He'd run us out. When he'd leave, we'd be

right back in there [laughs]. There'd be other things going on too, but they had so many courts in there that you could play on.

But anyway, at the high school the coach got to know me and he ( ) us in there. I played at Lincoln High School. And he liked me and all. So I used to get a ( ). It was some good people around here. There was more good than bad, let me put it that way. I think. Because—I've been a musician forty-six years, where I've worked the University of Mississippi, Auburn, and all the major colleges in the United States, I've seen the differences in the cities, I've seen the differences on the campuses.

BG: Over a period of time?

DC: Over a period of time. But Chapel Hill. I wouldn't want to be working in no better place. For me. Can't speak for everybody.

BG: Where did you learn how to play an instrument?

DC: OK. I wanted to be a drum major. In seventh grade, eighth grade, I wanted to be a drum major. There was a drum majorette names Cynthia Booth. She had—I had to be behind her and made me like a little faggot, a little sissy, thinking everybody who's a drum major is gay, you know. In order for me to be a drum major, I had to join a band. I had to play an instrument. So I started playing drums. In the marching band I was a drum major. In the ( ) band I played the drums. So I could get them units.

Cynthia graduated, then I was the drum major of the whole band. By the time we got uniforms, I was the man. I enjoyed it. At that particular time, that band had gotten so popular, we used to play at the Carolina-Duke parade here. We played for Chapel Hill High School's parade—they had a band, but they didn't have a strong march like they got now. We played for that. We played for the Christmas parade. We played for ( ) Homecoming. We played for Chapel Hill Homecoming. We had to play the ( ) Duke parade. ( ). No. Hillsborough didn't have none. We played for Henderson's Homecoming and their parade, and in Durham for North Carolina Central's Homecoming. We always played for that and the Christmas parade in Durham. We always had to go to Horton High School in Pittsboro. They had the fair, every year, about the first week of September, and all the students for the school day, the whole school would go and we would have to play—the band would march all the way to the school. That's where it was at first. And we was tying up the 64 so bad, they cut that out after a few years, because it was too far down Highway 64 and tractor trailers and everything and traffic was stopped. And we would go down to Horton

High School and do that. Then we had to go right back about a month later and play for them for football. They we had to go down to Horton High School again to do a spring festival. In other words, the band was doing spring festivals, a lot of Christmas parades, and a lot of other high school homecomings. So we stayed kind of busy with that band. I enjoyed it because we got to be ( ) in the State at one time. We were in the top three every year in black high school marching bands.

BG: Now, how did you know that you were in the first three? Was there a competition?

DC: OK, I'll give you a good example. Let's look at the Navy band again. All these guys, which were young guys when they first got into the Navy band, when they finished guess what happened to them: all of them just about got jobs in all the black schools in the state as band directors. William Carson—he lived right down the street—he's the band director at A&T, retired just last few years ago. All the high school bands in the State—after World War II all these guys got a job teaching as band directors in the State, in North Carolina, Virginia, and all.

BG: Is that when the high school band started, after World War II?

DC: Right. But Mr. Pickett, he wasn't a part of the Navy band. He went to Winston-Salem State.

BG: But he started the band at Orange County Training School right after World War II?

DC: Right. Right around there. I don't know exactly what year.

BG: For the rest of the State, the stimulus was the Navy pre-flight program, the people came out of that program?

DC: Yes. And it made the whole State just great, you see what I'm saying? I mean from High Point, Winston-Salem, Fayetteville, Rocky Mount, Charleswood, from here ( ) Hillside. Just about ninety percent of the band directors in the State and part of Virginia and South Carolina came from the pre-flight school. College band directors, you know.

BG: Now, did they come into the high school and help out with teaching?

DC: No. They were just busy doing their own thing, you know.

BG: Did they help you personally?

DC: No, but I knew them. See, there were so many of them in the community—all these sharp ( ), pretty white hats, dark blue, and ( ) pretty white and you know, they were all over the place. Some of them were married. Like Carson, he was married, he and his wife, and they had a house down here.

BG: Where did the others stay?

DC: The others stayed at Hargraves. See, upstairs—downstairs is where all the bedquarters were. And down there there's two great big bathrooms, showers, and everything. And upstairs was the dining room where the captain or whatever stayed. That was upstairs. But downstairs was like a barracks.

BG: How is it that a Navy band is an all-black band? Didn't they have any whites?

DC: No. Nothing but the man that was in charge [laughs]. And I don't know his name! Nothing but the man that was in charge!

BG: He didn't stay at Hargraves, I'll bet.

DC: I think he did!

BG: Did he really?

DC: I think he did. I'm not sure, but I think he did. I'm glad you asked me some of these questions because I think I might have forgotten. Especially the Navy pre-flight school. But that got embedded in me and that's why I like music. And that is why I'm still in music because that's where I got my ideas from way back then.

BG: What was it like being the drum major? Were you the leader of the band there as a drum major?

DC: Well, especially half-time, that kind of stuff. Mr. Bell, my band director, was the leader of the band.

BG: So he led the band but you were the one marching in the front?

DC: Yes.

BG: What was that like? What did that mean to you?

DC: Well it just meant that I was a part. It didn't mean that I was in charge, but it meant that I was there with all my friends. The recognition and the credit goes to all and it doesn't go to me. I'm one of these types of people that don't care about a whole lot of recognition, credit. Just get the job done, that's what I'm all about.

BG: At that time, though, was it a matter of pride?

DC: Of popularity for a while. Hell, I was on cloud nine, you know, because all the little girls, they want to meet the drum major. And this little town, during Homecoming at Hillside, in Rocky Mount,

in Henderson—our rivalry band was in Henderson. Why that was, Mr. McDougle here, his brother, was the football coach and the basketball coach there. So everything we done here was tried to outdo them and everything that was done down there was trying to outdo us! And it was a good ( ). We got the two bands. And believe it or not, guess what? Both bands got the two same school colors.

And I tell you, they were such exciting times during our time coming through. With the Doug Clarks and the Ed Caldwells and the Hilliard Caldwells and all of us. If we had to come through any other time through this world, and be born, I don't think we would ask for a better time to see so many changes. What we didn't have ( ). Half the people don't have too much of anything. And look what's happening fifty years ago. Can you imagine what the hell this place is going to be like twenty years from now? As fast as things are going, the Internet thing? I feel like—me and my brother sit down and talk—we feel like we came through the best times of life that anybody could. My son, last night his daughter was looking at the story of Martin Luther King. And I've been trying to get him to look at it for years. He finally got him to, and he looked at it twice. Every black kid should look at it.

BG: And you lived through it.

DC: I lived through it. I was there. And my point is, I don't think there's another generation that's going to come through and enjoy the things and see the things that my generation came through and see. All black schools, the integrated schools—I look at me riding up and down the road, for forty-six years, playing all over the country. First job I had at a major college out of state was the University of Georgia in 1957. I had never even been to Georgia. Went down there to play, playing for the KA's. We got up that morning. The guys were so glad to see us. They put us up in the basement, the living quarters where all the help was. Made sure you had something to eat, something to drink. We played that night. They was crazy about us. Then we came back home. That started me on the road in the South. Played the University of Georgia a lot the next years. My first year doing ( ) Alabama, Tuscaloosa, Alabama, 1958. Georgia Tech, 1958. In other words, this is the onliest I've had since 1958, working every major college in the country.

By 1958, I was working for the University of Miami, all the way to Princeton and Yale, the whole east coast. And for an all-black band to work all-white colleges during that time. The colleges were great; the kids treated us nice. We learned where our place was, where not to go. In the cities, when we got there, we knew how to go to places like Alabama. We stopped in all the major service stations in the major cities,

not the little service stations on the side of the road. We made sure our vehicles were in good shape when we left so we wouldn't have any problems. We started going to Ole Miss, the University of Mississippi in 1961 before James Meredith was admitted to school. And then, after things were half-way cooling off, we slipped in there a few times and played. But why? Because the fraternities treated us like kings, they treated us nice.

We didn't ever have to worry unless we were working for local people. ( ). There's a lot of college bars I don't work. And I think that's what—our longevity for the college circuit and the white kids.

BG: How did you get known throughout the South and through all these colleges?

DC: Good question. Good question. My first job—you're going to read it all in the book but I'm going to tell you—one night—like I said all the black kids and all the black parents [tape stops]. OK. One night, all the black parents were working for the university in some kind of way. This was back during the Christmas holidays back in 1954. They had the Sigma Nu fraternity house. Mr. Jacob James, which was one of the men in Chapel Hill, was a cook there, and Lee ( ) was the houseboy there. They needed some help for that night's Christmas party. And they wanted me to come down and help out ( ). The party started at twelve o'clock at night. So I went to my little party at our fellows' hall there. And I went on down, I went to work. And when I got there I heard this band playing, three-piece band. Kids just having a ball. I asked ( ), "How much you paying these guys?" He said, "Sixty-five dollars." I said "Sixty-five dollars for that?" There were only three of them: keyboard player, saxophone player, and a drummer. Then a little light came on in my head. I said, "We jam. At school, we sound better than this in the bandroom." ( ) We had all these kids were into music and all. We had another little group: Prince Taylor, Ross Ferrington, Alfred Frechette, Thomas Booth, Ralph Edwards, a little singing group and they called themselves the ( ).

But before we get to the ( ). What was happening, that summer of '54, we went to Connecticut to work—every summer we used to go out of town to work—so they sent me and John up to Old ( ), right out of New London, Connecticut.

BG: What did you do up there?

DC: We worked in a restaurant. My mom and dad's friend, ( ) Weaver, ( ) Weaver that owned a funeral home here, his brother worked up there. He's the one that got us a job for that summer.

BG: Cynthia Weaver's--.

DC: --brother-in-law. Yes. And so we went up there and had us a job. And we went up there to work. ( ), I ain't going back up there. I love it—don't get me wrong. But when I came back to New York, I spent all my money on 125<sup>th</sup> Street [laughs]. Because I saw these pretty clothes and stuff that we don't have here, and all these things. Anyway, we came on back.

My dad had a friend, name was Roy Caldwell, he had Caldwell's auto. He had a set of drums. I knew it was going to be the most expensive instrument to try to find, some drums. So what happened, Roy Caldwell let me use his drums. And that summer, all the kids here had summer jobs. ( ). He was a foreman for this big company, a plaster company that does plaster. And so he hired a whole lot of us kids in the summer. So they were doing a whole lot of work out at the Camp ( ). They were adding some new wings and all. They were plastering these new buildings. So it was two truckloads every morning to go to work and come back. So we started throwing a little rehearsal in every now and then that summer. And I got all the kids from the high school band: Ralph King, Melvin Page, ( ) Booth again, Morris Mason Jr., um, Roy Bynum. There was a bunch of kids. So I went to Durham and got some sheet music. Went to O'Brien's Ocean Music Store. And the onliest thing I could find was "Tweedle-dee," ( ) and something like that. Because everybody could read sheet music. At that time, it was big band sound—we were trying to. So we found ( ), one or two other things.

But then, there's these five guys at that time: all the Clovers, the Drifters, the Platters, Little Richard, Chuch Berry just put out "Maybelline." And all this stuff just hitting the market. And this group, the ( ), they could just about imitate all these guys. So all of us got together and went down here and ( ) close-knit neighborhood we got. When you needed help, people come to help you. So Miss Lucy ( ), she worked for the school system. She always liked me as a kid and was in charge of the lunchroom and all. So she chaperoned for us because anything we done we always had to have a chaperone. And she took up the money for us—we charged fifty cents--.

There's another fellow who came home from World War II and moved back here by 1954. He built a place back here on Merritt Mill Road—it's no longer there—called The Patio. He was trying to make it go and all. So made a little deal with him: we come down there, work, and we check the door. He said, "fine," because he didn't have no entertainment. So we tried, got a whole lot of little friends at school



and everybody come ( ). And in the summer, too, there was a lot of people in Chapel Hill that had nieces and nephews and kids in New York and places, they would come in the summer in the South. So all these new girls in town, everybody was trying to show off. Nobody had anywhere to go. So all the kids would come to The Patio. So we tried it this week, and next week, and it just got to be the thing. We didn't know—we just started messing around. ( ), you know.

So in September, Mr. William Hargraves, Willie, Miss Frances Hargraves' husband—one of the best musician, the best at that time around here. He had one of the most popular groups around here. Bands were few. Didn't have many in the whole State. When students had parties around here then, they had to rent juke boxes, and the man would trick the juke box so they could play it all night on a big weekend. So this was German's weekend—here they call it German's weekend in Carolina, a big party weekend. So somebody went to get Willie and Willard said he's already booked. They said, "Do you know anybody we can get?" He said, "Not really. Well, maybe, there's a little high school group around here. You might want to take a chance, you might be satisfied with them." So Willie called me, had his guy call me, and said, "How much you charge?" I said, "Sixty-five dollars."

BG: ( ).

DC: ( ) [laughs]. Out the hell on Highway 54, and old schoolhouse, where Mr. James Snipes used to run way back, before they consolidated all the schools, a country school. People would rent that out for parties. I think there were three fraternities having this party. So they had it. And the place was packed. Mr. Ben Baldwin, let's go back to him, he owned-- Yes. He was like a DJ in dances and stuff, before all this stuff now, he used to spin records. He was the onliest one around that had a PA system. Had one mike and two mike speakers. So he let us use that. We went out there. And the students just ate us up, ate us alive. They just loved it. And the ( ) quartet, what they were doing. So after we played that first job, we started getting booked all on campus here at Carolina. That was in '56.

BG: Just word of mouth.

DC: Word of mouth. OK. So December the 28<sup>th</sup>, I ain't got no driver's license or nothing. I ain't got no car or nothing. And some fraternity brothers here want us to play December 28<sup>th</sup> the Cherry Hotel on ( ), the Christmas Party. OK. "How much you charge?" Two-fifty. Went down there to play. A friend of mine, Leroy Brenner, let me use his car, put a U-Haul trailer behind. We had to get people to drive for us

and all. Went down there. Played. The people were crazy about us. Also, already booked New Year's Eve in Martinville, Virginia, on the 31<sup>st</sup>. OK. Doing Martinville, Virginia, I said, "Where's Martinville?"

So at that time, the school didn't have an activity bus. Miss Suzy Weaver—Mr. ( ) Weaver's wife—she had a bus that she had for the Weaver Gospel Singers. She would rent it out to people in the community, a nice bus. But the school, you see, used it all the time for the football time and the basketball team. They used to lease her bus. That was Orange County Training School. Nobody had told you that yet, hunh? A little light came on and said, "Call Miss Suzy and see what she do." I said, "How much?" She said, "Thirty-five dollars." ( ). We got on the bus, went to Martinville, Virginia. Playing at the Moose Lodge. We pulled up there. The guy was waiting on us. The guy looked at the bus, looked at us, looked at the bus. Saw it said, "Weaver Gospel Singers." That done messed him up [laughs]. Had a fit, said "What do you all sing, gospel?"

So they set up all the tables, all lined up. This is our first big gig, this is like playing the Apollo, like playing the Superbowl or something. They were setting up the stage—back then we had bandstand, and had sheet music. So we started playing, they started eating. And I was so nervous. My foot pedal, it would squeak, it needed greasing. That was just getting on my nerves. So I stopped. I asked the cook, "You got some oil I can get?" He said, "No, but I got some cooking oil." I said, "Hell, that'll work." So he gave me that. We started back playing again. I said, "Look, let's try to play some of that Platters stuff." I brought out the ( ), the singing group. Knocked 'em dead. They went crazy on us. They paid me 250 dollars. When I got through, he tipped me 100 dollars.

BG: Oh, my.

DC: And they asked me, would I play next New Year's Eve?

BG: What a nice compliment.

DC: And we went back the next New Year's Eve and played. ( ) They wanted to have another party, something about a daddy's cabin at a lake. We messed around for about an hour ( ). With all that noise.

BG: Were these white groups you were playing for?

DC: All white. All white. Our popularity had gotten so powerful at Carolina that people come in—Chapel Hill I heard way back was the most popular school in the country at that time—we made Carolina,

from I'd say 1957 to 1962, probably, we made them one of the most popular schools in the country, because of the group. OK. Then you had—usually a lot of out-of-state students would come in, had a lot from Maryland, a lot from New York. So what was happening, these kids were coming here from out of state and they hear us play, and they would tell their brothers and their cousins at the University of Florida and the University of Alabama about this group ( ). We found ourselves playing, along with the University of Miami, to Princeton and Yale by 1958.

Going back to this—going to Georgia, this guy, a very good friend of mine, his name is ( ). He went to the University of Georgia [tape stops]

END OF TAPE 1, SIDE B

START OF TAPE 2, SIDE A

DC: OK. He came up here from the University of Georgia and he heard us. He fell in love with—at that time we cut the band down, there wasn't but five or six of us. After we finished high school we busted the band up because everybody went their different ways. And he love everybody's name—Chicken, June Bug, Fella, Walker Holmes, and John and myself and Raff and he just liked us all. This kid had a 1949 Ford, a '50 Ford. His daddy was in charge of this exchange market in Savannah. He would drive up here on big weekends. He had this beautiful young lady named Lane ( ). About a six-footer, all blond hair. And everybody looked at this chick, ( ) I mean on campus, all these kids. So he would come and he had on these black and white shoes like a average college kid.

See, back then, our popularity had gotten so great at Carolina, every football game we started playing at Sigma Ki House before the game. We started at ten o'clock. Ten to twelve thirty—the game started maybe at one thirty. We played on the front porch. After the game, we'd be at the Lambda Ki House in the fraternity house, we started at about four thirty-five until five-seven. Then, we go maybe to the ( ) House or some other house and work from eight to twelve. ( ). But what happened, see, bands were few. Everybody wanted live entertainment. When you go to fraternity houses, especially when you go inside at night, they want it to be just the fraternity house and nobody else. So ( ) got to be such a good friend of

ours, he wasn't going to get in, so we all said, "Well, he with the band." They said, "Man, how the hell he with the band? He ain't black!" [laughs]. ( ). So we treated him so nice.

And this kid had this convertible, blue, with a hole in his convertible top. He'd ride all the way from Georgia—there wasn't no interstate then—and come here every few weekends that we playing. He's the first one to hire us at the University of Georgia. ( ).

But I guess what I'm trying to say is, from the fact of all these kids hearing us, then we started working the University of Virginia, we start working ( ), the University of South Carolina—that was in the ACC, and we worked down at the University of South Carolina at Columbia a lot—then we started going special like Alabama, Georgia, Princeton, University of Maryland. I mean we stayed busy.

BG: The traveling, there's some really tough time in a segregated South. ( ) trouble?

DC: We didn't run into as much, because we learned a lot of things, number one. You didn't have to worry too much in Virginia, South Carolina, North Carolina. Because all the places we worked, when you go into a college institution you don't have no problem on campus if you're a band. And we would go places like Alabama and places like that. And we were always stopped. ( ). Let's say we go from here to Sanford. We wouldn't stop in Pittsboro to get no gas. We made sure we had enough gas to get to Sanford. And we'd calculate how far we got to go before we gas up. And we wouldn't stop at small service stations in country towns on the side of the—especially during integration, and they see out-of-state license plates. We tried to keep cars on the interstate so we had nice cars.

We weren't worried about the students. We had to worry about the other people. And they didn't know what we were. We didn't have no sign saying Doug Clark and the Hot Nuts on the outside. But we go to Alabama and some place. We might leave here with sandwiches or something, get some at the service stations or something, or stop at the grocery store and make sandwiches on the way. Then we got the long trips, going along to Birmingham or some place like that. We might stop at Spartanburg or somewhere, the black sections of town to get something to eat. ( ) Atlanta we go do to the black section, they got all these restaurants. They got another place in Birmingham, the black section, all the soul food, you go downtown to eat. Same with Nashville, Tennessee: you find out where the black section is, where you can eat if you got the time. Also, there weren't too many service stations at that particular time staying open. So you got

to make sure you gas up when you get there and calculate how far you going to get to the big city where there's a gas station opening up.

And you learn all these things. But we travel a lot at night. But we made sure we didn't stop at any of these little country towns. ( ). We got a lot of unjustified tickets just for the hell of it. But as a whole, because everywhere we worked was clean-cut white kids. I mean, they didn't—we had a few incidents, but nothing—not a big deal. The gods blessed us. I've been very, very lucky with my group—an all-black band working all these major white colleges in the country. I've been very, very lucky.

BG: I want to go back to the high school and I wanted to ask you two questions. One is, who taught you to play the drums, and the second one is, you mentioned that you were always one, two, or three in the State--.

DC: OK. Let me go back there again. You did ask for that. What they had, they had a music festival every year at A&T. They graded the concert band. They graded the marching band. All the black bands in the State would go to the festival.

BG: How many would you say would be there?

DC: Everyone that had a band. Hillside in Durham, Raleigh, ( ). A lot of black schools still don't have bands in them.

BG: So what would you say, ten, fifteen, twenty?

DC: Let me say fifteen bands. Then, they would have the judges, would be college band directors. You may do Beethoven Number 1, and Number 2, and you may do two tunes, or three tunes. And they judge it. They judge everything, the woodwinds and everything.

And also on the football practice field, that's where they would judge the marching band. While the concerts are going on over here, you're trying to ( ) whatever's going to be. ( ). What was so good about it, you meet all these kids from all other different schools. Every section, you got a drum section. ( ). Other drummers go to see exactly what they're playing and all. And the camaraderie between everybody—you got to meet a whole lot of kids. And then you run into the same ones you know ( ) like the Rocky Mount's band and Henderson's. And these little girlfriends—you say girlfriend but you don't ever date them, you like them but you don't ever get a chance to see them. And you walk around kissing them but that's as far as it go. It's a very, very, very exciting time. I've had a rich life with friends.

BG: Who taught you to play the drums?

DC: When you join the band, that's what you learn. Yes, the band director.

BG: What about other students, did they teach you at all?

DC: You go to the band practice. Every day the band practiced. Every day the band practiced.

BG: Did you ever have to come in early or stay late for practice?

DC: Stay late. Band practice was always last period, every day.

BG: So you practiced every day?

DC: The band practiced every school day.

BG: What if you had a competition coming up?

DC: Well, you practice every day. The band director knows his schedule for us, what you got to play and what he's going to work on, what he wants you to do. But hell, he's got five days to do it, every week.

And not only that, our band director Mr. Bell, A&T College had the best marching band around anywhere, for the blacks. It was between them and Florida A&M for black marching band. But A&T, everything they done, was more like Michigan State marching, high stepping and all that formation and all. Uniforms, lights, and all this stuff. And our band director, they would go and take some ( ) and me and we'd go up to A&T and look at the practices now and then, maybe twice a year, for the different formations they were doing. We learned a lot about formations and stuff from A&T's marching band. He would take one of the majorettes, or two or them, me, and probably two other musicians—we would get in the car and go up there.

BG: When did you practice your marching?

DC: Every afternoon.

BG: How many hours did you put in practicing?

DC: I'd say about an hour. You had to go and get your stuff, get out in the field, they'd tell you what to do, and you'd be doing it. Everybody had such fun. It was fun. And the band was a fun time. Mr. Bell would tell you right quick, "Everybody make this marching band, won't make this a concert band. There won't be no ( ) in the concert. You gonna be playing." But I enjoy both. I didn't think I'd ever like

symphony music until I got in the concert band. I like Beethoven Number 1. I love to hear those French horns [imitates horns]. I used to love that.

( ) for the drummer you might have twenty minutes before you play anything. You don't play like in a marching band. You might not play but twice in a whole tune. ( ).

BG: Did they teach you music theory?

DC: Music theory? As much as he could, for him to be one director with that many kids. It wasn't like we had two band directors. They might have one assistant student, you know, but other than that.

BG: But you knew how to read music?

DC: Everybody there did. You couldn't be in the band if you didn't.

BG: What were the memories that you have of Lincoln High School that stand out?

DC: For me, I probably wouldn't have finished school, I probably wouldn't have been in the band, wouldn't have played basketball, played football—I had two people that saw a lot in me and they wanted me to be there because I had a learning disability for one thing. I was down on myself and I was down on everybody else. R.D. Smith is just like my dad, even today. Good counselor all the time, keep me on the right track. When I got my driver's license, I used to keep his car and he'd give me money to take my girlfriend to the movies or whatever. R.D. Smith and Jay Y. Bell, my band director. They took me under their wings and they must have saw a lot in me. I really appreciate it to this day. And there ain't nothing there I wouldn't do for R.D. Smith. Mr. Bell just died a few years ago. But I stayed in contact with Mr. Bell just like one of my personal friends.

BG: So you were a little down on yourself as a student, if I heard you right. You think you would have dropped out of school but for music and your--.

DC: --athletic abilities and all that kept me there. My transcript wasn't good enough to go to college. I could go, but I'd be fighting to stay there. And I didn't realize I had a learning disability ( ).

BG: Did the teachers encourage you?

DC: Oh, yes. Back then it's hard for them to tutor you one on one with as many students we had per teacher.

BG: How big were your classes?

DC: Probably—I'm just guessing—my gradating class was the largest class they had, and that was forty-eight. That was the largest class they'd ever had up to that time.

BG: And all forty-eight of those students went to class together?

DC: No. At the end there, everybody just started in the same class. But when we started, it was 105 in the freshman class. That's how many kids dropped out. Some girls do the pregnancy; some guys give up to go to work.

BG: Let me ask you another question: Did you see alcohol use at the school?

DC: No. Not the students, no.

BG: Did you see smoking at the school?

DC: No. There were very few kids even smoking at that time. And they were probably just regular cigarettes.

BG: How about when you were just out in the schoolyard?

DC: No, no smoking. ( ). Didn't have no smoking ( ) and all that.

BG: Did you see much alcohol in the community?

DC: Older people, yes. Younger people, no. You had some kids, when they got to be about a junior or something, they would try to imitate some of the people in the community. But not on a big scale, no.

BG: Did you have those—what did they call those houses where they had drinking?

DC: Liquor houses? They had a few in Chapel Hill. I think every town has got them. I heard way back ( ) house there ( ). I got to look at it this way: Chapel Hill was just a working town, a working bunch of people just working all the time. When they did drink, they drank when they come home from work at night. See one thing that probably helped in Chapel Hill for the drinking, we didn't have no liquor stores over here. We had to go to Durham to buy liquor. And back then, they didn't have the 15-501; you had to go to old ( ). It took you thirty-five minutes to go to the liquor store. Now you can go over there in twelve, thirteen minutes. That might deter some of the people from drinking. They could get it if they wanted it, but it wasn't that available. I saw more drinking around here when they first put the liquor store in Eastgate ( ). I saw a lot of drinking during that stage and up to a few years ago.



I'll give you a good example now: we just had a Superbowl party, had thirty-one people there. I don't think I had three people, four people that drank hard liquor there. I had six cases of beer and I think one case of beer out of thirty-one people. And you know what we sat and laughed about: all my buddies said, "Man, thirty years ago you'd be emptying all these bottles!" [laughs]. I guess what it is is we got old and we got different problems and so ain't nobody drinking like they used to do. It's amazing; we sat up here and talked about this no longer than Superbowl Sunday, how we all changed with drinking and the way we just like, used to have to have it.

BG: I was going to ask you about that. You always think of musicians as, at break time, having a drink or two. I wonder how much alcohol was used by the band, and whether that was a problem.

DC: Well, it was a problem with my band, I would say in the '60s, and part of the '70s. My point in saying this: you got an all-black band playing for an all-white audience. You entertain them, but you wasn't socializing or picking up the girls. When you get off from work, it's back to the motel, or you try to find a black neighborhood, find out what the happenings are. You can't find it if you don't know about the town. If you don't know about the people, you're scared to even venture out to try to find anything.

So what we were doing in our band—including myself—all of us were drinking a little too much. Out of boredom. In our spare time we played poker or either ( ) and drink.

BG: What's ( )?

DC: It's like bridge, but you play for a few dollars. When we played poker we always played with a limit on it, so nobody wouldn't get broke or what. ( ). That was our pastime. I remember when we had the bus and all. Can you imagine a poker game lasting from Denver, Colorado all the way home? Non-stop.

BG: ( ).

DC: Well, when we were riding around there was about fourteen people. When somebody gets tired, stops, somebody else gets in the game. But over the years, including myself, I used to drink a little bit too much. I look back over it. Our social lives were very, very dull. Because it's like, you're not around your friends; you go out to make a living. And you're making everybody happy. People think you're happy because you're making them happy.

At the end of the week all my guys went to Western Union, wiring money home. But most of the money they spend was from drinking or feeding themselves. Which wasn't much because they were among each other for drinking—if you're at a bar buying drinks for other folks that's something else.

BG: So when you traveled, you would go to really distant places, it seems like. Did you then, say, have a western tour?

DC: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. We used to go out to Canyon. We'd go to Champaign, Illinois, Bloomington, Illinois, and we'd go to Madison, Wisconsin and we'd cut down to the University of Missouri, then ( ), Kansas, then Colorado. I had to go to Nebraska once. I had to go to Iowa. I had to go up to Minnesota. Then we'd double back and come back down through ( ) Oklahoma, the University of Texas, cut back across, come through Alabama, and come back out. And we'd do that on average twice a year. We'd go out the spring of the year, and the fall of the year, before the weather set in. And it got to be a big thing for us.

BG: That's a lot of traveling.

DC: Yes. But back then we had a bus, I had a bus, a big bus just like Greyhound Trailway.

BG: Let's go back to the high school. You say you played sports also. What sports did you play?

DC: Basketball. Football. Baseball.

BG: How did you have time to do basketball, football, baseball, and band?

DC: Well, the thing about it: especially when I got to be a junior, I ( ) else hard time, Mr. Bell did, the drum major, especially games. And ( ) other stuff. Every year I'd come out football, make the team, and the football coach would get mad because I would stay out there. And the band director get mad because he just bought these brand new uniforms and all this high hat and all this beautiful stuff, he told me—he used to stutter when he talked—( ). He's my mentor. You know.

BG: Who was the coach of the football team?

DC: ( ) was the first coach. Then Mr. Peerman was my second coach.

BG: When did Peerman come in?

DC: Let me see. I think it's '54. It was two years one, and two years the other.

BG: And then Coach Bradshaw came in?

DC: Yes, but that was after my time. I was gone.

BG: What position did you play?

DC: I played quarterback.

BG: What kind of team did you have?

DC: Good.

BG: How good?

DC: We made the playoffs every year [laughs]. Unfortunately, my junior and senior years, we made the playoffs and we lost in the playoffs each time.

BG: Do you remember the records of the team in '51? Do you know where I could find that? Maybe a school newspaper?

DC: School newspaper. I was going to suggest that.

I had such a busy life. I had such a busy life I haven't had a chance to get too bored.

BG: I would think not. Tell me more about the football games--.

DC: Let me say--. Since you brought that up, it's amazing, way back when I was a kid and I wasn't playing the first quarterback. They didn't have a place for the team to play. They played at old Emerson Field down at the university, the high school then. The kids would walk all the way through campus to go down. There was an old baseball stadium, right behind the student union building. They tore that down now. But the whole school, the university—that's what I was saying about the university and the close-knit neighborhood—they used to let Lincoln High School use the facilities of the university. And the games used to be way back—in the late '40s and the '50s—at old Emerson field. The ones that wanted to go to a game, they walked from Orange County Training School all through Cherry Street, right behind Lenoir dining hall. Later on, they started having games at Chapel Hill High School, on their field.

Then, in Carrboro, they built a place called Lion's Park. They used to have lights and everything, really nice. And they started having all the games out there—the baseball team would play out there. All our games were on Friday nights; all the Chapel Hill High School games were on Thursday nights.

And this is the thing about that too: our high school band was so popular that people would come to see the band at the half-time show as well as the football team. We had about as many whites there as we had blacks. A lot of students. A lot of Carolina football players would come.

BG: To see the football team or the band, or both?

DC: Both.

See what generated a lot of that, too, by having all these parades and stuff. And they'd read the newspaper about Lincoln High School this or that. The onliest thing that we didn't have, that I regretted, with the talent we had in Chapel Hill: we didn't have a gym until the summer of '56. I had a chance to graduate in it but not play in it. At Lincoln. That's when they finally built the gym on to the school and then finally put the gym on to the school in the beginning.

BG: Where did you play your basketball?

DC: OK. I'll tell you what happened. Over at Northside, which is Orange County Training School, they had a gym. Dig this—here come the shocker—there were three poles, that's what I told you about. We had an advantage over other people because we had eight people out on the floor, we knew where the poles were and they didn't [laughs]. And they kept them padded. But you used that pole for a lot of blocking and all. And that's where we played basketball.

Now dig this: even when they finished Lincoln High School, basketball practice started at six o'clock for boys—yes, because girls started at five. We would have to walk—like me, I come from Lincoln High School, I come from home—dropped by bags off, and go to Hargraves Center, might play a ( ) game, then I go to basketball practice. OK. When ( ) was the basketball coach, you might not get out of basketball practice until ten o'clock.

BG: Six until ten o'clock?

DC: Yes, but when ( ) was there I didn't go but about eight [laughs]. Because you know you're going to be there. OK. About ten o'clock. Then you leave there and come back by, ( ) the sweets shop, in high school. Then you come home. It's amazing, the basketball team ( ) doing their homework for the boys. But girls got home early. And so the gathering place after basketball practice would be Ben Baldwin's sweets shop, right by the theater. That was every night. I actually look at people like Jacky Bell, and ( ) Hurst, and Nick Hurst, the kids that lived on Windy Hill, they would walk all the way back up to Carrboro, then turnaround and walk way back to Windy Hill. Windy Hill is what we called Old Hillsborough Street. We had basketball practice until ten o'clock, then we walked up, that's ten-thirty. They hanging around there, they walk home. ( ) coming to school! [laughs]. And the bus didn't pick

them up, the bus didn't pick them up on Hillsborough Street to bring them to Lincoln. They had to find a way. Something to think about.

BG: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. They had all different type of formations. [tape stops].

DC: We took a lot of pride in the school, in the band director, for how the band looked at all times. And you got fined when all your uniform wasn't there. I'll never forget, first one that started this was Rocky Mount's band, ( ) down at Rocky Mount. At half time they cut off all the lights. You had five lights. One on each arm, one on your cap, and one on each leg. They would cut off all the lights in the stadium, and the band would play with no lights, and doing the different formations on the field. And the crowd would go absolutely wild. A&T was doing that too—I'm sorry , A&T was doing it before Rocky Mount, they set the pattern for everybody else—they had spats on their shoes and all. The uniform—if you leave some at home, you really catch it.

BG: When did Lincoln start doing it?

DC: Shortly after A&T. I would say about '55, right when we got our new uniforms. Yes.

BG: How did you get money for the uniforms?

DC: OK. Lucky you brought that up. My mom, Ed Caldwell Sr., and a guy named Chapman, used to have a printing press here. They started the ball rolling way back, trying to raise money for these uniforms ( ). Ed Caldwell Sr., they purchased a car from somewhere, a Ford, a new car, and they raffled it off. And believe it or not a lot of students at Carolina even bought tickets for that, too. The raffle for that Ford car. And we would have little things like weiner roasts and little parties and stuff to raise money. Like a little booster's club with the pearls. That gave us all something to do too, with all the kids going to weiner roasts to so-and-so's house. They had hot dogs and wieners and sodas, and you bought them.

BG: Did the PTA have a role in--?

DC: No. Not that I know of. But I knew Ed Caldwell Sr., and my mom, and Chapman, had a lot to do with it.

BG: How long did it take you to raise money to get all those uniforms?

DC: I don't know. There's no use in me saying yes I do. But I know that drive was on for about a year. Let's say it started at the last of '53. '54. We got the uniforms in '55.

BG: Do you want the move because the sun is coming in here?

DC: The sun's going to come down on that side over there anyway. Excuse me [tape stops].

BG: Were your parents involved in the PTA?

DC: My mom was involved in just about everything in Chapel Hill. My dad was a workaholic. At one time, my mom, during my high school days, she left for a little while, about four or five years—I had a real sick auntie in ( ), New York. She went to help take care of her. She was in the hospital. She finished dentistry college, taught for years, and came down with TB. Back then there wasn't no cure for TB. The best hospital that we could find for her was up in ( ), New York, right out of Buffalo. So that's where my mom went, and that's where my mom got her training for nursing, while she was up there.

BG: So she was gone for four, five years. During a tough time in your life.

DC: Yes. But my dad, he just made sure, every morning, everything when he left, our breakfast was there when he went to work, and in the afternoon he patted out hamburger patties for us to fix to eat. In the morning before we went to school he always had change for us, he always had the money for us to buy a lunch. My dad had a tip jar in a little brown jug, that's where he put all his tip money. See way back then, lunch didn't cost but thirty cents or less, so you get thirty cents or fifty cents, that's enough to do what you want to do for the day.

BG: What do you remember about the principal at the school?

DC: At one time, when I was young, I go from Mr. Holmes, to Mr. Jernigan—there were a couple there that I forgot—and then it came to Mr. McDougle. Mr. McDougle, as far as I'm concerned, was super. He was super nice to us, a good principal. He took a lot of time with me, too, and Mrs. McDougle did, too. I think Mr. McDougle was good for the neighborhood, good for the whole community.

BG: What did he do that makes you feel this way?

DC: I think he was fair. He was fair to the students, fair to the teachers and the parents. That means you could go to him. If he wanted to make a correction, you felt like it was his decision to make. He wasn't a controversial principal that I know of. He was good for the community. For him to be here that long.

BG: When did he start?

DC: I don't really remember. It was back in the early '50s.

BG: So you were in high school from seventh to twelfth grade. In seventh grade, you were, what, 1948?

DC: No, I was born in 1936.

BG: So it would be '49.

DC: Yes. Come out in '54. I didn't come out in '54, I came out in '53.

BG: And he had been principal since the early '50s. Were there any habits he had that you can remember?

DC: No. He was well respected for the students. He walked the halls and he'd look in on us. Sometimes he'd come in and sit in on a class for a few minutes. I think he had a good relation with all the students when I was in school. He was always kidding with you.

BG: He knew your name?

DC: Everybody. He knew everybody's name. He used to tickle me in the mornings. You probably heard this. In the mornings, especially at Lincoln, he'd be out there before the bell rings on the same side as you pull in. All that was dirt then. ( ). I'll never forget—I forgot to tell you—there were school buses [laughs] ( ). Anyway, came out bus route one day, and you know the bell ring. He's still out there. A friend of mine is coming, taking a long time. His name was Russell Marr. And says Mr. McDougle, "Go on back, Marr. Go back. You're too late for today and you're too late for tomorrow." And boy we just fell out. He told him he was too late for today and too early for tomorrow. I'll tell you, he was comical in his own way. From my opinion, I loved the guy. I thought he was fair. I thought he was good. I don't know of any kind of scandal he was in while he was here. Everything that the teachers done, he was on top of it. I just think that he was a good person. I really do.

BG: What about the coach? It sounds like he coached all sports.

DC: Well he did. Kornegas and Peerman, most time they would teach probably biology in the class. And teach basketball, football, and baseball, all three sports. Kornegas wasn't—he was funny and this and that and he had good ( )—but with kids who wanted to play for him he was too loud, he was worse than Bobby Knight. One of my worst experiences I had with him—I'll never forget this, I think it might have hurt me in life—I was in the fifth grade, fourth or fifth grade, and they were playing Raleigh—we called them the little blues, in Raleigh. That was a powerhouse school. And going to play them at

Emerson Field. I asked my teacher could I go to the bathroom. ( ). I went down stairs, in the locker room, where they were dressing. I saw the little blues dressing, just like a little kid. I was telling all the guys that knew me, ( ). The coach came up and hit me with his fist, and beat me—I had headaches for I don't know how long. And throwed me out of there. I went back and I cried. I didn't tell the principal, because I was scared to tell him. I had a headache probably for months. But I wasn't the onliest one he hit in his tenure there. He hit quite a few other people. And jumped on ( ). Worse than a Bobby Knight. Plus he had a bad attitude as far as in the community. He was winning with his team, like a Bobby Knight. But his way or no way. But he was more respected because he was violent.

BG: Out of fear.

DC: Right. And I didn't want to play football, that's why I stayed with the band. And I made the team every year. Every year he'd try to get me to come up, but I wouldn't come up. I played basketball. And I'll never forget—I was maybe a freshman. I played basketball under ( ) for two years, not football. And we were warming up, a game. The ball hit me in my chest, just about broke my ribs. And I just found out a few years ago who done it. And it was him. This man hated me for some kind of reason. I don't think he liked that I was drum major in the band. I took drum major over football. It's like he's trying to say I'm gay or something else. Other people would be scared because they didn't want me to quit or what. And later on that year, I kind of felt like it ( )—I had to lay down on the floor and everything, I mean I was in pain, I thought it caved in my ribs.

Later on we had a practice, maybe a couple of weeks after that. He was teaching us a play on how to hand the ball off from the outside of you ( ). A guy on the team, Averett Rasheed, he wasn't paying attention. He was laughing and talking. He said, "Rasheed, come on out here and do this." Came out, done it wrong the first time, the second time. But after the second time he had to pass by the coach. The coach hit him in the stomach as hard as he could. He just picked that boy up—this man weighed two hundred, maybe sixty or seventy pounds. He hit that boy [gasping sounds]. Everybody quit, had stopped. He said, "( ), let's go. Move the ball." Just lay there, hurt.

So me and Thomas Booth and another guy, we were taking shots. I think it was that same day or the day after. He said, "You all can't shoot that ball right, go home to your mammy," and so and so and so. And he was angry. But I knew ain't nobody could do it but me and ( ). And I ain't about to let this man hit



me no more. So when he wasn't looking I went into the room where I was dressing, and grabbed my clothes and climbed right out the window and I went home. Because he wouldn't have let me leave. I went home. I didn't go back to practice. This was in '53. ( ), the captain of the team, came to me after about two days, said, "What's up? Why aren't you coming to practice?" I said, "I ain't coming back." He said, "Come on, man, we're going to need you next year." See, he's graduating, you know. "We need you now." And he went off [tape stops].

END OF TAPE 2, SIDE A

START OF TAPE 2, SIDE B

DC: I said, "I'm tired of him beating on me. I'm not going back." I waited about a week. A game or two passed, and I went back. And I had no more problems out of him, and he got fired after that year. I didn't tell the principal. But he was doing so much hitting. Mr. Turner of the dramatics club and a couple teachers they started ( ). But he was just a hard nut. He got another job in Durham and he got fired from that. Then he went to ( ) and he got fired from that. Up in ( ) he beat the principal's son. Man's crazy.

So I went through that. I wasn't the onliest one he hit. But I'll never forget. Shortly after him, that same year, they were fixing the maypole. We had a May Day festival. I'm out there kidding around with a childhood friend of mine, dodging around and running, and I ran smack into this post, didn't see it. Knocked me slam out. And when I woke up, everybody was standing there ( ) my teeth and all. And they finally got me all right. But I still had another headache for god knows when.

BG: You had a concussion.

DC: I did. Both times I had one. OK. 1957, I had a accident. I broke my cheekbone, both ribs, and all. And when they took X-rays of my skull, they saw that I had a spot on my skull. And it had to come from one of those blows.

BG: You fractured your skull, either when he hit you or you ran into the post.

DC: Right. I was doing decent in school around that time. But it kind of slowed me up too. I don't know. That might not have been the problem, either. Because I wasn't putting in a whole lot of effort either.

BG: Are there any other teachers you can remember, or anything else that stands out in your mind?

DC: Well, Miss ( ), she was great to me. Miss Bell, Mr. Bell's wife, the band director, she was great to me. R.D. was great to me; R.D. was more than great, he was like a dad. If anytime he needed something done, or he needed something done correctly—like all the parades, Christmas and all, I ended up being R.D.'s shop foreman my sophomore year. Because I used to build so many things, lamps and stuff like that. I built so many lamps and end tables and stuff like that. I probably would have been—I like cabinet making and stuff like that—I probably would have been an interior decorator.

BG: Did you build ( )?

DC: I didn't build that. I organized it, put it all together. I put that little ball over there, though. My point is, interior decorator, I see so much stuff on the road, in all these country clubs, these nice homes. I hate to say it but I got expensive tastes [laughs] with no money. But I like things, I like putting things together.

BG: You think you got that from R.D.?

DC: I got a whole lot of things from R.D. The man is just a good man, I tell you. He cares about you. I haven't called that man in my life—not in school, out of school—when he didn't respond. I've been out of school—I need to borrow his truck, I need to borrow his car, I need him to help me to do something—he hasn't said no, not one time. He hasn't said, "Well I got something else to do." He might have said, "Well I'm doing something today; can we do it some other day?" Even today. The man's eighty-one years old. Out of everybody that I've been around, other than my immediate family, he's probably the closest loving friend I got. And he wonders how I care so much about him. But I'm like this: I don't forget people. Anybody who's a friend of mine that helped me, I don't forget him. I cherish friends; I cherish friendship. I'm just as hard on people that try their best to hurt me. I just stay out of the way and want them to stay out of mine.

BG: Maybe that's a good place to end, with your friendship with R.D. I could ask you to go on but I think that's long enough. Thank you very much. I really appreciated talking to you.

DC: You're welcome. You're welcome.

END OF INTERVIEW

END OF TAPE 2, SIDE B