

MEMORIES OF NEW BERN

CAROLINE HUNTER DAVIS

INTERVIEW 301

This is an interview with Caroline Hunter Davis. She is retired and taught school for six years, but for twenty-five years was employed with the North Carolina Forestry Service from which she retired. She was born at 24 Craven Street, but after only a few days moved to the new home built by her father in 1911 for the family at 19 Broad Street.

She has lived in New Bern all her life. This interview is being conducted at Miss Davis' home on Meadowbrook Avenue. The interviewer is Daphne Pope representing the New Bern Memories Committee. My number is 300. This is interview number 301. The date is 20 May 1991.

DAPHNE POPE: All right. Just give me a short biographical sketch of yourself, Caroline. I know it needs longer, but just a short one.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Well, first of all I'd like to say who my mother and father were.

DAPHNE POPE: All right.

CAROLINE DAVIS: I am the daughter - I'm Caroline Hunter Davis, the daughter of, no, how do I bring my parents - let's see -I'm the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. David R. Davis, but my mother's name before she was married was Mary King.

DAPHNE POPE: Okay.

CAROLINE DAVIS: And I have her, you know, birth certificate and death certificate.

DAPHNE POPE: Let me stop you just a minute, Caroline, to make sure your voice is coming through, okay. You told us who your parents were, tell us about how many brothers and sisters you have.

CAROLINE DAVIS: That's what I was gonna say.

DAPHNE POPE: Okay, tell me about those.

CAROLINE DAVIS: I have a twin sister whose name is Frances Allen Davis.

DAPHNE POPE: Frances Allen.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Davis.

DAPHNE POPE: Did ya'll look anything alike?

CAROLINE DAVIS: People thought we looked just alike even when we were just born. One lady on the street, Mrs. Hurst, decided that she thought we looked so much alike that she was gonna call both of us "Twiny", so both of us had that nickname for quite some time until we got grown and then we used our own name.

DAPHNE POPE: Did you have any other sisters?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Had no other sisters. My mother and father had four children; the twins, Frances and myself, and we had one older brother who was six years older than we were and he was born in 1905. My youngest brother was born March 7, 1913.

DAPHNE POPE: Uh huh. I see.

CAROLINE DAVIS: And he was two years younger than we were.

DAPHNE POPE: Okay. All right. Now you grew up on Broad Street at 19 Broad Street.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yes.

DAPHNE POPE: And then you finished at the high school?

CAROLINE DAVIS: I graduated from New Bern High School in 1928. I started in the first grade with Miss Molly Heath as my teacher. And I can name my other teachers down in the primary grades.

DAPHNE POPE: Well, right now let's just get... You went off to school. Where did you go to college?

CAROLINE DAVIS: When I graduated from high school, I went the first year to Converse College in Spartanburg, South Carolina.

DAPHNE POPE: Um huh. That was a long way from home.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Well, I wanted to go somewhere out of the state because I felt like living in North Carolina I would meet more people in North Carolina without having to go there.

DAPHNE POPE: Um huh. And then where did you go?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Then after I finished Converse, I came home and I told my mother if I was going to be a teacher, which she wanted me to be a teacher, I would like to go to a school where I could get a course in education in order to have a teacher's certificate. At that time there was one other friend of mine that was going to Fredericksburg State Teachers College and I asked my mother if I couldn't go there and she could consented. I graduated from Fredericksburg State Teachers College which became Mary Washington College.

DAPHNE POPE: Oh, okay.

CAROLINE DAVIS: I graduated from there in 1932 with a primary grade A certificate. At that time teaching jobs were hard to get. You wrote applications all over the United States and hardly ever heard from any of them at that time because teaching was scarce.

DAPHNE POPE: But you did teach for six years.

CAROLINE DAVIS: But one night somebody called me and said, "Miss Davis, I understand you're looking for a position in the primary

grades", and I said, "Yes", and he said, "Well, we have one in Chatham County and I'd like for you to come over to Kinston and meet me on a Friday of that week to discuss the position." So I went over to Kinston, it was the hottest day in August, and interviewed the Principal who was a Mr. Hunter, and he told me a little bit about the school.

He said that it was a modern school, it had electric lights, and right across the road from the school was a Teacherage. He said, "I would meet the teachers when they came to Raleigh and then I would take them and show them where the school was and the Teacherage right across the road."

DAPHNE POPE: You were a new teacher and he was asking you to meet the teachers coming in?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Well, no, he was going to meet me.

DAPHNE POPE: Oh, okay.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Some of the teachers had taught there, see. They had taught, some of them had taught there many years before I started. But anyway, that week I took a bus to Raleigh because he said he would meet some of the teachers at the bus station. Well, I got to the bus station and sat down to wait for him to meet me. I was there about an hour and I didn't see anybody looking for a teacher, so I kept on sitting there finally thinking well, he would be down in a few minutes. Well, a little bit later he had not come and I was getting worried because I didn't know where to go or what to do. So I went up to the desk and asked the clerk what time the next bus left for Apex. He had told me the school was near Apex. And he said, "Well,

I'm sorry lady, but we don't have another bus going to Apex until in the morning", and that was gonna be too late. So then I said, "Well, what about the train?" There was not a train going out til in the morning. So I went and took the seat back in the bus station, and a taxi cab driver heard me and he came over and he said, "Lady", said, "If you want to go to Apex", he says, "I'll take you", and I said, "Well, how much will it be?", and he said, "It will be three dollars and a half." Well, it had only cost me three dollars and half to get to Raleigh and I didn't know whether I had that much in my pocketbook. (laughter) I said, "Well, no, I don't believe I can do it", so I went back and sat down. And he came back, I think he felt sorry for me, and then he said, "Well, I tell you lady", he said, "I'll take you for three dollars", so I thought, "Well, I'd better take him up on that, I won't Jew him down anymore."

DAPHNE POPE: Well, what had happened to the principal?

CAROLINE DAVIS: And so, well, he had left. So then he took, the cab driver took me to Apex, and I said, "Well, now, when you get to Apex you put me out at the Teacherage" because I thought that's where the, you know, Teacherage was. Well, I went up and he took my bags and put them on the porch and I knocked upon the door and the lady came to the door and I said, "Well, I'm Caroline Davis and I'm the new first grade teacher", and she said, "Well, I'm sorry lady", she says, "I think you've made a mistake because we don't have a new first grade teacher here", and I said, "Well, yes, but this position I understand had just become vacant because the teacher that had been

teaching was sick or for some reason couldn't, you know, keep it up."

So then his wife said, "Well, my husband is principal of the school here so maybe he knows something about the school you're talking about."

So I told him everything that the man had told me. I said, "Well, he told him he would meet me, you know, at the bus station." Anyway, so the bus driver took me to Apex and that was the reason I got to go. I got to the wrong place because it was not the Teacherage for that school.

DAPHNE POPE: Oh, oh, I see.

CAROLINE DAVIS: And so then I went and sat on the porch, and by that time the cab driver had driven off, and he said, her husband said, "Well, I'll take you out there because I know exactly where it is." Him being in the school business, he knew about all these little schools in the community. So he took me out there.

DAPHNE POPE: He did?

CAROLINE DAVIS: And I got there and I knocked on the door and they came and I said, "Well, I thought Mr. Hunter was gonna meet me", and they said, "Well, he had to go to the train to meet another teacher, but he'll be here in a little while." So he did finally come.

DAPHNE POPE: Now tell me what the Teacherage was like. Was it a nice place to stay?

CAROLINE DAVIS: The Teacherage was just a country house. And the first thing I noticed it had lamps on the table. I thought maybe the electricity had gone off because he told me, when he told me the school had lights I didn't think about the Teacherage not having lights

too, you know.

DAPHNE POPE: But it didn't, didn't have electric lights.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Didn't have electric lights.

DAPHNE POPE: How about running water?

CAROLINE DAVIS: It didn't have running water. Had to go outside.

DAPHNE POPE: My goodness!

CAROLINE DAVIS: And all that sort of things.

DAPHNE POPE: Well, where, where, now you had a little outhouse.

CAROLINE DAVIS: There were just about seven teachers there. We didn't have but about seven grades. It was a consolidated school, and all the children had come in on buses.

DAPHNE POPE: Um huh. Nobody walked to school.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Nobody, well, nobody walked to school.

DAPHNE POPE: Nobody lived around there.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Nobody lived near enough to walk.

DAPHNE POPE: So seven teachers...

CAROLINE DAVIS: Seven teachers.

DAPHNE POPE: You had about 350 students, children, or something like that I guess.

CAROLINE DAVIS: In my first grade that first week I had 55 children in the first grade.

DAPHNE POPE: Fifty-five!

CAROLINE DAVIS: And I didn't know what to do because I thought, well, they were gonna have a teachers meeting that night and I thought they would tell me at the teachers meeting what I was suppose to do



the first day or tell me a little bit about it. They didn't tell me anything! And so anyway, all these children came in there and I said, "Honey", I said, "I don't believe you're ready for school yet." I said, "You don't look like you're six years old", and I said, "You take your little brother or sister", whoever it was, I said, "You just take them home and tell your mother that they're not old enough yet. They'll have to wait until they're six years old." Then, they didn't require them to have...

DAPHNE POPE: To have their birth certificate and all that.

CAROLINE DAVIS: The birth certificate. So I got rid of some of those the first week.

DAPHNE POPE: But you had books in your room though. Did you have books and supplies like that for first graders?

CAROLINE DAVIS: First grade, see, they didn't get any books for some time.

DAPHNE POPE: Okay. You had writing books? Did you have tablets?

CAROLINE DAVIS: No. No, I had to do everything on the writing board, on the blackboard - teach them how to write. And then finally we got a primer, you know, like...

DAPHNE POPE: Okay.

CAROLINE DAVIS: My name is Jack. I have a dog. His name is...

DAPHNE POPE: Yeah, you have to have...

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah. And so I taught the way I was supposed to teach it, because at least I had some, you know, training.

DAPHNE POPE: Well, you had your training, yes. Well, you said

it didn't have running water, so you had an outside bathroom. Where was your water? Where did you have a pump?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Well, they had a pump and they had bowls and pitchers in each room.

DAPHNE POPE: In your rooms, uh huh. And there was a pump like on the porch or something.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah, um huh.

DAPHNE POPE: Was this common in Teacherages, do you know, or was that just a country place that it was...

CAROLINE DAVIS: It was just a country place.

DAPHNE POPE: Cause this is 1932.

CAROLINE DAVIS: This is 1932.

DAPHNE POPE: Now in New Bern most people had indoor plumbing and all of that, didn't they, in New Bern about that time?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yes, but they didn't there. It was half-way between Apex and Pittsboro, now it was about a mile off the road. Had to go across a little bridge.

DAPHNE POPE: Well, in New Bern while you were growing up, talking about schools, let me ask you this, we're getting ahead of ourselves perhaps, but the teachers that you had growing up, can you remember if they had any very strong rules about their morals and that kind of thing? Did they have...

CAROLINE DAVIS: What, in the schools?

DAPHNE POPE: Uh huh. Could the teachers be married? Could they go out on dates with men? Did they have to go to church and that kind

of thing?

CAROLINE DAVIS: At one time they didn't take married teachers.

DAPHNE POPE: When you were growing up?

CAROLINE DAVIS: When I was growing up.

DAPHNE POPE: Um huh. If you got married you had to quit teaching?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah.

DAPHNE POPE: You know what the pay was?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Another thing about this school, boy, you couldn't, it was a Baptist community. There was only one schoolhouse and the Teacherage and one Baptist Church. I think they had church about once a month, but they had Sunday School every Sunday. But they, you know how Baptist are, they're against every thing!

DAPHNE POPE: Yeah.

CAROLINE DAVIS: You couldn't play cards.

DAPHNE POPE: Um huh.

CAROLINE DAVIS: You couldn't...

DAPHNE POPE: Okay. Well, we don't care. I mean, we're not having memories of Chatham County. Let's get back to New Bern

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah, that's right.

DAPHNE POPE: And while we're talking about schools, I was just going to ask you do you remember anything about the salary? Now do you remember what you made your first year?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah, I sure do, I sure do.

DAPHNE POPE: What was it?

CAROLINE DAVIS: I made \$75.00 a month.

DAPHNE POPE: Seventy-five dollars a month.

CAROLINE DAVIS: It was a county school.

DAPHNE POPE: And you had to work twenty days, it wasn't just every month you got paid. And do you remember how many days the school year was? Now did you have eight months or...

CAROLINE DAVIS: All I know, no, we didn't have, I think we had nine months.

DAPHNE POPE: You had nine months?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Nine months.

DAPHNE POPE: But you made \$75.00 a month the first year you taught.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Seventy-five dollars. But let me tell you this, I got room and board for eighteen dollars.

DAPHNE POPE: A month.

CAROLINE DAVIS: A month.

DAPHNE POPE: That's pretty good, isn't it?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah.

DAPHNE POPE: You can't get that for a day now, can you?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Didn't have anything to spend my money for anyway.

DAPHNE POPE: Um huh. Let's get back to the neighborhood you lived in here, since we're interested in New Bern.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Okay.

DAPHNE POPE: What were the houses on Broad Street like at that time? Were they one-story frame houses, two-story brick houses, or,

what kinds of, types of houses were they?

CAROLINE DAVIS: The ones on the street that I lived on from East Front Street to Craven Street they were nice big houses.

DAPHNE POPE: Big houses. Mostly two-story with big porches?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Three-story. Our house, like I said, our house was built in 1911, it had an attic and a furnace down in the basement.

DAPHNE POPE: Um huh.

CAROLINE DAVIS: And mother used coal in the furnace. And every morning the colored man that worked down at the Sudan Temple, he would come by and stoke the furnace or whatever.

DAPHNE POPE: Did that early in the morning?

CAROLINE DAVIS: He did that early in the morning and then at night he would shake it down.

DAPHNE POPE: Did that last all day? When he would stoke it in the morning, would that make it run all day long?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah. And then he would do whatever he was supposed to do at night.

DAPHNE POPE: Uh huh. And you had heat all the time.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yes.

DAPHNE POPE: And then you had a first and second floor and then the attic.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah. There were about thirteen rooms in that house.

DAPHNE POPE: Thirteen? And one bathroom?

CAROLINE DAVIS: No, we had - well, yeah, we had one bathroom, but later my mother had two, later on, not right away, but, well, I'd say maybe when we went off to college she decided she would take tourists, you know, when they started putting up tourist signs.

DAPHNE POPE: Yes.

CAROLINE DAVIS: So she thought it would give her something to do and she enjoyed it.

DAPHNE POPE: And this is something a lot of people did?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Um huh.

DAPHNE POPE: You didn't have as many hotels then, and if they had those extra rooms they took in tourist.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Um huh, that's right.

DAPHNE POPE: Was Broad Street paved at that time?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah, it was.

DAPHNE POPE: But it was not as broad as it is now.

CAROLINE DAVIS: It was broad.

DAPHNE POPE: But there were those trees there. They cut those down after we moved here in '54. You know when they widened it...

CAROLINE DAVIS: That's right, they did. They cut down those big oak trees and it was the prettiest street in town and they cut those down.

DAPHNE POPE: They had two lanes there, but then there was a nice wide stretch where you had trees and shade and all that playing.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah. And we had big yards. Our yard went half-way up Pollock Street. That's where...

DAPHNE POPE: A deeper lot, uh huh.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Deep lot, and mother had a garden.

DAPHNE POPE: So you remember most of the houses as being large with two-stories and big porches on them and that kind of thing.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah. Well, you can see now what they were like because the Hurst house on the corner and right next to the Hurst house is the Carraway house and that was a big house. Then next to the Carraway's that's where they had the printing press in which was...

DAPHNE POPE: Now wait a minute. Where are we now, on Broad Street?

CAROLINE DAVIS: On Broad Street. Beginning at the corner of East Front Street and Broad Street were the Duffy houses that owned the Duffy Drug Store.

DAPHNE POPE: Okay. Okay.

CAROLINE DAVIS: And then right back of that, their's was facing East Front Street...

DAPHNE POPE: Now you're talking about on the side that goes toward Pollock Street.

CAROLINE DAVIS: No. No. I'm talking about the Duffy house that was right across the street from where the Holiday Inn used to be.

DAPHNE POPE: Uh huh. Okay.

CAROLINE DAVIS: And it was facing that way.

DAPHNE POPE: Okay.

CAROLINE DAVIS: And then right next to the Duffy house going around East Front Street was the Rawls' house and that's where they had the library at one time.

DAPHNE POPE: Yeah, I remember that.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Now, then right next to the Duffy house on the corner was the Hurst house and that was a big house. And then right next to that was the Carraway house which was a big house, and they had that, you know, iron gate. And right across the street from there was the Nelson house where the Sudan Temple was later built. Then next to the Carraway house I said was the printing press, and then there was a little house where the Montague's lived. Her name was Lizzy Montague I remember. I can't remember her husband's name. Right next to the Montague's, the Carpenter's, Primrose Carpenter and his family; and there were Edith, Edna, and Mildred, the three girls and Primrose.

DAPHNE POPE: Now is this in the same block?

CAROLINE DAVIS: In the same block going toward my house going toward Craven Street.

DAPHNE POPE: Okay. Now you where - you remember when Primrose had that florist business one block up, so that's a different house.

CAROLINE DAVIS: He didn't have a florist business.

DAPHNE POPE: On Broad Street, yes he did.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Oh, on Broad Street later.

DAPHNE POPE: Uh huh, later. But that was another place.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah. But not when he first moved there.

DAPHNE POPE: But the house they lived in then was not the house.

CAROLINE DAVIS: No, uh huh. Then the Taylors, Linabelle Taylor, and she had a sister named, well, she had two sisters; one was named



Dixie and the other was named Alma. She had two brothers; one was named Elwood and was named Isaac. There were five, you know, growing up in that house. Then after that was the, what do you call it, the Carpenter, not the Carpenter house, then next to the Carpenter house was I think the Ashley house. Theirs was built after ours was. Ours was built in 1911 and the Ashley house was built in 1914, but theirs was built on sort of the same plan as ours was. Then was our house right in the middle and right across the street was, you know the house that had the fence around it that the girl moved out round next to the Academy - what was named?

DAPHNE POPE: I can't place it right now.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Oh, she painted it and restored it. She's new here. (Emily Henson)

DAPHNE POPE: Is this Broad Street we're talking about now?

CAROLINE DAVIS: No, no. On...

DAPHNE POPE: Craven?

CAROLINE DAVIS: That was the house that was across the street from us that had a fence around it. You know where Elizabeth Crowley lives?

DAPHNE POPE: Elizabeth who?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Elizabeth Crowley. You know where Guion, what's the name, where Louise Guion's house... You know the Guion girl - John, her husband works at the bank.

DAPHNE POPE: Well, I don't check to study peoples names. Were any of these people that you're telling, well, was anybody in the

neighborhood considered a rich person?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Well, I tell you the richest person on that street when we were there, or at least I thought was, and that was, his name was Eby, Clyde Eby, and he had the house that Mary Charles Maxwell had. And Mary Charles Maxwell's house, you know, was brick. It was used as...

DAPHNE POPE: Right, for Board of Education and then it was Chamber of Commerce.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Well, that was almost right across the street from us.

DAPHNE POPE: Okay, got it.

CAROLINE DAVIS: I have a picture of their house with Frances standing in front of the house. But the other house was, it was owned by the Bray's at one time; great big... (Henson house on New Street)

DAPHNE POPE: Well, in your neighborhood everybody's house sounds so big. Was anybody that was considered poor in your neighborhood?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Poor? I don't know of anybody being considered poor, of course there was a depression and everybody didn't have as much as they did have. No, I don't remember them being real poor.

DAPHNE POPE: Okay.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Well, no. And next door to us was Ernest Green and his wife. There were two people that lived in that house. They didn't have any children. That was Martha Gibbs aunt and uncle.

DAPHNE POPE: So this is Mr. Eby that was buried where...

CAROLINE DAVIS: Mr. Eby, oh, when he died, the reason I thought

he was so rich because they told what his estate amounted to and it was \$42,000 and I thought boy...

DAPHNE POPE: And that was an enormous sum of money.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah, I thought, well, that's what I thought. I thought, well, \$42,000! I can't imagine anybody having that much. I thought he was a millionaire.

DAPHNE POPE: Do you know what he did for a living?

CAROLINE DAVIS: No, I surely don't. I could find out. Oh, and then they had, right on further down, Mrs. Whitty, John Whitty's mother and father lived there. Then right next to them the Matthews, and the, oh, the funeral parlor was over there - Albert Willis Funeral Parlor.

DAPHNE POPE: I remember that, yeah. Is there anybody in your neighborhood that you really looked up to, particularly when you were growing up? Any person that you looked up to more than others, had a great deal of respect for?

CAROLINE DAVIS: I guess I would say Dr. Ashford.

DAPHNE POPE: Dr. Ashford, and he was a well respected man by everyone.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Well, so was his family.

DAPHNE POPE: The whole family. What made them so special?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Well, I don't know.

DAPHNE POPE: They just were, huh? Just nice people.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yes, they were nice people. Nice neighbors.

DAPHNE POPE: Were most of the clothes you had purchased at stores

or homemade?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Well, mother made a lot of our, Frances and my dresses because she had to dress us just alike and it was...

DAPHNE POPE: Hard times.

CAROLINE DAVIS: It was hard to find two alike, but she did find two alike when she could, like them little army coats they had and I want to show you a picture of.

DAPHNE POPE: Did you have, when I was growing up I remember having a Sunday pair of shoes and an everyday pair of shoes. And you know we have hundreds of outfits now and a different pair of shoes for everyone, did you have lots of Sunday and every day outfits or were you mostly, did you have one or two that you saved for Sunday?

CAROLINE DAVIS: We always had some for Sunday, especially for Sunday. Especially at Easter time.

DAPHNE POPE: Yes, everybody had, if you didn't have at any other time.

CAROLINE DAVIS: But, let's see, what was I gonna say?

DAPHNE POPE: What types of recreation did children have? Where were you allowed to go?

CAROLINE DAVIS: We played all the time. We had recreation every day.

DAPHNE POPE: Right out there in the street?

CAROLINE DAVIS: We would play out on the street. We would play hopscotch, hide-and-seek. We'd play, oh, a lot of games.

DAPHNE POPE: Did any of you have bicycles or roller skates?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Well, my mother one time, she bought us a bicycle. Well, at first she didn't want to. My father had his accident on a bicycle and I can understand that she didn't want to have a bicycle first, but then, I think, she did consent later, so she bought us, Frances and myself together. Oh, we had skates. We would skate a lot.

DAPHNE POPE: Did you skate right out on Broad Street?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah, skate right there on the street.

DAPHNE POPE: No problem about getting by a car or anything.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Uh uh. Uh uh.

DAPHNE POPE: But everybody had skates.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah, that was one thing all children had.

DAPHNE POPE: And you mostly played right in the neighborhood. You didn't go any other place for your fun?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Right in the neighborhood.

DAPHNE POPE: How about a little in your teenage years? Were you allowed to go other places? Didn't you have, they had the trolley, what was that out at...

CAROLINE DAVIS: Oh, the streetcar?

DAPHNE POPE: The streetcar that went all the way out to...what was that recreation place they had?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah, it went out to the ballpark.

DAPHNE POPE: Okay.

CAROLINE DAVIS: We would go hiking sometimes. We'd go hiking way out there. I don't know where that is now, it's something. It

might be...

DAPHNE POPE: What direction was it? Right toward Glenburnnie?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Well, we went out to Glenburnnie.

DAPHNE POPE: Now, they had river rafts.

CAROLINE DAVIS: And we were about teenagers then. I mean, maybe just, no, we weren't going to dances but we could go out there and see the people a little bit older and they would go up there and they...

DAPHNE POPE: Okay, you didn't go to dance.

CAROLINE DAVIS: We would go up there and watch them, and the dance they would dance was "Cheek to Cheek" was it called.

DAPHNE POPE: Cheek to Cheek?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Cheek to Cheek.

DAPHNE POPE: Well, now, how old were you then? I mean, you were pre-teenager. You were probably about twelve maybe, you reckon?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Well, I guess it was more about 12 or 13, something like that. But another thing we went out there for, they had a grapevine that we would swing on and it would go over a ditch or something. We'd get on that grapevine and swing on that thing. It's a wonder we didn't...

DAPHNE POPE: Swing back and forth over that ditch.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah, back and forth over that ditch. It was scary!

DAPHNE POPE: And then you watched the older ones dance. Now was this a kind of pavilion or something out there?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah, a pavilion or dance hall or whatever you

call it.

DAPHNE POPE: What did it look like?

CAROLINE DAVIS: I don't know. It was just a brick - it was just a wooden building.

DAPHNE POPE: A wooden building.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Wooden.

DAPHNE POPE: Had sides all around or was it like a shed or something? It was regular wood building.

CAROLINE DAVIS: It was a wooden building.

DAPHNE POPE: Was it on the water?

CAROLINE DAVIS: It seemed like to me it had an upstairs to it. There was water around it. I mean, you know, I don't know whether it was the river or lake or what.

DAPHNE POPE: Don't remember that.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Don't remember that.

DAPHNE POPE: But you took the streetcar out there?

CAROLINE DAVIS: No.

DAPHNE POPE: You didn't? You walked out there?

CAROLINE DAVIS: You know, I can't remember how we got out there.

DAPHNE POPE: Can't remember?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Uh uh.

DAPHNE POPE: I would think it would be too far to walk; although I don't know if it was Glenburnie and you were on Broad Street.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Glenburnie.

DAPHNE POPE: Is that where it was?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah.

DAPHNE POPE: There was also a streetcar that went to the end of Spencer didn't it, down that way?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah. There was a ballpark out that way.

DAPHNE POPE: Is that where you went to play? Now you could take the streetcar out there.

CAROLINE DAVIS: No, we could take the streetcar out there. Maybe we would hike out there sometime. That wasn't so far. We would hike out there.

DAPHNE POPE: You did?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Um huh.

DAPHNE POPE: But the streetcar did go to both of those places didn't it?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah.

DAPHNE POPE: Now whenever you got a little older and you were allowed to dance, were those the same places that you ya'll went to dance?

CAROLINE DAVIS: No, the places they had those dances was the gymnasium and it was over there across from Owen G. Dunn's place.

DAPHNE POPE: Across from Owen G. Dunn.

CAROLINE DAVIS: It was called Stanley Hall.

DAPHNE POPE: Is that where the parking lot for the Sun Journal is now? No, that was a house there.

CAROLINE DAVIS: It was probably where Federal Alley is or somewhere like that or near there.



DAPHNE POPE: Oh, I see.

CAROLINE DAVIS: But we called it Stanley Hall and that's where we had all the basketball games and I played basketball in high school.

DAPHNE POPE: Is that named for the same man that Stanley Recreation Center is?

CAROLINE DAVIS: I don't know where they got the name. I don't know.

DAPHNE POPE: So the recreation center was right downtown then?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Well, yeah. You go to the corner and it was just a block from the corner to the post office, I mean to the city hall, and it was right across the street from the city hall, so you didn't have but about a block and a half to walk.

DAPHNE POPE: Now you're talking about when city hall was further down Craven Street?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah.

DAPHNE POPE: And it was across the street from city hall then?

CAROLINE DAVIS: What, the Stanley Hall?

DAPHNE POPE: Uh huh. It wasn't that far down?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Fred & Clare's restaurant is below the Stanley Hall.

DAPHNE POPE: Okay. And that was your main place to go for fun and dancing and that kind of thing when you were a teenager.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah, uh huh.

DAPHNE POPE: Did you ever go down to the beach?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah, went down to the beach. Yeah, we went to

the beach a lot.

DAPHNE POPE: Was it boys and girls or with families or how?

CAROLINE DAVIS: It was, well, seemed like to me the only time we went down there was on Fourth of July. It wasn't every month. My mother took us down there one summer and we spent the summer but we rented a cottage.

DAPHNE POPE: You didn't just a gang of you get in a car and go down there to the bay?

CAROLINE DAVIS: No, it was family that we'd do that. And then I was about ten years old, because my mother had just taught us how to play bridge, she was quite a bridge player...

DAPHNE POPE: At age ten?

CAROLINE DAVIS: No, but she taught us how. But see, she and my father must have played duplicate because I know they got duplicate boards for I think their wedding present and they played duplicate, so she taught me how to play duplicate. But she had taught me before how to play auction bridge and then duplicate.

DAPHNE POPE: And all this was when you were...

CAROLINE DAVIS: About ten years old.

DAPHNE POPE: Ten years old.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Like I said, we'd go down and rent the cottage for about a month, and there were a lot of people down there from Wilson, North Carolina, because all of them seemed to have plenty of money and they would play bridge. But now, everybody in New Bern didn't play bridge then, you know, when they were ten years old.

DAPHNE POPE: Well, can you think of anything else you did for recreation?

CAROLINE DAVIS: What?

DAPHNE POPE: Besides dances at the Stanley Hall and going down to the beach and playing bridge.

CAROLINE DAVIS: That's the...

DAPHNE POPE: Main things.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah, that was about the main things. Cause see, everybody didn't have cars in those days.

DAPHNE POPE: Uh huh. Did every family on the street have a car where you lived?

CAROLINE DAVIS: No, but I tell you how we got to school. John Green's daddy had a car and he would pick up all of us on Broad Street.

DAPHNE POPE: You mean a fellow in the high school had a car?

CAROLINE DAVIS: No, John Green's daddy.

DAPHNE POPE: Oh, the daddy picked you all up.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Daddy. See, Martha Gibbs, Mr. Johnny as we called him, we called him Mr. Johnny, Mr. Johnny was her mother's brother and naturally he took Martha to school and Mary Emma and Lucy. She had two sisters; Martha, Mary Emma, and Lucy (Hurst).

DAPHNE POPE: Well, it really wasn't that far to school was it?

CAROLINE DAVIS: No, it was two and a half blocks, but rainy days...

DAPHNE POPE: Oh. Oh, yeah.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Rainy days he'd pick us up. That's what I was

talking about.

DAPHNE POPE: Did you have school buses then?

CAROLINE DAVIS: No, didn't have school bus.

DAPHNE POPE: Didn't have school buses in the city system did you?

CAROLINE DAVIS: No, cause we would walk to school.

DAPHNE POPE: Uh huh. Everybody in town had to walk to school or get there.

CAROLINE DAVIS: But we just, well, I lived just down Craven, no, down Broad Street and then turn Middle Street or either, yeah, turn on Middle Street and I'd go by where the post office is and then the next block was Hancock Street and there was the school.

DAPHNE POPE: Yeah.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Well, one day I was late to school because the train was going down that track.

DAPHNE POPE: Uh huh.

CAROLINE DAVIS: And I thought it would never get by. And I was scared then because I was in the first grade I think, or second grade, and I had to wait for that train. And when I got there somebody said if you're late, if you're ever late you have to go to the superintendent's office, and so they sent me to the Superintendent's office, Mr. Smith, and I was scared too death, because they said if you ever had to go he would give you a whipping. And I went over there and I told him, I said, "Mr. Smith, I couldn't help it." I said, "That train was so long I couldn't get by."

DAPHNE POPE: And he believed you.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yes. And he said, "Well, just don't let it happen again."

DAPHNE POPE: Well, tell me, you said they didn't have that many cars, did anybody still have horse and buggies along the street where you lived then?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Uh uh.

DAPHNE POPE: They didn't?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Uh uh. One person had an electric car and I don't know who that was. I think it was Jones. I think it was Jones had an electric car.

DAPHNE POPE: Jones, and he lived closed to you?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Well, no, he lived further up the street.

DAPHNE POPE: I read something about him.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Kenneth Jones' daddy. I think that's who it was.

DAPHNE POPE: Did you ever ride in it?

CAROLINE DAVIS: No, I never did ride in it. I could see it sometimes.

DAPHNE POPE: Did you all use picnics for kind of getting together things? Did you do much of that?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Well, now, the Sunday Schools, the Sunday School would have a church picnic every year. I was brought up in the Episcopal Church and they had a picnic every year. And then, well, we went by train then, went by train to Morehead or something and then we got

on a boat somewhere.

DAPHNE POPE: Oh. That was a big outing wasn't it?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Um huh.

DAPHNE POPE: And there was like a church camp or something you went to?

CAROLINE DAVIS: No, it was over to the beach.

DAPHNE POPE: Oh, oh, I see.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Went to the beach.

DAPHNE POPE: I see. What about special holiday things, observances. You know, Christmas has always been big. Do you remember anything that you all used to do kind of different from what we do now? Anything special like Christmas that you don't see much anymore?

CAROLINE DAVIS: No.

DAPHNE POPE: Or Fourth of July or anything?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Everybody so crazy about putting up Christmas tree. But they'd go out and get a tree. Most of the time it was somebody in the family that could go and cut down a tree you know.

DAPHNE POPE: And they just went out in any woods.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Like my father wasn't living so he could not go, but anyway, my uncles would go out and cut down a tree or maybe David when he got big enough, my brother, my older brother, would do it. And we, you know, would always decorate the Christmas tree.

DAPHNE POPE: Did you all have electric lights for them then?

CAROLINE DAVIS: I don't think we did then. We put up ornaments. I remember we had tinsel on that and maybe...

DAPHNE POPE: But you didn't put candles on them. You didn't put live candles, I mean real candles, I mean, you know, burn any candles on the tree.

CAROLINE DAVIS: No. We didn't put electric candles. We might of put, no, we didn't put any candles on it as I remember.

DAPHNE POPE: Now, did you spend much time at the river?

CAROLINE DAVIS: We'd go down to the river and go fishing a lot.

DAPHNE POPE: Right straight down on Broad?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah, they had a bridge, no, it wasn't a bridge. What do you call it? Just a platform that would cross the bridge, so it was a wooden bridge. It was a wooden bridge.

DAPHNE POPE: Okay. I was gonna ask you about the bridges. The Neuse River bridge at Johnson Street, do you remember anything about that?

CAROLINE DAVIS: No, that wasn't there then. The bridge was across the Neuse River, I mean, was down there at the end of Broad Street.

DAPHNE POPE: Well, I thought that was more fairly recently.

CAROLINE DAVIS: No. It was just a bridge (pier) about as far from here, not across the street, not very long, and then the end of it was the Cutter, a cutter that stayed down there all the time. We couldn't go on the Cutter, Pamlico.

DAPHNE POPE: You couldn't?

CAROLINE DAVIS: I don't remember going on the Cutter. We could sit on the bridge (pier). And all the blacks would be down there too fishing and all we'd ever catch would be catfish or eels. They'd make

me so mad because I'd want to get, you know, a croaker or something.

DAPHNE POPE: Something to eat. You wouldn't eat a catfish?

CAROLINE DAVIS: I wouldn't take it - I'd get somebody else to take it off my hook.

DAPHNE POPE: But you did enjoy it whether you caught anything or not.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah. I felt like I'd gotten a whale.

DAPHNE POPE: You all didn't go swimming in the river?

CAROLINE DAVIS: No, because see, the rivers were polluted. All the - everything, so it wasn't safe.

DAPHNE POPE: It was not safe to go swimming.

CAROLINE DAVIS: No.

DAPHNE POPE: How about the Trent River?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Some boys would go down there to the Trent River and they would go over and swim.

DAPHNE POPE: And that was not suppose to be polluted like the Neuse River was.

CAROLINE DAVIS: No, it wasn't suppose to be. Oh, and another thing, later we would go over to Sandy Beach, but we'd have to get somebody to take us over to Sandy Beach and that was across the river.

DAPHNE POPE: Is that what Sandy Point is now?

CAROLINE DAVIS: No, it was the other way.

DAPHNE POPE: Oh, I see. Down that way.

CAROLINE DAVIS: You turned to the left it was called Sandy Beach.

DAPHNE POPE: Well, I think that's summer homes.



CAROLINE DAVIS: Uh huh.

DAPHNE POPE: I never did understand why you lived on the river and yet people would have a summer home on the other side of the river in Bridgeton and move over there for the summer.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Cause they got the breeze and they could go swimming, we'd go crabbing and all that. Well, I never could understand why it wasn't safe over there either. So then we started going out, when we got old enough we went out to the Country Club.

DAPHNE POPE: Oh, you did?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Um huh.

DAPHNE POPE: You remember when that was first formed?

CAROLINE DAVIS: What, the Country Club?

DAPHNE POPE: Um huh.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah.

DAPHNE POPE: You know how they went about organizing that?

CAROLINE DAVIS: No, you had to pay so much dues. But I don't know when it was organized.

DAPHNE POPE: But there was a swimming place there and it was considered safe to go swimming there?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah, um huh. Only thing, you had moccasins there and I was scared to go in. I was just as afraid of the moccasins as I was of polluted poison water.

DAPHNE POPE: Was there anything else at the Country Club? I mean, they didn't have a swimming pool at that time. They had the golf course.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah, they had a golf course. I used to play golf out there.

DAPHNE POPE: Oh, did you?

CAROLINE DAVIS: In '48.

DAPHNE POPE: Did they have tennis courts at that time?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah, they had tennis courts. Oh, by the way, they had some tennis courts, I loved to play tennis, they had tennis courts right across from the cemetery, the recreation...

DAPHNE POPE: Where George Street Recreation Center is. What do you remember about that?

CAROLINE DAVIS: I remember I enjoyed that, but that's when I came home from college. I took golf lessons when I was at college at Fredericksburg and so I knew how to play golf. And I also, well, my brother taught me how to play tennis and there was a tennis court on New Street down there where the Big Star used to be.

DAPHNE POPE: Oh, really?

CAROLINE DAVIS: And we used to go down there and play with my brother. And then when you got one out across from the cemetery I went out there and played. But I had a hard time finding someone to play with.

DAPHNE POPE: How long after - was Stanley Hall prior to George Street Recreation Center? You said that Stanley Hall was where you...

CAROLINE DAVIS: Stanley Hall was where they had the basketball games. They had the high school basketball games at Stanley Hall.

DAPHNE POPE: Well, when did George Street Recreation center come

into being?

CAROLINE DAVIS: That was when Mr. Henderson was mayor.

DAPHNE POPE: So that was a little later.

CAROLINE DAVIS: He was the one who started that. By the way, I worked for Mr. Henderson when he was elected. That was one of the jobs I was gonna tell you about.

DAPHNE POPE: Did you have a great deal of respect for him? Was he one of your favorite politicians from the start?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Well, I was a good friend of his wife and Mary Lib, Mary Lib, her mother. And so when he got to be mayor he said, "I'd like for you to be my secretary", and I said, "That will be fine."

DAPHNE POPE: Well, was there much sailing on the river at that time?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah, the people made their sailboats, I remember that, but I never did go sailing. I didn't like to go on boats. It made me seasick. I used to go down to Beaufort, my cousin was down there, and he would always take us out to eat seafish and I'd get seasick every time I'd go.

DAPHNE POPE: You mentioned earlier about baptisms in the river.

CAROLINE DAVIS: About what?

DAPHNE POPE: Baptisms. Can you describe the way they did that?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah, in the Neuse River. Yeah! They would dress up in white.

DAPHNE POPE: All white.

CAROLINE DAVIS: All white and they would come down the river.

They were like this, you know, immersed and then they'd come out and you wonder, well, now, wonder if this one's gonna shout. And some of them would shout and go up and hollering, holding their hands up and shaking and everything. Some of them didn't do all that, you know.

DAPHNE POPE: Now are we talking about white or blacks?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Blacks.

DAPHNE POPE: Blacks. The whites didn't use the river for baptizing.

CAROLINE DAVIS: No, I never saw any whites there.

DAPHNE POPE: Never saw any whites baptized in the river. Now there are whites that are immersed, so they had their own.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah, they had their own.

DAPHNE POPE: Did they usually have a big crowd watching?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Oh yes. Just curiosity like we were you know. We were just curious about that. We would stand on the other side of the street. We wouldn't go up on...

DAPHNE POPE: I started to say did they seem to mind that you were there watching them?

CAROLINE DAVIS: No, they didn't seem to mind.

DAPHNE POPE: Do you remember knowing some black people that you knew or anybody of another race you knew when you were growing up as friends, I mean, you know, as...

CAROLINE DAVIS: I knew the black people that worked for us.

DAPHNE POPE: Uh huh.

CAROLINE DAVIS: But I didn't know any of them that were baptized.

DAPHNE POPE: Um huh. And none your age, you didn't really get a chance to associate with any of them your age.

CAROLINE DAVIS: No. My mother always had a cook though.

DAPHNE POPE: Um huh. Did you all ever give any thought to the race relations when you were growing up? I mean, you know what we've gotten into. Did you give any thought about when you were growing up, was it a matter of any concern to anybody?

CAROLINE DAVIS: I can't remember. I don't feel that we were any better than they were in a way because it was just accepted that, you know, that they were colored and they had their ways of doing things. And some of them were real good. I mean, if they worked for you, they were real good.

DAPHNE POPE: We were talking about them being paid about three dollars a week, now how early did they get there?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Well, they got here, they were suppose to get there in time to cook breakfast for us to go to school.

DAPHNE POPE: So that was pretty early.

CAROLINE DAVIS: To go to school. And sometimes they wouldn't show up or wouldn't come.

DAPHNE POPE: But if they got there about seven, how late did they work?

CAROLINE DAVIS: If they didn't come my mother would go down there and do the cooking.

DAPHNE POPE: How late did they work?

CAROLINE DAVIS: They worked to about - I think they got off about

two o'clock in the afternoon.

DAPHNE POPE: So they didn't stay to cook dinner at night, but they'd cook they mid-day meal.

CAROLINE DAVIS: We didn't have them cook dinner at night. We would either have some left over and my mother would fix some for supper. But I can't remember them, unless it was a special occasion like, well, at Christmas dinner or something like that, but even then they didn't do all the cooking. My mother did most of that.

DAPHNE POPE: But you never had any confrontations between blacks and whites growing up?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Um uh. No. I can't remember any. There used to be some that would come by and beg sometimes. That was during the Depression I think. They'd come to your back door though and they'd want some money.

DAPHNE POPE: How did you usually travel from one community to another? You mentioned train, was that one of the big ways to travel?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Train, yes! I traveled on a train. My mother, we'd go to the station on a streetcar. But I had an aunt and uncle that lived in Norfolk and I would go there, you know, most every summer, and she put us on a train and the conductor would look out for us until we got there and then Aunt Bessie and Uncle Henry would greet us at the train station in Norfolk and we'd stay, oh, I guess three or four weeks with them.

DAPHNE POPE: Did the circuses or any other traveling shows come to town?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Oh yes!

DAPHNE POPE: How about silent movies and that kind of thing?  
Ya'll had movies though.

CAROLINE DAVIS: We had vaudevilles.

DAPHNE POPE: Oh, you did.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Vaudevilles, and we would be in some of those  
vaudevilles too.

DAPHNE POPE: You mean they would come in and they would get towns  
people?

CAROLINE DAVIS: They would put in the people in town. And Mr.  
Foote, Dolly Foote's mother, lived around there on New Street, he would  
teach us the dances, and I remember one that we had was a sailor dance  
and we had to hold out our hands like this and he taught us the steps  
and everything to do.

DAPHNE POPE: And you mean this was somebody who would come into  
town that you wouldn't know and they would put on...

CAROLINE DAVIS: And of course they would black their faces.

DAPHNE POPE: All those were black face, all the vaudeville shows.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah.

DAPHNE POPE: Now where did they hold these, right outside?

CAROLINE DAVIS: No, at the theater, Athens Theater.

DAPHNE POPE: At the Athens Theater?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah. But before that when we were younger,  
there was a something that came every summer it seemed like to me and  
they would put on some kind of play or something special and they called

it Chatauqua - The Chatauqua.

DAPHNE POPE: Yes. What do you remember about that?

CAROLINE DAVIS: I don't know, I just remember they had it about every summer and we'd always go.

DAPHNE POPE: Do you know where they came from?

CAROLINE DAVIS: No, I don't have any idea.

DAPHNE POPE: It was a group of actors.

CAROLINE DAVIS: A group of people. I don't know where they came from.

DAPHNE POPE: Was that put on at the Athens Theater too?

CAROLINE DAVIS: No, that was put on the school ground.

DAPHNE POPE: Oh, on the grounds.

CAROLINE DAVIS: On the ground.

DAPHNE POPE: Where Central is?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah. They might have had a tent or something. Seemed like to me sometimes they had a tent in case it rained or something. But that was sort of a fun thing. And we would sing songs.

I think they would teach us some songs like, "I Am Proud of My Town - Is My Town Proud of Me?"

DAPHNE POPE: "What you need is citizens trained in unity."

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah, do you remember that?

DAPHNE POPE: Yes, that was our school song. We sang it for school instead of town.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah, well, I think we sang that out there too.

DAPHNE POPE: Did you ever have gypsies and fortune tellers and



faith healers coming around?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah, yeah.

DAPHNE POPE: Do you remember anything about that?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah, I remember we had them and I went and had my fortune told me one time, telling one day. Told me I was never gonna get married and I think she told the truth. (laughter)

DAPHNE POPE: You reckon? (laughter) You can't be sure, Caroline, can't be sure. What about circuses, did you go to the circus much when you were little?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah. I wasn't too crazy about the circuses.

DAPHNE POPE: You didn't care much about it - the animals and all that.

CAROLINE DAVIS: I went but I didn't like it very much. I guess it's cause I didn't have anybody to take me. See, my father wasn't living. If my father had been living, but my mother, I don't think she.

DAPHNE POPE: Well, when these people would come in out of town, now, I remember us being very afraid of gypsies cause they used to come in town where I was, were they accepted by people in town? I was a little surprised that you said that vaudeville would come in and would get the people to act in the show. Weren't they little bit afraid to associate with people like that?

CAROLINE DAVIS: No, I don't remember it like that. I thought they were such fun, and Mr. Foote was teaching us the dance and everything, so we just thought it was fun.

DAPHNE POPE: So it was just the thing to do. It was another way to have a good time. I didn't know.

CAROLINE DAVIS: The gypsies I remember - the gypsies - and they'd say the gypsies would steal from you, but they never stole a thing that I remember.

DAPHNE POPE: Was there any bootlegging, do you remember?

CAROLINE DAVIS: I heard of bootlegging but I never...

DAPHNE POPE: Never knew anything about it.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Never knew anything about it.

DAPHNE POPE: Can you think of anything else? We've been talking recreation, anything else that you all did for fun or anything like that in the summertime or during school either.

CAROLINE DAVIS: No.

DAPHNE POPE: Okay, listen, I've talked to you so long I think that maybe... (Interruption) We were gonna quit but I have to mention the fire of 1922. Annie Wells Sanford told me, I believe she was from somewhere else. You know she's from Oriental?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Um huh.

DAPHNE POPE: And it seems to me that way away they could see the fire. Was that a terrible, terrible tragedy? Do you remember it as being...

CAROLINE DAVIS: We were all playing on Broad Street that day, and we were playing at Sadie Mae Gaskins house which was right next to the Sudan Temple and we were up on top of her garage. She had a garage and we were all on that roof and we could see the smoke and

see the fire and we all got off that garage, jumped off the garage, and went - went - all in a body into my yard. For some reason that's where we stopped. And then somebody said, "Well, let's", they said, "Let's pray." I think they said pray and I thought they said "Let's play", but they were talking about let's pray and had to go in our house. And we said, well, we better go get all of our clothes out so we can, you know, save what we can.

DAPHNE POPE: You were afraid.

CAROLINE DAVIS: We'd pray.

DAPHNE POPE: You thought it was gonna burn the whole town I bet.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Burn the whole town. We were really praying. But we just prayed.

DAPHNE POPE: Did it have any affect on the entire town do you remember?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah, I think it did. Everybody was...

DAPHNE POPE: Did it cause any changes, I mean, it burned down how many blocks?

CAROLINE DAVIS: It burned a lot in colored town. Most of it was in colored town, and so those houses were not, you know, too much.

I mean, it might have helped them getting...I don't know how long it took them to build them up or how they got them built or if they gave them any money or...

DAPHNE POPE: Never heard anything about that.

CAROLINE DAVIS: I don't know whether the city or the Red Cross helped or who helped them, but it looks like somebody would have helped

them.

DAPHNE POPE: Well, we're so near the end of this, if it's all right with you I want to ask you this because you got the paper about World War ending. Do you remember how World War I affected New Bern and how it changed life in New Bern? I mean, you were close to the water, were you fearful that the enemy was gonna come in from the ocean and work its way up here? How did it change life in New Bern? Now this is World War I.

CAROLINE DAVIS: I don't know how it changed. I know the people, the men were coming back from the war and a lot of them like people about Gertrude Henderson's age, well, that's when they, whoever they were gonna marry, they would get married soon after they came back from the war.

DAPHNE POPE: Did any of them get married before they went off on the war?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Now that I don't know. I don't know whether they did or not. Maybe they were engaged before they went. Grace Green's mother and daddy, I think they were married at the end of it too.

DAPHNE POPE: Do you remember some of the happenings, now this is after World War I, in the Depression, how it affected New Bern, what happened in New Bern? Now you said you all, everybody wasn't poor during the Depression, but what were some of the things that happened in New Bern that changed things? You had some banks here didn't you?

Do you remember?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah, they had some banks and they said that a lot of people lost their money because they didn't get it out. Some people got their money out and some didn't. But my mother always said that fortunately she had hers in the New Bern Savings and Loan and she had always, you know, dealt with them, and I don't think she lost very much.

DAPHNE POPE: They weren't connected with the federal banks, so they didn't...

CAROLINE DAVIS: And anyway, she said that she had not put her money in the New Bern Savings and Loan, that she wouldn't have been...

DAPHNE POPE: So that was one of the banks that did not close?

CAROLINE DAVIS: ...that that was what she was saving for our education. She had always saved for our education.

DAPHNE POPE: Do you remember anything about epidemics or, you know, well, that's epidemics I guess, or anybody being quarantined?

When I was growing, you know, if a house had diphtheria in it they were quarantined. Do you remember anything?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah, I remember that. I was about in the fifth grade and came around and they tested everybody and checked everybody for diphtheria I believe it was or measles, I don't know which. But anyway, they said, well, we really didn't have diphtheria but we were a diphtheria carrier, and I think they came and put the sign up on my door.

DAPHNE POPE: Oh, was that a big fear?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Well, I was not so afraid as I was mad.

DAPHNE POPE: How did they decide that you were a diphtheria carrier, do you know?

CAROLINE DAVIS: I don't know. But Elizabeth, there was one other girl, in a way it was fun because we could, you know, play with each other. I would go over to Elizabeth Duffy's house right around the corner and we could play with each other.

DAPHNE POPE: Cause you all were supposed to be carriers.

CAROLINE DAVIS: But we were supposed to be carriers, and nobody else was supposed to play with us.

DAPHNE POPE: Did that last just during the season?

CAROLINE DAVIS: No, I think it lasted just about a week or so, but it seemed like was about a year.

DAPHNE POPE: I'll bet it did.

CAROLINE DAVIS: And I think the measles were the same way. They would put up a sign "Measles" if you had measles, and I used to think, well, I didn't want a "Measle" sign on my porch either.

DAPHNE POPE: Do you ever remember New Bern having epidemics; like flu, influenza, or...

CAROLINE DAVIS: Oh yeah. 1918 was a bad year for the flu and that's when Martha Gibbs' father died in 1918, and that was a flu epidemic. A lot of people had the flu. And everybody - all the families had it - one would get it and then the next would get it, almost like it has been in the last year or two. You know a lot of people have had the flu. It goes around. But that year...

DAPHNE POPE: But they couldn't seem to do as much for it then.

CAROLINE DAVIS: No, they couldn't.

DAPHNE POPE: Do you remember hurricanes, or ice storms or snow storms that particularly everybody tell stories about?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Snow storms? Yeah, well, the river froze over one year.

DAPHNE POPE: All right. I've been hearing about that ever since I came to New Bern. Do you remember when it did?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah, I remember, but I don't know what year it was.

DAPHNE POPE: I can tell you because it's down here on this. It was 1918.

CAROLINE DAVIS: Yeah.

DAPHNE POPE: Four men drove a Model T Ford across Neuse River on the ice. But you didn't see that happen?

CAROLINE DAVIS: It was 19-- what? 1918.

DAPHNE POPE: 1918 is what this says. 1918.

CAROLINE DAVIS: I might have just heard about it. I doubt my mother would haveof let me go on it.

DAPHNE POPE: (laughter) Well, you were so close to the river I thought maybe you had watched it.

CAROLINE DAVIS: No.

DAPHNE POPE: You didn't watch it.

CAROLINE DAVIS: I don't remember. I just remember hearing about it.

DAPHNE POPE: There's just one thing I want to ask you and then we're gonna be through with this whole session. When someone died, how was the treatment different from the way it is now?

CAROLINE DAVIS: About the funerals?

DAPHNE POPE: Yeah, about how it was handled. Yes, the funerals and, like, did they stay at home, did you go to funeral homes the way you do now, who came and got the body, or did they usually die at home or did they die in the hospital?

CAROLINE DAVIS: Well, most of them, well, if they died in the hospital, my mother died in the hospital in 1958 and she had been in a nursing home over at the Green's...

DAPHNE POPE: How about a little earlier than that? When you were a child, do you remember having relatives die and how it was done?

CAROLINE DAVIS: No, I don't. I remember, I just can remember when my grandfather died. He died in 190-, let's see, when did he die? I don't remember. I was about five years old when he died but I don't know what it was all about, and he died on Easter Sunday and I remember talking about, you know, saying something, but I never did know what happen. But I think I found out later that my grandfather had died but I didn't know that he had died.

DAPHNE POPE: Um huh. You don't remember a whole lot about what happened.

CAROLINE DAVIS: I didn't go to the funeral, because I asked my mother could I go to the funeral and she said no, that funerals were not for children.



DAPHNE POPE: Well, listen, I know you're tired.

END OF INTERVIEW