

MEMORIES OF NEW BERN

FRANCES ALLEN DAVIS

INTERVIEW 1036

This is Dr. Joseph Patterson representing the Memories of New Bern Committee. I am interviewing Frances, F-r-a-n-c-e-s, Davis at her apartment at 2403 Meadowbrook Avenue in New Bern. The number of the interview is 1036. The date is January 26, 1993. My interview number is 1000.

DR. PATTERSON: So, Frances, the tape is running now and I want you to know that I'm very happy to be here talking to you about yourself and your memories of New Bern. I know that we've talked to your twin sister, Caroline, and she's told us many of these things, but you have a different view of them, so we want to get both of your stories. Let me ask you about yourself first. What is your full name?

MISS DAVIS: My full name is Frances Allen Davis. I was named for my Grandmother Davis. She was a Barrow, and her name was Laura Frances. So they took the Frances from her name and my grandfather's name was Allen Davis. So they took the Allen from his name and combined it to make it Frances Allen Davis.

DR. PATTERSON: You were born in New Bern?

MISS DAVIS: I was born in New Bern.

DR. PATTERSON: At home?

MISS DAVIS: Yes, we were born on Craven Street what is now 507 Craven Street, next door to the house that my mother later bought. You know we sold our house on Broad Street and my mother bought 509 Craven Street because she knew that she would feel at home there, because Mr. Smallwood had built both those houses on Craven Street, and she knew that they were identical as far as the floor plans went, and so she saw Mr. Kennedy one day on the street, and said, Mr.

Kennedy, said, have you ever thought of selling your home, and he said, well, yes, Mrs. Davis, as a matter of fact I was thinking of selling it. She made him an offer and he said later, said, well, Mrs. Davis, you've offered me a thousand dollars more than I was going to ask for it, but she was so interested in having that particular house that she didn't, it didn't make any difference to her, but she had always said, well, Frances and Caroline, said, I'm going to sell my house here on Broad Street, because I want some place for the two of you to live after I'm gone, and I know that this house on Broad Street is too big for both of you to keep up, and said she didn't think we'd be able to keep it up or pay the taxes on it.

DR. PATTERSON: What is your birth date?

MISS DAVIS: May 14, 1911.

DR. PATTERSON: And you were born in the hospital or at home?

MISS DAVIS: We were born, I believe, at home.

DR. PATTERSON: On Craven Street?

MISS DAVIS: Yes, and you father, Dr. Patterson and Dr. Jones, Dr. Robert Duvall Jones brought us into this world. Caroline was born first, I understand, because I don't remember that, but she was born about an hour before I was born, and we were born on a Sunday morning, and my mother used to say, we practically broke up the church at that service, because everybody was whispering, Mary Davis has twins, born this morning.

DR. PATTERSON: Which house was that Frances?

MISS DAVIS: On Craven Street? At 507 now.

DR. PATTERSON: Then wheredid you move?

MISS DAVIS: Oh, the house we moved to? Well, my father had the house built on Broad Street.

DR. PATTERSON: Now which house is it?

MISS DAVIS: It was the house next door to the Ashford house, but I believe our house was built first, if I'm not mistaken. It was built in about 1911.

DR. PATTERSON: That's the first block of Broad Street from the bridge?

MISS DAVIS: Between Craven Street and East Front.

DR. PATTERSON: On the south side.

MISS DAVIS: Yes.

DR. PATTERSON: What is that house now?

MISS DAVIS: It's now 219, well, they changed the numbering system. You know, it used to be, for years and years and years it was 19 Broad Street. We always called it 19 Broad Street. I don't know what year they changed the numbering system, but they made all the numbers start two hundred. Like down on the corner, there was, well, Martha Hurst, the Hurst's lived at 205 Broad Street.

DR. PATTERSON: That's the Hurst-Green house.

MISS DAVIS: The Hurst-Green house. Next door to that, coming toward our house, was the Carraway house. Their's was changed to 207.

Then next door to the Carraways was a family by the name of Montague that lived in a little house. Then next to the Montague's was the Carpenter house. Mr. Howard Carpenter. He was with the Pepsi Cola Company. And then next to their house was the Taylor house. Now the Taylor's had your house, what is your house now on East Front Street.

I mean, they had that as their store. It was a grocery store.

DR. PATTERSON: Ok, the Taylor-Bell Store.

MISS DAVIS: The Taylor-Bell Store. Lina Belle Taylor was one of my contemporaries. Lina Belle lived there. Then next door to the Taylor's came the Ashford house, and then our house, 219 Broad Street, and on the other side of our house was the Green house. Mr. Ernest Green and his wife lived there when we were growing up and they were related to Martha Hurst's mother. Mrs. Hurst, Mrs. Benjamin Hurst was a Green, and Mr. Ernest Green was her brother. And then later Johnny Dunn and his wife lived there in the Green house. Then next to them was, the first family that I remember living there were named Guerrant, G-u-e-r-r-a-n-t. There were children. And then...

DR. PATTERSON: And the boy's name was Teeny and, Teeny Guerrant and...

MISS DAVIS: He had a sister.

DR. PATTERSON: He had a sister and a brother.

MISS DAVIS: Now I don't remember the sister's name, but she was one of our friends and we played with, but there was a big family up there.

DR. PATTERSON: Now was this on the corner of Craven and..

MISS DAVIS: No, it was where the, it was not on the corner. Well, the Kehoe house was next to their house, but the Kehoe house actually faced Craven Street and the side of the Kehoe house was on Broad Street.

DR. PATTERSON: That's Tom Kehoe?

MISS DAVIS: Well, there were two Kehoe's. There was the Kehoe

that lived across the street on the other side of Broad Street, next to the Willis'. Well, they lived there, let's see, who lives there now, where John Whitty's family lived later. You know, where John...

DR. PATTERSON: I tell you what let's do. Let's start back at the corner of East Front and Broad Street across and go up the street, the other side, across from your house.

MISS DAVIS: On the other side. Ok. Well, on the other side, on the corner, well, they put the Shrine or Masonic Temple there, it belonged to the Rhems. There used to be a big magnolia tree out in that yard.

DR. PATTERSON: Now is this the corner where...

MISS DAVIS: The corner, on East Front..

DR. PATTERSON: the old Shrine home used to be?

MISS DAVIS: Yes.

DR. PATTERSON: That's the Rhem house.

MISS DAVIS: Yeah, that was where the Rhems...

DR. PATTERSON: Facing the river?

MISS DAVIS: Facing the river. Alright, now next to them was the Gaskins house and my mother and father lived in the Gaskins house at one time before they built the house on Broad Street, on the south side of Broad Street. They lived in the Gaskins house, because I remember hearing my mother talk about that Gaskins house, and, you want me to tell you about that house?

DR. PATTERSON: Sure.

MISS DAVIS: It had a loud speaker at the door, and if somebody came to the door, they could talk through this speaker. A delivery

boy came there one day, and he heard this voice and he got so scared he turned and ran away. But my mother said that my father used to, I think he used to walk to work in those days. I know she said you'll wait, she said that my father hated to carry packages. He hated to carry anything in a bag or anything you would carry. Then next to the Gaskins house was, we always called it the Bray house. I always thought it was the Bray house and it had a fence around it, a big yard, and then...

DR. PATTERSON: Let's stick with that house for just a minute. Didn't Myer Hahn live there?

MISS DAVIS: Yes.

DR. PATTERSON: H-a-h-n.

MISS DAVIS: Yeah, he certainly did, but I believe before they lived there there was a family named Franks that lived there. The Franks lived there.

DR. PATTERSON: Now was not that house moved up on New Street next to the academy building. Isn't that the Bray house there?

MISS DAVIS: Yeah, I believe it is. It has been moved. Yeah, that was the one I understand. And then the next house to that house was the, oh, the Eby house.

DR. PATTERSON: Clyde Eby.

MISS DAVIS: Yeah, Clyde Eby. They built that home there.

DR. PATTERSON: That's a brick house.

MISS DAVIS: It was a brick home, yes, and it was a very expensive place.

DR. PATTERSON: That was later lived in by...

MISS DAVIS: Maxwell.

DR. PATTERSON: The Maxwells...

MISS DAVIS: Yeah, Mary Charles Maxwell...

DR. PATTERSON: And that building had been moved down...

MISS DAVIS: Where to, where the Chamber of Commerce...

DR. PATTERSON: Yes, on Middle Street down by the Sheraton...

MISS DAVIS: Yes, across from the bank, B B & T Bank, isn't it now?

DR. PATTERSON: Yes, it's now Weyerhaeuser's offices I think.

MISS DAVIS: Yeah, but don't they call that street something else now. Don't they call it Tryon...

DR. PATTERSON: Tryon Palace Drive is what used to be South Front Street, but Middle Street still goes...

MISS DAVIS: Oh, Middle Street still goes, extends down there to the Sheraton.

DR. PATTERSON: But that big brick home was moved down there.

MISS DAVIS: Yeah, I know it was, but that was an expensive home. I believe that home cost about, as I recall, I remember them quoting a figure, said that house cost \$40,000, and I thought, imagine a house costing \$40,000, but he was a very wealthy man. He was in the lumber business I believe. Clyde Eby and his wife. Now next to them was the, what I call the Whitty house. A family by the name of Kehoe lived there, and then the Whittys lived there, and that was next to the Willis house. You know, the Willis..

DR. PATTERSON: Funeral Home.

MIS DAVIS: Funeral Home people, and Matthews, Catherine Matthews

used to live on the corner there. Catherine Matthews, I believe her mother, there, was a Willis. She was a Willis or her mother or somebody was a Willis there.

DR. PATTERSON: What was on the corner of East Front and Broad Street next to the Green house, the first Green house.

MISS DAVIS: The Carraway house.

DR. PATTERSON: On the other side.

MISS DAVIS: No, on the same side. The next across from the Carraways was the Gaskins house.

DR. PATTERSON: No, I mean on the same side as the Carraway house but on the other side toward the river.

MISS DAVIS: Oh, that was the Duffy house was on the corner but it faced East Front.

DR. PATTERSON: It faced East Front Street.

MISS DAVIS: Yeah, but there was just a lot.

DR. PATTERSON: Do you remember other houses down where the bridge is now? Were not some houses right down there where the bridge starts to cross the river at the end of Broad Street?

MISS DAVIS: You mean on the same side of the street? I mean facing the river?

DR. PATTERSON: Yes.

MISS DAVIS: Well, the Rawls house, I remember the Rawls house. They made it into apartments. The Rawls house was next to the Duffy house.

DR. PATTERSON: Facing the river on East Front Street.

MISS DAVIS: Facing the river, and then next to that house was

the Willis' lived there. George Willis' family. Now then the McCarthy's lived there. Well, maybe one married, did a Willis marry a McCarthy? Anyway, I'm associating Mrs. McCarthy with that house. And then next to them was Dr. Daniels' house.

DR. PATTERSON: Dr. O. C. Daniels?

MISS DAVIS: Well, he was an eye specialist. He was my eye doctor. And then next to that house was, I always thought it was the, what do they call it now? I've always heard that it was the oldest house in New Bern. It sat back from the street a little ways. Now that house has been moved, I believe. They call it the Haslen or...

DR. PATTERSON: Fred, do you remember? This is Fred Latham talking now.

MR. LATHAM: That was the West's.

MISS DAVIS: Yeah, the West's lived there.

MR. LATHAM: Myrtle West and Gloria West lived there last I think.

MISS DAVIS: But another family lived there before that and I think his name was Pinner?

DR. PATTERSON: Now this is the house on the corner of...

MR. LATHAM: It was in the middle of the block.

MISS DAVIS: No, it's in the middle of the block.

DR. PATTERSON: The middle of the block facing the river on East Front Street?

MR. LATHAM: Yes, it was sort of set back from the street.

MISS DAVIS: Yeah, set back. And then next to that house there was another man that lived there. I can't think of his name. It starts with an "H". I believe they had a, the people that lived next door

had a dry goods place down on Pollock Street. Does that ring a bell?

DR. PATTERSON: I'm not sure.

MISS DAVIS: Well, I remember the family.

DR. PATTERSON: Not Braddy. It wasn't Braddy, no.

MISS DAVIS: But I know this man that lived in what was later the West house. I think his name was Pinner. He was an old man, at least older to me.

DR. PATTERSON: Not as old as we are now?

MIS DAVIS: No, not as, well, I think he was pretty old, and he lived there alone, but I remember going to that house and sitting on that porch and next door talking to this man that, you know, that had the dry goods place.

DR. PATTERSON: Frances, across the street on the other side of East Front Street in that block, do you remember who lived along there. I know Mr. Dawson lived along there.

MIS DAVIS: Yeah, next to the Dawson's, toward the bridge, from where the bridge is now was the Millet, Walter Millet.

DR. PATTERSON: M, i, double l, e t?

MISS DAVIS: And his, he was in my class at school. I've got his name in my year book there.

DR. PATTERSON: Who was on the corner on the other side of the Dawson on the Pollock Street side.

MISS DAVIS: Corinne Taylor on the corner. Corinne Taylor lived on the corner.

DR. PATTERSON: And going the other way?

MISS DAVIS: The other way was the, well, the McKeevers lived

along in there some place. Do you remember a girl named Margaret McKeever?

DR. PATTERSON: Yes.

MISS DAVIS: I knew her. She lived in Washington before she died.

DR. PATTERSON: Weren't there some other houses along there too?

MISS DAVIS: There was some houses and then on the corner of Pollock and East Front, let's see, who lived there.

DR. PATTERSON: On the south west corner I think the Nunns lived.

MISS DAVIS: Yeah, the Nunns. Yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: Mary Nunn and her parents.

MISS DAVIS: Yeah, that's right. I think, I believe the Williams lived there, I believe Betsy Williams lived at one time. Amy and William and Betsy. I associate them with that house later.

DR. PATTERSON: And then down where the bridge now takes off was where Will Flanner had a house and the Lumsdens used to live there too later on.

MISS DAVIS: Who? Lumsdens?

DR. PATTERSON: Mrs. Lumsden had a cafe or a tea room upstairs and Miss Foote would help her.

MISS DAVIS: Yeah, she was related to Lawton.

DR. PATTERSON: Parker.

MISS DAVIS: Parker. She was a Lumsden. Her mother, that was Mrs. Lumsden, yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: Frances, if you put yourself at the corner of Broad Street and Craven Street, ok, and look south toward Pollock

Street, do you remember the houses that were on the right side as you look south on Craven Street?

MISS DAVIS: You mean where the court house is or the other side?

DR. PATTERSON: On the other side. You're going from the corner down toward the Trent River.

MISS DAVIS: Oh, the Claypoole's lived there. They lived in the next house to the corner, but the...

DR. PATTERSON: No, no, not East Front Street.

MISS DAVIS: I know. You're talking about Craven Street. Yeah, Craven Street.

DR. PATTERSON: Yes.

MISS DAVIS: No, I'll tell you who lived there. Martha Waters, Martha and Catherine Waters lived on the corner. And then next to them, going towards the Trent River would be Elizabeth Duffy. Mrs. George Duffy's daughter. Elizabeth Duffy was a good friend of mine, and Martha, she was a great friend of Martha Hurst. She was a, her mother was a Hartsfield. Now the Hartsfields used to live in the house down where the Smallwood house down on East Front Street.

DR. PATTERSON: The Maxwell house is now being done over by...

MISS DAVIS: Mrs. Hartsfield and Mrs. Duffy were sisters. Mrs. Hartsfield had a son named John Hartsfield. I don't know whether you remember John Hartsfield?

DR. PATTERSON: I remember John, yes.

MISS DAVIS: He was very musical, very talented.

DR. PATTERSON: Was there another house next to them?

MISS DAVIS: The Clark house. I used to go by there, an elderly

woman, what was her name, Miss Clark.

DR. PATTERSON: This house sat right on the street as I remember.
Right on the side...

MISS DAVIS: Yeah, right on the street.

DR. PATTERSON: And Stanley Claypoole was kin to them in some way. I know he had some association with that house.

MISS DAVIS: Well, he, he may had, but I remember the Clark.

DR. PATTERSON: The city hall building came in there pretty soon, didn't it?

MISS DAVIS: Yeah, the Episcopal Rectory was next to the Clark house. It used to be where the Episcopal rector lived. And then, the court house was on the corner, of course.

DR. PATTERSON: Well, that's pretty good memory I'd say. All those places.

MISS DAVIS: Well, I remember them. 'Cause I used to pass by them every day, and then on the other side of the street, tell you who lived on the other side of the street, the Hellingers, at one time.

DR. PATTERSON: Now were they the second house from Broad Street?

MISS DAVIS: They were next to Dr. Primrose's house going toward Trent. See, the Kehoe house, the Kehoe I'm talking about, faced, was on the corner of Broad and Craven. Next door to them was the Primrow house, Primrose, Dr. Primrose. That's where they took my father when he fell. Then next to them was the Hellinger house.

DR. PATTERSON: Jack Hellinger.

MISS DAVIS: Jack Hellinger. I can't remember who lived there before the Hellingers.

DR. PATTERSON: His father worked for the city in the city hall.

MISS DAVIS: But the Hellingers originally lived down on you know where Middle and Craven come together. They lived in that house before they moved further down. And then next door to them, I believe, Willis' lived there, next door to the Hellinger house. But later, you remember the, Rosemary and Betty Lawrence. Remember the Lawrences. The Lawrences lived in what, next door to the Hellingers for a long time.

When they first came to New Bern, then they later moved up on Middle Street. Ok, then next to them was the great big house was the Stewart house. Had twenty four rooms in it.

DR. PATTERSON: That's the old Victorian house that's torn down to make a parking lot for the city.

MISS DAVIS: Yeah. Always heard that that house had twenty four rooms. It was very palatial and big.

DR. PATTERSON: The house behind that, next to that that you just talked about, the Guerrants lived there too at one time later on.

MISS DAVIS: They did?

DR. PATTERSON: I know because I was a great friend of Teeny's.

MISS DAVIS: Oh, really. Well, I don't remember the Guerrants. I don't remember when they lived or when they left New Bern even, but after the Guerrants lived there, I believe it was after the Guerrants lived there, Mrs. Schenk. She was a great lady. She was related to the Mullineaux.

DR. PATTERSON: Is that S-c-h-e-n-k?

MISS DAVIS: S-c-h-e-n-k, and she had a, I believe it was her nephew named, she had a nephew named David. He was a handsome boy.

DR. PATTERSON: Now, alright. Would you like to describe the Stewart house a little bit.

MISS DAVIS: The Stewart house? Oh, it was a big rambling house. I don't know that I was ever in it. I don't recall ever going in it, but I had always heard that it had twenty four rooms.

DR. PATTERSON: What did it look like from the outside?

MISS DAVIS: Well, it was Victorian, and gray. I believe it was gray as I recall. A great big gray house.

DR. PATTERSON: It was something like the Blades' house on the corner of Middle and Johnson Street as I recall that big Victorian.

Frances, let me change the subject a little bit and let's talk about your father some and Davis Pharmacy. This is a very important thing in New Bern's story. Why don't you tell me about your dad and how he got involved in the pharmacy business and where the pharmacy was and the story of that pharmacy.

MISS DAVIS: Well, of course, I don't remember my father because he died just before we were two years old. He died in March of 1913 and I was born on May 14, 1911. So I was not quite two.

DR. PATTERSON: Would you talk about his accident a little bit?

MISS DAVIS: Well, of course, all I know is what I read later in the paper. He had a drug store on the corner of Broad and Middle. It faced Broad Street.

DR. PATTERSON: That's on this north west corner where the Clark Building is now?

MISS DAVIS: That's correct. And he opened the business in New Bern in 1896. Now he, of course, died when, as I said before, I was

two, and my mother had an uncle who was a pharmacist. Mr. Buxton Hunter, B. W. Hunter. He was a bachelor and he had worked for King Drug Company in Raleigh. So my uncle, my great-uncle, Uncle Buck, we called him, came to make his home with us and to take over management of my father's business. He was a great, great man and everybody loved him. He was very faithful and very loyal to all of us and to the store. He would get calls all hours of the night, and he would go down and fill those prescriptions. Well, getting back to my father, of course, I don't remember him, but his father was a pharmacist in Beaufort. My grandfather, Mr. Allen Davis, had a drug store in Beaufort. My father also had a brother who was a pharmacist. His name was Mr. Ed Davis and Mr. Ed Davis, my father's brother, had a drug store in Roxboro, North Carolina.

DR. PATTERSON: Did your father build the building on the corner when he opened his business. Do you know?

MISS DAVIS: That I don't know.

DR. PATTERSON: The building that he was in or the pharmacy was in is not the same building that's there now.

MISS DAVIS: No, no. It's not the same, that's down there now, because it was later the Mohn Building.

DR. PATTERSON: The Mohns built this building that's now called the Clark Building.

MISS DAVIS: Yes, at the time it was built, they called it the Mohn Building. It was the Mohn Building. I don't know when they changed the name to the Clark Building unless it was after my mother sold the store.

DR. PATTERSON: Was the Davis Pharmacy Building torn down and the Mohn Building put up?

MISS DAVIS: That's correct, as I understand it.

DR. PATTERSON: What was the pharmacy like? Was it a combination of different things?

MISS DAVIS: Well, originally they had a fountain in there, but my Uncle Buck did not want the fountain because he was so interested in making sure all the prescriptions were absolutely correct. I'm sure that he did not like the confusion and having people come in and sit and drink sodas all day. So he made it in to what I believe would be called an apothecary shop, because he was a true pharmacist and he wanted to take care of his pharmacy business not a social place.

He never took a vacation. He worked every day of the week, except he came home, I believe, Sunday evening. He had all of his meals sent to him. My mother said she spent practically all of her time in the kitchen getting meals, because his delivery boy would come down on his bicycle and with the tray and he'd get his breakfast, lunch, and dinner. All by delivery.

DR. PATTERSON: Now did he close the fountain.

MISS DAVIS: And he closed the fountain, and my brother, David, took some of fixtures, or some of the tables and chairs, you know. They had these old Coke Cola chairs. So my brother, David, opened up a pharmacy in Williamston in about 1933.

DR. PATTERSON: Now he was also a pharmacist who had come back to New Bern to work hadn't he?

MISS DAVIS: No. He never came back to New Bern to work. See

the idea when he went to school to study pharmacy, I'm sure that they had in mind that he would eventually take over my father's business.

However, by the time he became a pharmacist, my Uncle Buck was still working at the drug store and New Bern was not large enough to warrant having two registered pharmacists in the store. So rather than have both my uncle and my brother working in the drug store, my brother decided to go into business for himself, but prior to that time, when he graduated from pharmaceutical school at Carolina, he was not quite twenty one. So he couldn't get his license until he was twenty one.

So in order to get experience, he worked for awhile for my uncle in Roxboro. He also worked at Horne's Drug Store in Fayetteville and he worked for a drug store in Rocky Mount. This was all before he bought his own store. He graduated from Carolina in pharmacy in 1925.

DR. PATTERSON: And he ended up in Williamston.

MISS DAVIS: He ended up in Williamston and he married a Williamston girl and built a home. So he was well established in Williamston and consequently he never got back to New Bern. The only time he came to New Bern as far as the business was concerned was when my Uncle Buck finally retired, because of his age. David would come over to check the books, and just make sure that everything was going along alright.

DR. PATTERSON: Frances, go back just a little bit, before your Uncle Buck closed the fountain, what was it like? Was the pharmacy part on one side of the building and the soda fountain on the other side?

MISS DAVIS: No, when he first went in the store, this was when

the Mohn building was there, there was only the one store. There was not the soda shop that later became available when they put up the, when Clark took over. Now, wait a minute. When they put up the Mohn Building, no, it was before the Mohn Building that he got rid of the pharmacy. After the Mohn Building was put up, they did divide it.

They made a big store on the corner which became a soda shop and my mother's brother, Mr. R. E. King, bought the soda shop and opened up a soda shop. It was not a part of Davis Pharmacy. It was just in the family, but it was not a part of...

DR. PATTERSON: It was King's Soda Shop.

MISS DAVIS: It was King's Soda Shop.

DR. PATTERSON: And a lot of the young people were hanging out there.

MISS DAVIS: Yes, and they had these high booths, and a lot of people didn't like it because they couldn't see who was sitting back of them. And they had curb service. They used to have curb service there. They'd come out and get curb service.

DR. PATTERSON: And then the pharmacy was on the other side.

MISS DAVIS: The other side. Adjacent to the...

DR. PATTERSON: Yes, that's the way I remember it.

MISS DAVIS: That's the way it was.

DR. PATTERSON: Well, tell me about your father's accident, what you know about it.

MISS DAVIS: Well, from what I know about it, he was on his way home to lunch.

DR. PATTERSON: From the pharmacy?

MISS DAVIS: From the pharmacy. He went home. He was on his bicycle and when he got to the corner of Craven and Broad, there was a street car. They had street cars in those days. And there was a horse and wagon. The horse kicked up his heels, I believe. So I'm told, and my father was thrown from his bicycle and struck his temple on the sidewalk and was immediately taken in to what was Dr. Primrose's office at the time. It was right there next to the corner where the accident happened. I believe he was there for about fifteen minutes or so, or maybe he was unconscious for about fifteen minutes. I believe there were two or three doctors on hand. In the meantime, someone went to my mother's house on Broad Street which was just a half a block down the street to break the news to her that my father had been in an accident. Well, my mother was pregnant and she fainted dead away in the doorway when they broke the news, because my brother Robert was born four days later. As a consequence, she was not even able to get to my father's funeral because she was just prostrated. Well, at the time of the accident, after they got him home, they thought, well, he was going make it through. They did not believe that he was injured seriously. However, during the night, he took a change for the worse and he died that same night. It came out in the newspaper the afternoon of the accident that he had been hurt. And the next morning, the next day's paper, it came out that the accident was fatal and that he had died.

DR. PATTERSON: That's a sad story and it's a pretty typical story of a ruptured artery underneath the skull, called the middle menigienial artery. There's temporary unconsciousness, then consciousness, and

then the clot starts getting larger and the patient becomes unconscious and comatose and dies. That is the type thing that these days could have been approached surgically and perhaps, something done about it.

In those days, it was impossible. My wife's father died the same way from a fall just similar to that.

MISS DAVIS: Well, if he had, if his brain had been damaged though, it could have been a real blessing, because he never would have been the same.

DR. PATTERSON: Frances, do you remember, across the street from your dad's place where Williams Cafe was, was Mr. Bradham there in his pharmacy at that time?

MISS DAVIS: I had always heard that he was there. I thought he was there, because he and my father were great friends. Although they were competitors, they were real good friends. And so I just thought it was there. I know it was there for a long time, because after school, when I was in school, we would stop by Bradhams's Drug Store to get an ice cream soda or a sundae.

DR. PATTERSON: That's across from your father's place?

MISS DAVIS: Across from my father's place.

DR. PATTERSON: Did your dad work with Mr. Bradham on Pepsi Cola in any way?

MISS DAVIS: Well, I don't know that he did. However, I have had some one tell that he thought that my father might have had something to do with, Pepsi Cola. I believe it was, I forget now who told me.

I don't want to repeat any names, because I don't know. What's Ed Hancock's mother's name?

DR. PATTERSON: I don't know.

MISS DAVIS: It was somebody that knew my father, because she was the one that told me, because I had never heard that.

DR. PATTERSON: Frances, what was it like growing up on Broad Street in those days.

MISS DAVIS: It was a lot of fun. We had a lot of children on that street, and we were all about the same age. We were all in school together. Like, our friends were Martha Hurst and the Carpenter girls, Edna and Edith Carpenter, and then let's see. Who else was about our age. Sadie Mae Gaskins. She then lived on the other side of the street.

Then around the corner there was Elizabeth Duffy. I'm talking about the Elizabeth Duffy who was Elizabeth Nunn. Although she was a friend of ours. But they were right there on Broad Street and we used to go down to Mrs. Hurst's house where Martha lived. We played paper dolls. We played marbles out in my yard. We played horse shoes out in my driveway, and we could walk to school. We walked to school from there, and I remember one of my teachers was Miss Louise Bell, and she lived around on New Street.

DR. PATTERSON: Where on New Street?

MISS DAVIS: She lived in the middle of the block next to, I believe it was next to where the Ferebee's lived. One of those houses. It might be where Johnny Dunn lives now. It's somewhere along in there, but she was one of my favorite teachers, and my sister and I would each go by and one would get on one side of her and the other would get on the other side and we'd walk up past the Presbyterian church right on up to New Street, right up to the school. She taught us in

the third grade.

DR. PATTERSON: Who were some of your other teachers?

MISS DAVIS: Oh, Miss Molly Heath. We were in the first grade with Miss Molly Heath.

DR. PATTERSON: Everybody remembers Miss Molly, and so do I, but it's a little bit vague. How do you remember Miss Molly Heath?

MISS DAVIS: Oh, she was a great person. I remember her because she taught me not only in school, but she taught me in the Sunday school.

And she used to come to all the children's parties. I don't believe any child in New Bern ever had a party that Miss Molly Heath wasn't the guest of honor, so to speak, and she would go to all the parties and tell the stories, and when we were in school, a lot of people couldn't tell my sister and myself apart, but Miss Molly Heath would call us up to the room, but she wouldn't call our name first. She'd say, well, Caroline, you come up to the head of the class and, but before she would call her name, she would look for a certain mole.

I don't know which one had a mole that Miss Molly would look for before she asked us how to spell something. Alright, Caroline, how do you spell cat. Then we'd go back and take our seat then she'd know which one she had asked.

DR. PATTERSON: So you couldn't fool her.

MISS DAVIS: Couldn't fool her.

DR. PATTERSON: But you fooled a lot of people.

MISS DAVIS: I don't know about that. When we were in about the fifth or sixth grade over in the other building, we had a teacher.

She'd go out of the room for something or go down the hall, and while

she was out, the students would say, Caroline, you and Frances change places while she's out. Go ahead. Go ahead. Change places. See if she'll know the difference. Well, we didn't want to. We were very reluctant to change places, but they finally talked us into it. We would change places. Then the teacher would come back in the room, and she'd say, alright, Frances, if you and Caroline get back into your regular seats. Well, we were embarrassed because it didn't mean anything to the children. They had put us up to it, but we didn't like it. We didn't like being taken for each other. We dressed alike, see, until we were in high school and then we finally stopped dressing alike.

DR. PATTERSON: Was it fun in school? Did you enjoy going to school on the academy green?

MISS DAVIS: Yes, it was fun. I thought.

PJP: What was downtown New Bern like when you grew up?

MISS DAVIS: Well, there were a lot of stores. We used to do all our shopping downtown, and Coplon's was one of our favorite stores.

DR. PATTERSON: Where was that located?

MISS DAVIS: It was located across from where Belk's is now.

DR. PATTERSON: Where Belk's used to be.

MISS DAVIS: Where Belk's used to be. Oh, that's right. There isn't any Belk's there any more where Belk's used to be. But it was next to, let's see, what would be there now. It was across from Mark's building, out where they, the Mark's Building is now.

DR. PATTERSON: Did folks do most of their shopping in New Bern right downtown?

MISS DAVIS: I believe so. My sister and I used to have trouble getting clothes alike. This day and time you can see dozens and dozens of the same dress if you want to, but in those days, my mother would take us to Coplon's and pick out a dress, but we would always have to have it specially ordered to get two alike, because they didn't have it in stock. Mrs. Schenk, the lady I told you about that lived on Broad Street, she was our favorite saleslady, because if she would get something in stock that she thought we would like, she would always call and say, Mrs. Davis, said, I think I have some dresses that might fit Caroline and Frances.

DR. PATTERSON: What are some other stores you remember downtown? Remember restaurants?

MISS DAVIS: Well, I remember William's Cafe, and there was a little tea shop across the street from that.

DR. PATTERSON: The Green Door.

MISS DAVIS: The Green Door. That was there, and then there was down Middle Street some, not a boarding house, but where they served meals. The house that Lilly Henderson used to live in. There used to be a dining room there that we liked to go.

DR. PATTERSON: Now which house is that. I'm not sure.

MISS DAVIS: It was the house next to the, it's a vacant lot, it's a parking lot now.

DR. PATTERSON: On Middle Street?

MISS DAVIS: On Middle Street. You remember where Lilly Henderson and her family used to live on Middle Street. Well, the Lawrences lived there at one time. The Lawrences lived there after they lived

on Craven Street. Betty Lawrence and Rose Mary Lawrence. You know Mr. Lawrence was a contractor, and they lived there.

DR. PATTERSON: Now what block of Middle Street are we talking about.

MISS DAVIS: We're talking about right next to Clark's going toward the old, what was the post office building...

DR. PATTERSON: We're talking about Middle Street from the corner of Broad Street going north.

MISS DAVIS: Yes, yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: Alright, and you're saying that next to what is called the Clark Building was a house.

MISS DAVIS: Yeah, where that vacant lot is.

DR. PATTERSON: Where the parking lot is

MISS DAVIS: Between Clarks' and the post office.

DR. PATTERSON: The Federal Building.

MISS DAVIS: Across from the Christian Science Church, I'd say.

DR. PATTERSON: And that's where the Lawrence's lived?

MISS DAVIS: They did live there.

DR. PATTERSON: Uh huh. That was a wooden house.

MISS DAVIS: Yeah, a wooden house, but after the Lawrences lived there, I think it was after the Lawrences there that the Hendersons lived there, Lily Henderson.

DR. PATTERSON: What was next to that house, before the Federal Building was built.

MISS DAVIS: Oh, it was, that's where the John Wright Stanly house was.

DR. PATTERSON: Uh huh. There was nothing between the John Wright Stanly house and this house that you're talking about.

MISS DAVIS: Off hand I don't recall a house there.

DR. PATTERSON: What was on the other side of the street in that block? The Christian Science Church.

MISS DAVIS: And the library. And a family, I believe their name was Vance. There was a, I remember that family, Vance. I believe it was Mrs. Vance that, or a Vance family.

DR. PATTERSON: Is that the house where Roy Miller has his office now, that you're talking about?

MISS DAVIS: I don't know where Roy Miller has his office. Right next to the Methodist church.

DR. PATTERSON: Well, that house that you're talking about now has been moved. It's moved to Change Street, and that's where Bob Stallings' daughter and her husband live. Some of my relatives lived there, but there's another house in between, between that house and the Christian and where the library was. It's where Roy Miller has an office. That's still standing.

MISS DAVIS: Oh, well, that's where I thought was the Vance house. Yeah, then the Methodist church, of course.

DR. PATTERSON: Yes. The post office in those days was not where it is now.

MISS DAVIS: No, it's where the court house

DR. PATTERSON: Where the city hall.

MISS DAVIS: City hall. City hall.

DR. PATTERSON: That's where the post office was. Well, you went

to school all through high school on the academy green, and then where did you go?

MISS DAVIS: After I graduated from high school? I went to a junior college, Sullins College in Bristol, Virginia.

DR. PATTERSON: What's the name of it?

MISS DAVIS: Sullins.

DR. PATTERSON: How do you spell that?

MISS DAVIS: S-u-l-l-i-n-s. Sullins College. It was a junior college. I mean, two year college and two year high school. It was, Bristol, Virginia. I don't know whether you know Bristol or not, but it divides, the main street divides the town. Virginia's on one side of the main street, and Tennessee is on the other, but we were on the Virginia side.

DR. PATTERSON: You stayed there two years

MISS DAVIS: Yeah, I graduated from there. I got a classical diploma from there. Then I transferred to Duke my junior year.

DR. PATTERSON: And finished at Duke?

MISS DAVIS: And graduated from Duke in 1932.

DR. PATTERSON: What did you do next?

MISS DAVIS: Next, I taught school for one year in Jasper, and then after that, I knew I wasn't going to teach. I didn't care for teaching. So during the summer I took a business course from Miss Wood on Broad Street.

DR. PATTERSON: Is that Mrs. Ernest Wood?

MISS DAVIS: Mrs. Ernest Wood. And, Mr. Abernathy was congressman at the time, but Charles Abernathy, Jr., actually ran the office more

or less because the congressman was not well. I believe he was in a sanitarium. And during the summer while I was in the process of taking this course from Mrs. Wood. You know, she was a private tutor, typing and shorthand. I saw Mr. Abernathy on the street one day and I said, Mr. Abernathy, I'm taking a business course this summer and I'm wondering, do you know of any jobs that I might be able to get.

And he said, well, actually I don't know of anything around New Bern, but if you'd be interested in maybe trying to get a job in Washington, perhaps I could help you. And, I thought, well, that would be nice.

So, I had these friends living in Washington at the time. I don't know whether you remember Mr. Frank Alston and his wife, Louise Alston.

They taught in New Bern, and their sister taught in New Bern, Jean, well, she wasn't an Alston. She was Jean Moore. She had taught in New Bern. Well, Jean married and moved to Washington, and wait a minute, that was later. No, they had an aunt that lived in Washington. That was the way it was. They had an aunt from Rock Hill, South Carolina that lived in Washington and she lived in a rooming or boarding house at the time. And they said, well, Frances, when you go up there, we can get you a place to stay where my aunt lives. So they contacted her and I went and got a room at that place. It was 1026 16th Street.

Right across from where the Capitol Hilton is now. And I stayed there and in the meantime, Mr. Abernathy was there and he made all these appointments for me. It was in the days of Roosevelt administration and they had all these alphabetical offices. RFC, and PWA, and WPA, you name it. So Mr. Abernathy made arrangements for me to have appointments to go by the various offices. In those days you would

have to take a test, a typing test or shorthand test. You would have to be able to type 50 words a minute or take shorthand 100 words a minute. Well, I knew that there was no way I could take shorthand 100 words a minute or type 50 words a minute when I was just barely through this course, but you could go around and take these tests, but if you didn't pass them, you could take them again. Alright, well, so I thought, well, I'll at least find out what I have to do and what I have to know. So I went to a couple of places and realized that there was no way that I could pass a test at that stage of the game.

So, but, I thought, well, with a little practice, maybe I could work up my shorthand and my typing to the place that I could pass the test.

So I just stayed on in Washington and I thought, well, I'll go to business school at night or in the day time and get, you know, just practice. So I did. Well, to make a long story short, I finally got enough practice to justify my applying or going back to take these tests. Alright, well, I went back to PWA and I took a test and I passed it. I got a letter from PWA, Public Works Administration, you have been rated eligible for a position and we will notify you when to report for work. Well, I thought I was going to get the job the next week or the next day, but it didn't work out that way. I would go down almost every day. I was within walking distance of the Public Works Administration. It was under Secretary Ickes at the time, and so I'd go around and say well, what's the status. Well, Miss Davis, your application is still on, under consideration. We'll let you know.

Well, everything was going out and nothing coming in so I thought well, I'll get a job. It's getting near Christmas time. I thought

well, I'll go down and apply for a job at Jelleff's. It was a notions store, you know, ladies ready to wear.

DR. PATTERSON: What's the name of it?

MISS DAVIS: Jelleff's. It was an old store in Washington right on F Street.

DR. PATTERSON: Jello

MISS DAVIS: It's not there any more. J, e, double l, e, double f, s. Jelleff's. Alright, so I went down and got a job working during the holidays, November, December. First I work about two days a week and then one day the floor manager came over and said, we'd like, beginning tomorrow, we'd like for you to come and work every day. Well, I thought to myself, well, I'm not going to work every day, because I'm going home for Christmas. I'm not going to stay up here and work, because I'm not getting anywhere. So I came home. He didn't like it. He said, well, that's why sometimes we're reluctant to take you girls from out of town, because you always find some reason to go back.

So, anyway, I came back to New Bern. I had no more than gotten back right after the Christmas holidays, I got a telegram from Washington, or a long distance call rather from a girl that lived in the boarding house that I lived in. Her mother was the owner and she worked for the Interior Department, or PWA rather. So she called and said, Frances, there's a Mr. Brown would like to interview you for a job.

He was in the transportation loans division. Alright, so I went down.

Talked to Mr. Brown and he was well satisfied with my application, 'cause he thought, well, he had somebody that could type and take shorthand, but he looked at my application and recognized the fact

that I had a good education as far as being a college graduate and high school graduate. My experience didn't mean much to him, because, like I said, he thought that I would be fine because what he needed was somebody to help with the filing and he didn't care whether I could type a 100 words.

DR. PATTERSON: Did you get that job?

MISS DAVIS: I got the job. I got the job. Ok, that was in '35 and I stayed there until PWA practically folded up. It folded, it almost folded up a couple of times before, because they would depend on their budget, you know, administration each year.

DR. PATTERSON: You stayed in Washington from '35 then until when?

MISS DAVIS: Well, I, there was a break there. After '37, it was '37, I believe it was that it folded up more or less and that's when I decided, well, I'd always wanted to go to New York. So that's when I went to New York. That's when I lived with, stayed with Jean, Jean Alston, I mean Jean Moore she was. It was she that had in the meantime married and I got a room with her staying. But, when I was in New York, I had to go all these various agencies, employment agencies. That's the only way you could get a job in New York, because jobs were hard to get then. Well, to make a long story short. I went to an employment agency one day. It happened to be run by the Washington School for Secretaries. So I went down to apply for a job at the Washington School for Secretaries. They sat me down. Had me take a test. They sat me down to a typewriter that didn't have any keys on it. All black keys. Well, I thought, gee, although I type by touch that still felt, well, there's something wrong here. I don't know

whether I'm hitting the right keys or not. I thought, well, goodness.

It was a funny feeling, Well, anyway to make a long story short.

I must have passed the test. When I got home that night, at that time I was living in a woman's hotel more or less, Evangaline House down on, near Fifth Avenue. Well, I got home and I thought, oh, I know I goofed on that. Well, they called me, and said, Miss Davis, we'd like for you to come in for an interview. So I went down for this interview, and I thought, well, who in the world would hire me after that test, 'cause I knew I'd flunked it. I thought I'd flunked it. So, they said, well, we'll tell you a little about this gentleman who wants to interview you before you go in, said it happens that he's the head of the Washington School for Secretaries. His name is Dr. Richard Ely. Said he's a very eminent economist and he was impressed with your application and would like for you to talk with him. So I went in and talked to Dr. Ely. He was writing his autobiography at the time. He was also a professor at Columbia University, and he said, well, Miss Davis, he said, I would like for you to, to come work for me. He said, if you would like to think about it and he said, I have a secretary now, but I really want to make a change. So I thought, well, I'll go home and think about it, because I got to thinking. I thought, gee, I don't know all this is the job I really want or not, but I got home that night. And that night when I got home to my room, that's when I had a telegram from Washington saying that I'd been reappointed to a job in the Public Works Administration at the same grade I'd had before as a stenographer. So, I thought, well, I'm going to call Dr. Ely and tell him that I'm going back to Washington, because

I thought, I knew I liked Washington and I knew what Washington was like, but I wasn't sure that New York was the place that I wanted to be the rest of my life. And further more, I thought, well, this Dr. Ely, I don't know what the job would have paid. I don't think it would have paid what the government would have paid. But I thought, he was in his eighties and I thought, well, if I get a job and he dies then I'm out. So, I took the, I went back to Washington. That's when I stayed on until I retired in '67.

DR. PATTERSON: You stayed in Washington awhile though after that didn't you. You didn't come straight back to New Bern.

MISS DAVIS: Oh, no. I stayed from there, I stayed in Washington from then until, oh, I retired in '67. No, I just came back to New Bern now.

DR. PATTERSON: You lived in Washington all those years.

MISS DAVIS: I lived in Washington all those years, but I worked other places too.

DR. PATTERSON: During that time you became very interested in the DAR, the Daughters of the American Revolution and you achieved an eminent position.

MISS DAVIS: No!

DR. PATTERSON: Didn't you?

MISS DAVIS: No! Not eminent at all.

DR. PATTERSON: What was your top level position in the DAR in Washington?

MISS DAVIS: In the DAR? Well, I was Regent of my chapter for about three different terms. Then I was a state, we call it state,

District of Columbia was considered a state as far as the DAR was concerned. Each, 'cause they had their own chapters, you know. I was the state assistant treasurer and then state treasurer. And at the national level, I was on various Chapter, State and National committees. My highest job in NSDAR was national chairman for the Continental Congress Housing Committee. It's to help the delegates and members that attend the Continental Congress to help with the room situation.

DR. PATTERSON: Didn't you bring a group of DAR people to New Bern on a trip?

MISS DAVIS: Oh, yeah. That was in 1962 when I was vice-regent of my chapter. We really did it as, well, partly as a fund raising project. I thought, well, we can have a tour and make some money on the tour of New Bern. So I chartered a bus, we chartered a bus, a Trailways bus and brought this group down, and this was in 1962. And we stayed at the Governor Tryon Hotel. And, oh, they loved it. We stayed there two nights. On the way down we stopped in Halifax and had a tour of Halifax. The ladies there met us and took us to the William R. Davie House and some of the other places in Halifax.. We came on to New Bern and we joined the chapter here for a luncheon at the Governor Tryon, it was the Governor Tryon Hotel. That was the name of it. We had a luncheon and joined this group and then that evening we had a banquet at the hotel. We invited the members in the Richard Dobbs Speight chapter to join us, or some of the members, the officers in particular, for the banquet, but they had all joined us for lunch. Then we had Gertrude Carraway as a guest of honor. Miss

Mary Ward as a guest of honor. Catherine Latta sang for us and she had an accompanist who was a lady that had just written a song about North Carolina, "North Carolina Is Home To Me".

DR. PATTERSON: It's "My Home".

MISS DAVIS: "North Carolina Is My Home"? What's her name?

DR. PATTERSON: I don't know that.

MISS DAVIS: She composed this music and the song, but Catherine Latta sang it. That was beautiful. And, oh, I believe we went to an antique shop. We went to Mrs. Guion's home to see her antiques.

DR. PATTERSON: On Johnson Street?

MISS DAVIS: On Johnson Street. Well, I had two different tours. Oh, and during that tour we had Genevieve Tolson get on a bus and took us all around New Bern. Showed us the highlights of New Bern and like we went to visit the Presbyterian church, and the Christ church in New Bern and saw all the places. And, of course, the main thing was the Tryon Palace.

DR. PATTERSON: What was the Gaston Hotel like?

MISS DAVIS: Oh, the Gaston Hotel, you mean, the Governor Tryon or the Gaston.

DR. PATTERSON: Governor Tryon. Well, when you were there on this visit, what was it like?

MISS DAVIS: It was beautiful. It was a nice, a nice room, and we had nice rooms and the meals were good, and they treated us royally.

DR. PATTERSON: That was a very large hotel wasn't it?

MISS DAVIS: Oh, yes. The Gaston Hotel, I remember it as the Gaston Hotel before it was the Tryon. You talk about my experiences

in growing up in New Bern, that was one of the highlights of my youth, because my mother's best friend, the Tuckers, Mr. John Tucker, ran the Gaston Hotel. He was a manager and Mrs. Tucker was my mother's closest friend I'd say. They were from Louisburg, North Carolina.

See, my mother was born in Louisburg, not born in Louisburg, she was brought up in Louisburg. She was born in Warrenton, but we used to go around. We thought it was the biggest treat in the world to go around to the hotel and have dinner on Sunday or any time, and they would let us go back into the pantry and help ourselves to cookies.

You know, from the dinner. And Robert was a great favorite. He was crazy about Mr. Tucker. My brother, Robert. It was only one of him.

I think he got to go around there more than we did, because there were two of us and one of Robert. You know, but we were great friends.

DR. PATTERSON: What were some other hotels that you remember in New Bern.

MISS DAVIS: Well, there was a hotel down on Middle Street, come to think of it, but I don't believe I was ever in that hotel. What was the name of that

DR. PATTERSON: What was it, the New Bernian, the Hotel Albert

MISS DAVIS: Albert. Well, was that, was one was down near Union Station, that was the Albert, wasn't it.

DR. PATTERSON: That was the Terminal.

MISS DAVIS: The Terminal.

DR. PATTERSON: Yes, that was the old Terminal Hotel. The Hotel Albert was down on Middle Street, in the second block of Middle Street. The building, of course, is still there.

MISS DAVIS: Yeah. I remember passing by it, but I don't remember the hotel. I mean I was never in it, the Gaston Hotel, because when the Tuckers lived here they went to Kinston and ran the Tole Hotel.

DR. PATTERSON: Frances, when you were growing up, let's go way back and end this story. Do you remember the flu epidemic of 1918 in New Bern?

MISS DAVIS: Yes, I remember it, the flu epidemic.

DR. PATTERSON: What are your memories of that?

MISS DAVIS: Well, there were a lot of people that came down with the flu. I don't believe we had it. If we did, it was a minor case. But I know they used to always put these yellow signs on the door, Influenza, and they did the same way with measles. Oh, I hated those yellow signs that they'd put on the doors. We had the measles once, and I thought, oh, that's embarrassing to have that yellow sign stuck out. Nobody can come in. You're quarantined.

DR. PATTERSON: Were there a lot of people dying from the flu in New Bern?

MISS DAVIS: Oh, yeah. There was, it was bad.

DR. PATTERSON: Any friends of yours or your family's that you remember.

MISS DAVIS: I really don't remember of any members that died. If you'd call their names, I might remember them.

DR. PATTERSON: Do you remember the depression in New Bern?

MISS DAVIS: Oh, yes. I remember the depression.

DR. PATTERSON: How did that affect the town?

MISS DAVIS: Well, everyone was, they were very frugal and during

the war I know we had a hard time getting butter or sugar. In those days I remember we had oleo and we used to make our own butter. It was white and we had these little, looked like beans, and we'd mix it up and put, and then, of course, in those days, they had the ice wagons that would come by. We used to go out and get on a, stand on the back of the ice wagon and scrape the ice and eat the crushed ice. We loved crushed ice.

DR. PATTERSON: All old New Bernians remember the ice wagons and doing just what you described. Did the depression affect your family business very much, the pharmacy?

MISS DAVIS: I don't know that it did, but we were always very thrifty. And we didn't have a whole lot of money coming, of course, they were able to put all of us through school, but that was through the savings and the thrift my uncle and my mother. They always put money aside in the Citizens Savings and Loan I remember.

DR. PATTERSON: I'm going to back track a bit, and get back to your family business. We didn't follow that through all the way and that's my fault. What finally happened to the Davis Pharmacy. You all sold it.

MISS DAVIS: We sold it.

DR. PATTERSON: To whom?

MISS DAVIS: To Clark.

DR. PATTERSON: To Sam Clark.

MISS DAVIS: Yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: Now the building was not your building, and the business was your business, is that correct?

MISS DAVIS: That's correct.

DR. PATTERSON: And Sam Clark bought you out, about what year was that?

MISS DAVIS: I would say in the early fifties. Early fifties I believe.

DR. PATTERSON: Yes, it would have to be, because I know Sam Clark had that business when I came back in '51.

MISS DAVIS: I thought it was in the fifties. I thought we sold the drug store about the time not too long before we sold the, our house on Broad Street.

DR. PATTERSON: Frances, you were here during some of the hurricane times. You were here in the hurricane of '33.

MISS DAVIS: Yes, that I remember.

DR. PATTERSON: Tell me about that.

MISS DAVIS: Well, in '33 the water came way up as far as our back yard I remember from Broad Street. All of the lower part of Broad Street was practically a river. I mean, it was real deep down closer to where the Carraway's, but it came, I remember it came all the way up to our back yard.

DR. PATTERSON: Did it do any damage to your house?

MISS DAVIS: I don't believe so. I don't believe it did. I don't think it

DR. PATTERSON: You didn't have to leave your home?

MISS DAVIS: We didn't have to leave our home, no.

DR. PATTERSON: Was the town hurt very badly by the hurricane?

MISS DAVIS: The one in '33?

DR. PATTERSON: Yes. I know the bridge was damaged very badly, the Neuse River Bridge.

MISS DAVIS: Yes. It was pretty bad.

DR. PATTERSON: When you were growing up, do you remember ferries crossing the Neuse River, down at the foot of Broad Street or in that area? Were there any ferries?

MISS DAVIS: I remember the cutter that used to be down on Broad Street.

DR. PATTERSON: The Pamlico?

MISS DAVIS: The Pamlico Cutter and then at one time the Blades had a houseboat down there on Broad Street. We used to go down on Broad Street and fish off the wharf. Was there a wharf? Yeah, there was a wharf on Broad Street, and we used to go down there and fish.

And seems like we always caught these eels. Well, eels made me think of snakes, and I got, oh, I don't want to catch an eel. We threw the eels back in the river or we'd get cat fish and I didn't like it, and when I've heard later that people ate cat fish, I think, you eat cat fish? Oh, my goodness. We used to throw those back in the river.

DR. PATTERSON: Cost you a lot of money to eat a cat fish now.

MISS DAVIS: But we did catch, we did, we went crabbing too. Used to go crabbing down there.

DR. PATTERSON: Along the shore down there?

MISS DAVIS: Uh huh, right off the river shore.

DR. PATTERSON: Did you swim down there?

MISS DAVIS: No, not there. We swam over in Bridgeton. There used to be a place over in Bridgeton that we went swimming. We couldn't

swim down there, because the water, you know, was, the sewage emptied in the water.

DR. PATTERSON: Is that Shady Beach that you swam at in Bridgeton?

MISS DAVIS: That was the name of it I believe. Yeah. We used to go down to Morehead. I mean, that's where I really learned to swim was down there in Morehead.

DR. PATTERSON: How did you get to Morehead. Did you drive or go on the train?

MISS DAVIS: We drove. Well, back when I was going down there, we went, let's see, that was back, let's see, how old I was. Well I was about 14 or 15. I guess we drove. We had a cottage down on Morehead, down right near the Atlantic Hotel, and right next to, I don't know whether you know where the Chalks' lived. Well, they lived next door to us. We had, we had a cottage but only about three or four doors this side of the Atlantic Hotel. It was before the Atlantic Hotel was burned. I don't remember what year that was burned. Do you?

DR. PATTERSON: Probably, the late twenties, I think, or somewhere around there.

MISS DAVIS: Late twenties. Well, that shows how long ago it was that we were down there.

DR. PATTERSON: Maybe the early thirties. I'm not sure. Was the trip to Morehead a tough trip then, or easy, or do you not recall that?

MISS DAVIS: I don't recall so much about Morehead, the trip to Morehead, but when the Tuckers lived in Kinston, we drove to Kinston.

My mother first had an Essex and I know we'd start out early on Sunday morning, allowed about several hours to get to Kinston. If we got there in time for lunch, that was fine. We would drive over there and spend the day with the Tuckers at the Tole Hotel and then come back home. Well, a couple of times my mother would have a flat tire and she said once, she says, well, the very next time I have a flat tire I'm going to buy another car. I'm not going to put up with this flat tire business. And so, the next car she bought was a Hudson.

And I thought, well, that's great. And my mother used to say, well, everybody had told her, well, a Hudson will pass everything on the street, on the road, but a filling station. Said it won't pass a filling station, because it uses so much gas. But I remember that Essex, I remember Robert or somebody would used to have to get out and

DR. PATTERSON: Hand crank it?

MISS DAVIS: Hand crank it, it seems to me. But my brother David had a DeSoto and that's when I learned to drive when he had a DeSoto.

I learned when I was about 16 or 15, and we used to drive out to the Oaks Road and places like that. And one day my grandmother was with us. My grandmother was quite along in years, but she was sitting in the back seat. And David would say, Grandmother, you know how fast we're going? And she'd say, no. How fast are you going? He says, we're going 20 miles an hour. And she said, 20 miles a hour. She says, David, don't you think we'd better slow down.

DR. PATTERSON: Well, you're talking to Fred Latham who used to drive to Kinston from New Bern in twenty one minutes.

MISS DAVIS: Twenty one minutes?

MR LATHAM: Yeah, that was a Studebaker president. That's my daddy's car.

MISS DAVIS: A Studebaker. Is that the kind of car that the, Mr. and Mrs. Tucker had, well, they had a Studebaker and then they had a Cord, and I thought that car was wonderful. He used to take us out to the fair grounds. You remember when they had fairs in New Bern? We'd go out there with Mr. Tucker to the fair grounds. He'd take us to the fair grounds and out to Oaks Road. I thought that was a real treat. Another thing, we used to walk to school, except on rainy days people that used to pick us up was Mr. Hollister. Janet Hollister's father. He would pick us up and also, I believe it was Mr. Johnny Green would pick us up some mornings. They had a car and they would drive by and pick us up. Other times we'd walk to school.

DR. PATTERSON: You'd come home for lunch?

MISS DAVIS: Yes, we came home for lunch. That's when we'd go by and get Miss Bell and go back to school and pick her up after lunch and walk back to school with her. But there were a lot of teachers that we liked. Getting back to the teachers, there was Miss Bridges and a teacher named Mary Enochs who used to go with Hugh Mills. I thought he was going to marry Mary Enochs?

DR. PATTERSON: How do you spell that last name?

MISS DAVIS: Enochs, e-n-o-c-h-s. She later lived in New York and I saw her, you know, when I lived in New York for awhile. I used to go to see her.

DR. PATTERSON: Do you remember the big fire of 1922?

MISS DAVIS: Yes. I do.

DR. PATTERSON: What do you remember about that?

MISS DAVIS: Well, my memory is more or less the same as what Caroline told you. We were out playing in the yard and got down on our knees and prayed that the fire wouldn't come any further. But I remember hearing the dynamite going off, and those were scary times.

DR. PATTERSON: Frances, I think we have had a fine interview and you've told us a lot of things about New Bern that are going to help our story. I want to thank you for this. It's been fun talking to you.

MISS DAVIS: Well, it's been fun doing it, but I hope I didn't really...

DR. PATTERSON: You did fine and it has been...

MISS DAVIS: I hope it made sense. I didn't jump around. I jumped from one thing to another.

DR. PATTERSON: Well, I led you around a little bit and I led you astray every now and then, but it turned out fine. So, we'll cut this off.

END OF INTERVIEW