

MEMORIES OF NEW BERN

FRANCES HATCH JONES

INTERVIEW 407

This is Marea Kafer Foster representing the Memories of New Bern Committee. My number is 400. I am interviewing Frances Hatch Jones, number 407. We are in Mrs. Jones' home, 905 Bern Street in New Bern, and today is Wednesday, the 11th of March, 1992.

MAREA KAFER FOSTER: Now, Mrs. Jones, if you will tell me your full name and your birthdate.

MRS. JONES: My name is Frances Hatch Jones. My birthdate is June 7, 1916.

MAREA FOSTER: That's wonderful. And your father's name and your mother's name.

MRS. JONES: My mother's name is Lucinda Hatch. My father's name was Simeon.

MAREA FOSTER: Okay, and where did he work?

MRS. JONES: He worked in the north. He worked north and south. When he was south, he worked at the train station. He also was a cook. He made soups for the New Bern General Hospital. Early mornings, he would leave and come back to the train station. He and Mr. Arthur Melton, when trains come, take the baggage off. Then he was an undertaker, and whatever else he had to do. Then he was from church to church with my brother and me every Sunday.

MAREA FOSTER: Every Sunday.

MRS. JONES: I don't think my daddy ever missed a Sunday, not in my lifetime. He wasn't here too long. He died at the age of forty-one.

MAREA FOSTER: Oh, that's awfully young.

MRS. JONES: Was young.

MAREA FOSTER: Very young.

MRS. JONES: Very young. I need him right now. (laughter)

MAREA FOSTER: I know. I know exactly what you mean. Now, tell me, where were you born in New Bern?

MRS. JONES: I was not born in New Bern. I was born in Norwalk, Connecticut. I'm a Yankee. (laughter)

MAREA FOSTER: Not really. (laughter)

MRS. JONES: You're right. My father brought me here when I was two and a half.

MAREA FOSTER: You were two and a half. And then where did y'all live?

MRS. JONES: He lived 42 Elm Street.

MAREA FOSTER: You've written that down for me.

MRS. JONES: I hope so.

MAREA FOSTER: You have, right over here. And what was your mother's maiden name? You told me Lucinda Hatch.

MRS. JONES: Her maiden name was, oh gosh, Richardson.

MAREA FOSTER: Okay, and was she born in New Bern?

MRS. JONES: No, she was a Northerner.

MAREA FOSTER: But was your daddy born in New Bern?

MRS. JONES: My father was born in New Bern.

MAREA FOSTER: So that makes you a Southerner.

MRS. JONES: I'm a Southerner.

MAREA FOSTER: That's right. (laughter)

MRS. JONES: I'm not going anywhere.

MAREA FOSTER: No, I don't think any of us are.

MRS. JONES: Anytime you stay in one place, I think, sixty years, you call it home.

MAREA FOSTER: I think so. I think so. In New Bern, where did y'all live?

MRS. JONES: 42 Elm Street.

MAREA FOSTER: Okay. And one of your earliest memories was the fire of 1922.

MRS. JONES: Yes.

MAREA FOSTER: Tell me all about that, please.

MRS. JONES: My aunt had carried me back to New York where she lived. This is my father's sister. I was six years old in 1922. New Bern was still burning when we got off the train. The fire was burning down the fence that was around the train station. So the train had to back up to Goldsboro and wait until the fireman beat it down.

I was peeping out the window. But anyway, when we did get through and get to the station, I got off. Well, we had been on that train for, looked like to me, two days, because they had to back up here and back up there. It was cold. It was snowing, just a lot of stuff.

But anyway, I wanted to see my daddy. I'm a daddy's girl. I wanted to see my daddy. And when we got to New Bern and got off the train, my father wasn't there. And something was a mystery because there was a man named Mr. Crispin that had a transfer, and no horse, no transfer. So I was wondering, "Oh my Lord, I wonder what's happened

to my father." 'Cause if we went off, you know, four years old, first thing I saw was my daddy. We come along, Aunt Fanny (Hatch) said, "Well, are we...?" I said, "We're on the right street, but Aunt fanny listen, I'll run ahead. And when I see the street where I see West Street School, I'll know where I am." 'Cause people were making up beds in the cemetery, spreading beds in the cemetery right out her.

MAREA FOSTER: In Greenwood Cemetery?

MRS. JONES: Greenwood, Evergreen, Cedar Grove, wherever, they were spreading. We didn't see anybody. There weren't too many people in the streets. Looked like I couldn't get myself together. Six years old, you're looking for what you're looking for.

MAREA FOSTER: That's right.

MRS. JONES: But anyway, I kept running up ahead, and I'd run out in the middle of the street and look back. I didn't see it. But when I got to West Street and I saw West Street School, I said, "Aunt Fanny, here it is." So she was coming with the bags. Had two suitcases. Put them up. Take them up, put them down. We got Elm Street that went right straight down to our house. We were not in the first, second, but we were in the third block. Daddy's undertaker parlor was on the corner, and our house was next door, bit two story house. They tore it down when they built the Craven Terrace (housing project). I got some money from them. Now what it was worth. Thirteen hundred dollars wasn't nothing but the land, but anyway they did give me something. (Interruption)

MAREA FOSTER: Mrs. Jones, tell me where the fire started.

MRS. JONES: The fire started exactly one block up Kilmarnock Street at the Bryan house, they said. My great aunt said, "I wasn't here when the fire started", but they said it started. And that was Elm and Reisenstein's Alley (on the city map now as Rezenstein Street), right at the corner. Mr. Bryan was a barber, private barber. He did private barbering. But the fire was burning everywhere. I saw big balls of fire leaping. I was just flabbergasted. It skipped over the school, and where that ball went, you just kept looking and it disappeared. It was burning down houses through Pasteur and Howard (Streets). Well, you couldn't see from there 'cause the schoolhouse. I thought the fire was flying. (laughter) Six years old, it was a mystery to me.

MAREA FOSTER: That's right.

MRS. JONES: But that's what happened. That's what I saw, and I can remember it as if it was today.

MAREA FOSTER: Well, let me ask you, do you remember the citizens of New Bern coming together and helping all the people who were homeless?

MRS. JONES: I have that down there. Rev. R.I. Johnson was a rector at the Episcopal church, Jonson Street. He lived in the parsonage. They just moved the parsonage, East Front Street. You see that.

MAREA FOSTER: I've got it right here.

MRS. JONES: All right. Rev. R.I. Johnson, along with the help of everybody, they were asking everybody, Red Cross, Blue Cross, and

every other cross (laughter) to help the people. The people were homeless, in the streets, crying. My father took some in; John Battle, his wife, and three boys. But there were bigger boys, and I didn't know what was going on. But my father would go out and bring somebody else, and he was cook, chef cook, and he'd bring ( ) and they'd eat and they'd go. And look, here come somebody else, and they would eat and go. But from early youth up, I've learned to love people, and I've been helping and teaching people for the last sixty years.

MAREA FOSTER: You certainly have. I can tell that, in your happy nature.

MRS. JONES: I'm happy.

MAREA FOSTER: I know that. Is there anything else about the fire you remember that you would like to tell us?

MRS. JONES: Well, right along through in there, they built Good Shepherd's Hospital, long up there to have us somewhere for the people to go. There were a lot of people sick, dying, lot of stuff going on. But like I say, six years old, you didn't keep up with all of that. But I do know Good Shepherd's Hospital was built out of the need for colored people to have somewhere to go when they got sick.

Of course, the doctors just had little offices. You know, you couldn't go to the office and get on the table and all that stuff. Put the thing in your mouth, ah!

MAREA FOSTER: Right. (laughter) Take your pulse.

MRS. JONES: It wasn't like it is now. Anyway, we went to Dr. Fisher that lived on George Street. Lived right in the house. Dr.

Mann's house and Dr. Fisher's house are still standing on George Street right behind the welfare building where St. Luke's Hospital used to be. That's the building.

MAREA FOSTER: Oh, okay.

MRS. JONES: Those two houses there, one belonged to Dr. Fisher and the other belonged to Dr. Mann.

MAREA FOSTER: And they were colored doctors?

MRS. JONES: They were colored doctors.

MAREA FOSTER: Okay, good. I did not know those houses at one time had been doctor's homes and offices.

MRS. JONES: Yes, yes. They had you go in there and sit down and open your mouth, stick your tongue out and stuff.

MAREA FOSTER: And you have written down here for me that Rev. Johnson, who was the rector of St. Cyprian's, helped start Good Shepherd.

MRS. JONES: Good Shepherd Hospital.

MAREA FOSTER: And who else helped start it?

MRS. JONES: Well, they said all the churches. They asked for donations. people just fell right in when they found out this was going to be a good thing. Rev. Johnson was very, very nice. I worked at Good Shepherd Hospital for about five years at six dollars every other week.

MAREA FOSTER: Six dollars every other week?

MRS. JONES: Every other week, did you hear what I said?

MAREA FOSTER: I certainly did. How long ago was this?



MRS. JONES: It wasn't yesterday.

MAREA FOSTER: (laughter) I know that. (laughter) It was before we had minimum wage certainly.

MRS. JONES: I'm trying to tell you. I worked at the tobacco factory, 1936. That was when they first started taking out social security.

MAREA FOSTER: Oh, that's right.

MRS. JONES: You remember that, Mamie Sadler?

MAREA FOSTER: Oh, Miss Mamie Sadler's grocery store?

MRS. JONES: It was right by the tobacco factory. That's where you went and spent your money.

MAREA FOSTER: At Miss Mamie Sadler's?

MRS. JONES: Right.

MAREA FOSTER: And the tobacco factory was behind her store?

MRS. JONES: No, Mamie Sadler's store over here, and the tobacco factory right across from it. You remember that? Ah, you'd strip tobacco.

MAREA FOSTER: Oh, well, who owned the tobacco factory?

MRS. JONES: Somebody in Farmville. They had another factory in Farmville, North Carolina.

MAREA FOSTER: Monk's Tobacco Factory. Fred supplied the name for us.

MRS. JONES: You know who I'm talking about, don't you? I ain't no dummy. (laughter)

MAREA FOSTER: I know you're not.

MRS. JONES: Oh please, I hope that's not on there.

MAREA FOSTER: No, it's on here, and I think it's wonderful because we're having a good time. But you've done so many interesting things.

MRS. JONES: Anyway, they said about social security, anything that said security, that's what I liked. Security, to look out for me. But in 1936 you had to get your Social Security card. So I went down and applied for a Social Security card and got my first Social Security card, 1936. I don't know the exact date.

MAREA FOSTER: You were one of the early subscribers to social security, so to speak.

MRS. JONES: And a lady asked me the other day, do you know your Social Security number? I said, "243-16-4130."

MAREA FOSTER: (laughter) She was amazed that you knew it.

MRS. JONES: I put that in myself. That's my number.

MAREA FOSTER: That's your number. You're absolutely right. Well, let's go back to Good Shepherd, and if you'll tell me again, if you can remember the doctors there and what did you do there.

MRS. JONES: I cleaned. I first worked in the washroom to help Mrs. Sarah Dudley. That was in the bottom. They had just a little laundry room in the basement like. You had two machines. I used to get up early and go six o'clock, walking, no car, to Good Shepherd Hospital, and I'd wash those white sheets first. And I'd have so many sheets to go on the line, Mr. Matthew Stewart would ask me, "Did you stay all night?"

MAREA FOSTER: Now, who was Mr. Stewart?

MRS. JONES: Matthew Stewart was one of the men that worked there to help the helpers. I didn't have to wash the clothes and then hang them out.

MAREA FOSTER: Matthew Stewart.

MRS. JONES: Matthew Stewart worked at Good Shepherd Hospital. Miss Sarah Monroe was the cook. She's dead and gone. Sarah Monroe, she was the cook. Mr. Moore, oh for goodness sake, he was a barber and his wife was a nurse, Moore. Mr. Moore was a barber, but his wife, Mrs. Moore, was a registered nurse.

MAREA FOSTER: That's wonderful. Now, you have mentioned on this wonderful sheet you've written for me, you've written down, is she Mrs. or Miss Charlotte Rhone?

MRS. JONES: Miss.

MAREA FOSTER: Please tell me about her. I've heard so many nice things about her. (Interruption)

MRS. JONES: Miss Charlotte Rhone was the first black registered nurse in New Bern, North Carolina. As I forestated, I. P. (Isiah Prophet) Hatch had the first automobile hearse. The Hatch brothers had the first automobile hearse that rode the streets of New Bern. They had it on horse and dray way back yonder. But I.P. Hatch had the first automobile hearse in New Bern and the first person that was carried to Greenwood cemetery was Miss Charlotte Rhone's mother.

I've got that down too. But I'm saying, that was a mystery. People would go and put your casket on the back of a horse and dray and carry you on that. So when Miss Charlotte Rhone's mother died, it was a

circus. Of course, I was in the hearse with my brother. See, my father was dead, so I went everywhere with Uncle I.P.

MAREA FOSTER: So you uncle, I.P. Hatch, raised you?

MRS. JONES: Practically, yes mam'm.

MAREA FOSTER: I see. So you were riding in the hearse with him...

MRS. JONES: It was circus time, because nobody in New Bern, black and white, had seen an automobile hearse.

MAREA FOSTER: What was it like?

MRS. JONES: Just like the ones they got today, only it was kind of old-timey. It wasn't as wide, you understand me? The chassis was higher, not low like Cadillac now. But when it was run by car, this old lady had a feeling the Episcopal church people standing all around, same Episcopal Church there.

MAREA FOSTER: St. Cyprian?

MRS. JONES: St. Cyprian Church, people would look in. "Who's got the body?" Said, "I. P. Hatch." It was the hearse. That's the hearse. "What?" Just like a circus. I've never seen anything like it in my life.

MAREA FOSTER: Well, that would be quite an event.

MRS. JONES: It was. It was something to see. Now, it's nothing. Shows you how things come and go. But as the Bible forestates, there's nothing new. There's going to be signs and wonders until this world finishes, right?

MAREA FOSTER: That's true.

MRS. JONES: What's next?

MAREA FOSTER: Now, I want you to tell me more about Miss Charlotte Rhone, if you can.

MRS. JONES: Miss Charlotte Rhone was, I guess you would call her the operator of the Welfare. She and Miss Della Dillahunt, helped her right in the basement of her building, give out food for the people. 'Course, she didn't give me any. I wasn't on welfare.

MAREA FOSTER: Right, you didn't need it. But you said in the basement of her building...

MRS. JONES: Her building is still standing, on the corner of North Cool Avenue and Queen Street. You know where the sewing room is, Pasteur Street, that one building there. That next building is Charlotte Rhone's home.

MAREA FOSTER: Was that her home?

MRS. JONES: Yes mam'm. And the first two story house that you can look see from Queen Street belongs to me, which is a descendent of Simeon Hatch, and my granddaughter lives in it.

MAREA FOSTER: Oh, isn't that nice.

MRS. JONES: Yeah.

MAREA FOSTER: Well now, I have been told that Miss Rhone was a midwife.

MRS. JONES: I don't know anything about that, but if you're a nurse, you can be a midwife.

MAREA FOSTER: Right. I didn't know if you had heard if she had been.

MRS. JONES: But she was the first, that's why you see a lot of

papers and stuff. Then sit and look. We had some New Bern firsts.

It was printed here, 1960, and I've been just looking to see where I would find it. I have some more firsts down there.

MAREA FOSTER: Yeah, you do, and I'm going to ask you about all of them because they're so interesting. Since that's all that you can recall Miss Rhone...

MRS. JONES: But she did that. People would give her clothes. People would send boxes of clothing from the north, they said. I didn't know where they came from because I was busy working, taking care of my family. Okay? But anyway, she did work with what they called then the Welfare system. She'd have rice and beans and cheese and whatever else she'd give them. And I don't know why, there was always somebody that would hand out something to Frances and her children.

MAREA FOSTER: Isn't that nice.

MRS. JONES: It's wonderful. But when they passed by here, I'd get a rest, and I'd always have a glass of lemonade.

MAREA FOSTER: Oh wonderful. That's great.

MRS. JONES: (Laughter) And some peppermint. You know, old people like peppermint.

MAREA FOSTER: Yeah, I like peppermint.

MRS. JONES: But the main thing, what I'm trying to say is, people learned back there, more so than they know now, about sharing, helping each other, helping to carry each other's load.

MAREA FOSTER: Now, tell me about Mr. Lonnie Davis.

MRS. JONES: Mr. Lonnie Davis had the first bus line in New Bern. He used to collect up all, he'd go to the churches. You could go to Morehead City for 50 cents.

MAREA FOSTER: Oh my?

MRS. JONES: And he would take the old people down to Morehead City. Every Sunday, he'd have a certain batch that went the first Sunday, a certain batch that went the second Sunday, because way back there when you had Communion Sunday, when you went in at eleven o'clock, you didn't come out 'til three. I mean, you communed. (laughter)

MAREA FOSTER: Yeah, that's a long communion service.

MRS. JONES: But I'm saying, that's what they did. So the first batch, my father, we belonged to the Guilfield Missionary Baptist Church. And Baptist, they say, are always long winded. But Mr. Lonnie Davis would take us down to Morehead, and those people would take their shoes off and put their feet in salt water.

MAREA FOSTER: Oh, how nice.

MRS. JONES: They said that was to remove the corns.

MAREA FOSTER: I know it made them feel better. (laughter)

MRS. JONES: I'm telling you. There's nothing beats a good bath for your feet, right?

MAREA FOSTER: That's right.

MRS. JONES: But anyway, this is where he had the first bus line in New Bern, Lonnie Davis. He had several brothers. Miss Rebecca Davis was married to one of his brothers. She didn't tell you nothing about this?

MAREA FOSTER: Rebecca Davis didn't tell me this.

MRS. JONES: She was married to one of the brothers.

MAREA FOSTER: She didn't tell me that, not at all.

MRS. JONES: They're people I know.

MAREA FOSTER: Well, right down here on your list, we're going back to Mr. I. P. Hatch, the undertaker, you have him as a specialist embalmer.

MRS. JONES: He was a specialist embalmer. I read his lessons to him, and he made top-notch lessons. (Interruption)

MAREA FOSTER: You were telling me you would read the lessons to Mr. Hatch.

MRS. JONES: Right, and he said I was real good because when I got to a word that I couldn't quite make out, he'd say, "Just call it something and go right on." (laughter)

MAREA FOSTER: Did you help him in the mortuary?

MRS. JONES: Oh yes, oh yes. I made flowers. I can make flowers out of paper. His wife was a florist, and she helped my father in his undertaking business.

MAREA FOSTER: So your father had a separate business from his brother I. P.?

MRS. JONES: Yes mam'm. The house that contained his undertaker parlor is still on Kilburn Street today. You know where the Brad house was where you go up Kilburn Street, that one yellow building over there. It have a picture of it. That was where the undertaker parlor was. That's where my father died.



MAREA FOSTER: In that house?

MRS. JONES: In that house, in that undertaker building. He had a room in there. He'd have to come and rest. The poor fellow worked himself to death, being dead at forty-one. I wasn't ready for him to go. But anyway, up, down, up, down. But I lived with my great aunt, and she took care of us until we were able to go, you know, with my dad.

MAREA FOSTER: Who was your great aunt?

MRS. JONES: Her name was Louisa Hatch. They were my grandfather's sisters, and Nettie Hatch. Nettie and Louisa, they're both Hatches.

MAREA FOSTER: Now before we started the interview, you were telling Fred Latham and me a very interesting story about Mr. Slater. Would you repeat it for our tape?

MRS. JONES: I sure will. Mr. Slater was in charge, Joe Slater's father, I cannot remember his name, but Mr. Joe K. Willis owned Willis Funeral Homes on Broad Street. You ever heard of Joe K. Willis?

MAREA FOSTER: Yes.

MRS. JONES: Well, all right, he was an undertaker. They said--a long time ago children didn't tend to people's business like they do now--they can cut their mamas off. Mine don't, and never will, 'cause I never allow it. Somebody say Mr. Joe Slater done took some medicine because (laughter) he was supposed to pay the poor people their Social Security money where he had taken from them. Say he's took some medicine and killed himself. Well, you didn't advertise that. So Mr. Joe K.

Willis came to my uncle's. I was always in doing something, clearing the table, my uncle would leave paper here and all. I tried to keep it neat. "Mr. Hatch, you know Joe Slater's done took some kind of poison and turned himself, he's blacker than you." (laughter) I was astonished. He says now, there was another undertaker who called in Beaufort. He said he didn't know nothing about it. He didn't know that much about it. So Mr. Joe K. Willis asked my uncle if he would change him back to this color, if he could do that. My uncle said, "Nothing to it." So he went and embalmed him. He was at Mr. Joe. K. Willis' undertaker place, wherever it was, and through the night, or whenever the finishing was, he did it that night. The next morning the man must have been back like he was. Well, way back then if you knew the person or had worked for him, you could go to the funeral. Then people now don't want to go, but now they've coming back again, going to the person's funeral if you want to. I think that should be freedom of choice, don't you?

MAREA FOSTER: I certainly do.

MRS. JONES: We've got our churches, and we're all going to the same Heaven, and there's only one God. So why just because I'm brown, I didn't make my color, my skin, it was on me when I got here, right?

Stick a pin, you get red blood, right? Stick a pin in you, you get red blood, so? What is the difference? In Christ there's no east or west, why would we try to come in our Father's world and change everything. This is what's happening. So uncle went to see, and Mr. Joe Slater laid there with his little narrow face (laughter) just as

white as he was supposed to be. "Come on, I want you to see this."

Oh, he was dark, veins standing blue in his face. You couldn't let him be shown looking like that. So he got right famed for that. You remember that?

FRED LATHAM: No, I don't remember that.

MRS. JONES: But you remember hearing the episode?

FRED LATHAM: I remember when he died.

MRS. JONES: It was black, it turned himself dark, whatever he took, the poison. I wasn't there, but anyway when I went back to look with my uncle--I don't know how long my uncle was gone because he ate before he left that today. Said, "I've got to go down here and see what I've got to do for Joe Slater."

MAREA FOSTER: That was a very Christian thing for him to do.

MRS. JONES: That was a Christian thing for him to do for me, because I've heard my uncle say a many a time, "Well, if took something and turned myself white, I bet they wouldn't even put their hand on me." I've heard him say that. I said, "Well, uncle, that hasn't happened, so don't worry about it." I don't like to worry about the future. You don't know what it's going to be. So I'd oft time tell him, "Don't worry about what's down the road. Wait until you get there."

He'd laugh. There was a man--you got this? I want you to get this.

There was another man in New Bern called Mr. J. B. Dawson. Both tall, both big, both round head, no hair on their head. So they said one white J. B. Dawson, one black J. B. Dawson; one white I. P. and one black I. P. (laughter) They said they could have passed for twins,

really, same features, blow-legged. Same features, but one was white and one was black. So my great aunt said, "Now, even in your lifetime, while you're young, you'll see that God is no respecter of persons."

I've always had a lot of respect for God's word because they were telling me that even when I didn't understand what they were talking about. You know what I mean? And I was lucky enough to work in Kafer Hospital, which was where the filling station is now, for Dr. Kafer (Oscar Adolph Kafer II) and Helen Kafer (Helen Seifert - Mrs. Oscar Adolph Kafer II) and Miss...

MAREA FOSTER: Dorothy Ritchy was there.

MRS. JONES: I worked for Dorothy Ritchy's mother on King Street, kin to Miss Ritchy, and Dr. Patterson, and a lot of friendly people there. But Dr. Kafer called me the little one. I'm just about the smallest thing going. And I told him that I had worked at Good Shepherd Hospital with a Mrs. Moore. She was an R.N. I can take temperature.

I can dispense insulin. I know how to read the temperatures, all that stuff. I mean, if you live and learn, and just living and going about, you're not doing anything. Live and learn, then you die and forget it all, right?

MAREA FOSTER: That's right.

MRS. JONES: So Mrs. Moore at Good Shepherd Hospital, because I like to take care of people. I like to see what's going on. I liked to see what she was doing for the improvement of the people, and a lot of them got up and went home. I was happy enough and fortunate enough to attend to Mr. J. B. Dawson, and I asked him did he remember

me. He said, "I don't know." I said, "Do you remember I. P. Hatch," uncle that was dead? "Yes. They said we were doubles." I said, "Right.

I'm his niece. I'm his brother's daughter." "Oh, I'll tell you one thing about I. P. Hatch. He was truthful, and I hope you're that way."

I said, "I am." He said, "Do you go to the store any time?" (laughter)

I said, "Yes sire, regular." "Well, I want some Sanka coffee. I don't know what kind they have in here, but it's not Sanka." (laughter)

So I went to the D. P. Store. A. P. was in the. D. P. was up here, right where the clothing store, right back of the post office. They done tore it all down.

MAREA FOSTER: Oh, the Colonial Store.

MRS. JONES: Colonial Store. Got his jar of Sanka, and I made sure he didn't drink any coffee 'til I got him some.

MAREA FOSTER: Well, I know he appreciated that.

MRS. JONES: Well, Rev. R. I. Johnson died in the Good Shepherd Hospital, and when I went to see him that Sunday afternoon, he had had an accident. I rolled that man over in there. I told the nurse, "Now, you come and help me now." "Oh, you get out of those clothes."

"Look, these clothes, I have some more clothes at home, but I'm not going to let Rev. Johnson lay there in that predicament." I cleaned him up and washed his pyjamas before I left there. "Lord." I said, "Um uh, my Bible says that the oxen in the mire lay hands and pull him out." Rev. Johnson looked at me and said, "God's going to bless you child." I said, "he's already blessed me. You know how many children I got?" He said, "No." I said, "Eight." He said, "What?"

I said, "Yes sir." I thought that was fine, you know, to have a lot of children. Didn't know how hard it was to bring them up. But one day I hollered, "Free at last!" I'm the mother of eleven.

MAREA FOSTER: You told me that.

MRS. JONES? He took two, and they're in the National Cemetery (for veterans). Isn't that a good place to be? So they were honorable, right? Had they not been, they wouldn't put them up there. You going up there the 30th of May? I said if they could they would come down there. I'm going up there. I told the man, there's a new man there now, younger man there now. I said, "I come up her every 30th." He said, "Mam'm, the cemetery's open. You come." I said, "I've got one in Section 15 and one in Section 18." "You have?" I said, "Yes sir."

He said, "Go anywhere you want." And I have the deeds and discharges and plaques to back up what I'm saying.

MAREA FOSTER: That's wonderful. All right, now, you have written down here, Mr. John Thomas Barber.

MRS. JONES: John Thomas Barber started the first black school in New Bern which was West Street School. His house is still standing on West Street which is across from the school. I think it's 621.

I was looking at this obituary thing this morning. Barbara Lewis (daughter of J. T. Barber), that's the last one. He has one more daughter that's living. She went to school with me.

MAREA FOSTER: And her name is Ethel.

MRS. JONES: Ethel Barber Latham (daughter of J. T. Barber), that's her last name. You know, she's married. Anyway, we would come

down Elm Street. When I say we, we were in pairs. I had a brother that I buried in '85 in Chicago. He was a musician. My brother and I would come--his name was Simeon after my father, and Henry Parker Roberts lived right across the street from us. Carrie Webster (Carolyn Webster Franklin - sister of John Webster) and her brother lived right around the corner. Shade Marshburn and his sister lived a little further down on Second Avenue, but Mr. Barber called us the Triumvirates.

MAREA FOSTER: Oh, he did?

MRS. JONES: We all came together, and he'd stand and watch (laughter) until we'd come down. He'd know who we were, you know. We all went to school together, all of that bunch is gone now except Henry Parker Roberts is still living, and I'm still living. But those brothers and sisters, and her name is Carolyn Franklin. She's still living, but when she grew up, she was Carrie Webster, and she had a brother named John. We'd come in pairs.

MAREA FOSTER: What was going to school like?

MRS. JONES: Happy times. No fights, no fights, prayer every morning. Trouble now, you've took prayer. No fights, no guns, none of that. Just happy times. You were glad to go to school. We had play. We had assembly. I took my music from Miss Esther Hazel Powell.

She was a graduate of Julliard School of Music in New York. That's who taught me my music. We'd just have a good time at school. No fighting, didn't have time to fight. Children now are killing time, walking up and down, talking about a nature walk.

MAREA FOSTER: They certainly are. But tell me, Mrs. Jones, when you were going to school, did ya'll come home for your lunch or did you take your lunch to school?

MRS. JONES: We came home from school early. But when I got to seventh and eighth grade, Miss Carrie Fisher (wife of Dr. Fisher) and Miss Buchannan had lunch room in the basement of West Street School. One taught cooking; the other one taught sewing. Mrs. Fisher taught the cooking. Mrs. Buchannan taught the sewing. Dr. Fisher's wife taught the cooking and Mrs. Buchannan taught the sewing.

MAREA FOSTER: How interesting.

MRS. JONES: It was nice. And we just had two rooms, one that way and one this way. Everybody happy. Not all this fighting and gun flinging and like. I'm so glad I don't have any children going to school now I don't know what to do, because I'd go close the school up.

MAREA FOSTER: I know. Well, tell me, when you all had recess, what games did you play?

MRS. JONES: We jumped rope. We played hopscotch. We played spin the bottle.

MAREA FOSTER: Oh yes.

MRS. JONES? We played everything that we could play comfortably. We would, I can't think of the name of it now but I used to have the children do it. I was a daycare teacher for twelve years. "A tisk it, a task it, green and yellow basket." Drop the basket, run and catch it. Stuff like that that you had fun. Not no fighting. If



they would just put the prayer back in the school. I say I'm going to the alderman meeting and tell them that, and I'm going to have prayer right in the courthouse. I don't reckon they ever had any prayer in there. Reckon they've ever had any prayer in the courthouse?

MAREA FOSTER: (laughter) I don't know whether they have or not. Now here you've written down, I know we're skipping around a lot, but I'm trying to follow your paper.

MRS. JONES: What's important, right?

MAREA FOSTER: You have written down first Emancipation Proclamation Program held in the Armory. So tell me...

MRS. JONES: Right, that big Armory right there that's used as the jail, where the police are, that was a day and a half.

MAREA FOSTER: Now, when was this?

MRS. JONES: That was on the 1st day of January, I think it was about 1952, just that far back.

MAREA FOSTER: And it was an Emancipation Proclamation Program?

MRS. JONES: Yes big program. People from the north, I didn't know who all of them were, but I'm saying they were here in big numbers. That place was filled with people.

MAREA FOSTER: What type of program...?

MRS. JONES: It was civic programs and reading of where you are and who thought that you might get where you are, and somebody to tell us about something specific that we could look forward to a goal. You'd have a goal that you were going to try to get to, something besides going in jail, cutting somebody's throat. The man really told us you

can be anything you want to be and you can.

MAREA FOSTER: Do you remember who the speaker was?

MRS. JONES: I don't know, but he was somebody that was a Mason, if I'm not mistaken. They came as far as Baltimore, Maryland, because a lot of them ate to my daddy's. But I didn't know. But George Downing had an eatery, and my uncle was telling them where to go and eat, you know. But I was young, I didn't know who, why, and all. And all those people came, you know you had to know. And we had to go. We had to go with the folks. These people now leave the children home to do what they want to do, and they're running in the streets, breaking out people's window lights. My brother and I did not do that. We're not allowed to do that.

MAREA FOSTER: You had discipline when you were growing up.

MRS. JONES: My children had discipline, and I got a switch now. I got a daughter fifty-nine. I got a boy fifty-seven. When I say shut-up, that means zip it.

MAREA FOSTER: And they do it.

MRS. JONES: They'd better. Want to see my switch? (laughter)

MAREA FOSTER: Oh, there's your switch over in the corner.

MRS. JONES: That's a knocker-outer.

MAREA FOSTER: That looks like some kind of sawed off pole.

MRS. JONES: That's a knocker-outer.

MAREA FOSTER: But that switch, you have taken a small branch off of a bush and you have pulled all the leaves off it. Oh, sounds like a whip.

FRED LATHAM: Let's get a picture of this.

MRS. JONES: No brag, just fact.

MAREA FOSTER: That hurts when you hit somebody's leg with that switch.

MRS. JONES: I hit mine. I was a daycare teacher for twelve years. I never hit anybody else's. All I had to do was have it. And I say, (Banging sound), "What does that say?" "Ip your lips." I say, "Well, ip them."

MAREA FOSTER: These little children couldn't say, "ZIP."

MRS. JONES: You couldn't hear a pin drop. Oh, the lady came from the state and told me that I wasn't supposed to have this. If you had this, this was corporal punishment. I said, "Well, mam'm, I have eleven living children that I didn't corporal punish them, and I whipped them. Now, you just move out of my face. You don't tell me. I can tell you." Thank you.

MAREA FOSTER: Okay. Fred and I have enjoyed seeing your switch, (laughter) and I know you're not going to turn it on us. (laughter)

MRS. JONES: The children come. The little girl came for music one Saturday and I told her, "you hold your wrist up," and she was dropping them down. So her mother brought her back the next Saturday.

She was taking music, and I said to her, "Now, I want you to come in her because I want your mother to make sure she hears what I'm saying.

Did I ask you to come to my house?" "No." I said, "Well, when you come here for a lesson, should you be wanting to do what you want to do or be wanting to do what I'm telling you to do?" Her mother said,

"Answer! Mrs. Jones is talking to you. Answer!" "I'm supposed to do what you say do." I said, "Thank you. So next Saturday maybe we'll get together real good. Give me a big hug." So she gave me a big hug. But her mother came back--she was getting her book out of the car--she said, "You've changed her whole attitude." (laughter) I said, "I change a whole lot of their attitudes. They don't come in here and run over me."

MAREA FOSTER: You changed it with love.

MRS. JONES: You understand what I'm saying?

MAREA FOSTER: I certainly do. You changed it all with love.

MRS. JONES: I have some little boys--not little boys, they're big boys, eleven, nine, twelve--come to Sunday School, and as I come up from the basement, I go to Sunday School every Sunday. I haven't missed one in thirteen years. They pass by. I'm standing. One of those boys looked and said, "Boy, you better come back here. You've got to give her a hug before you get down." (laughter) I was so tickled.

"You've got to give her a hug before you get down." I said, "Thank you." This just warms my heart, and it will take me through today.

"Better hugs than drugs, right? Go on their merry way. I told my granddaughter--I have a grandson that I took to the Catholic School for eight years. His mother works at Cherry Point, and father. She'd bring him at six. He's asleep. "Come on Chris. Come on Mike (Mrs. Jones' grandsons)." So we went to the school on Bern Street for three or four years or five. I was so busy going the next year to Bern Street, "Grandmama,"--but anyway, I get in the car and said, "Lord Jesus, please

come and go with us. Help us get there safely." So we went to school. For five years I took him to, I'll say, Father Julian Hall down there. That's what it was. Next year, he had been transferred to Middle School. I didn't know that. (whispers) "Lord Jesus, please take us through." I went on, turned my car around there. "Grandma, what school you going to?" I said, "Don't you go to the Catholic?" "Yeah, but I go to the one, I've done graduated from that one, I go to the one on Middle Street." I said, "Well, why didn't you tell me, dummy? You want me to be a dummy?" I'd been all the way down, went to Pollock Street, then had to come all the way back. I said, "Now, why you didn't tell me? Grandmama can't keep up with everything." But last Saturday, he's driving. He's sixteen. He's got his driver's license. I said, "Baby, will you take it to the bread house?" "I'll take you anywhere you want to go, Grandma." I said, "All right, Sweetie, let me get my pocketbook, and when I got in the car, I said, "Lord, please come." "Uh, Grandma, you're still up to that same old bit." I said, "Well, it took you safely to school." (laughter) "It works right on. Prayer always works." "Oh yeah, yeah, yeah." So we on down. (laughter) Got the bread and come on back. I said, "See, you didn't have an accident." If people would pray more, I think the whole world would be better. I can say to that bird, "You hear me?" See, he's not whistling now. "Shut up, Charlie." (Bird whistling) I say, "Shut up, Charlie." He might be hungry. Don't you let that piano get going.

MAREA FOSTER: He likes to sing.

MRS. JONES: Talking about some beautiful music, he can really

put it down.

MAREA FOSTER: Well, Mrs. Jones, let me ask you, and I don't think I asked you your husband's name.

MRS. JONES: My husband's name was Albert Jones. I've been married two times.

MAREA FOSTER: Albert Jones, was he the first?

MRS. JONES: No, the first husband was Moses Downing. He's still living. Yes, he is.

MAREA FOSTER: And he was the first, and Albert Jones the second.

MRS. JONES: Yes. Moses is living. Isn't that a mystery, and Albert is dead.

MAREA FOSTER: How about that.

MRS. JONES: Well, Frances is living. That's the main thing.

MAREA FOSTER: That's the main thing.

MRS. JONES: That's the main ingredient. (laughter)

MAREA FOSTER: That's the main thing. You're absolutely right. Now, also on your paper is Mr. Ralph O'Hara.

MRS. JONES: God is no respecter of persons. I went to J. T. Barber School to talk with the children. They have afternoon classes, 61, you call them slow learners. Everybody doesn't have the same ability to comprehend, right?

MAREA FOSTER: That's right.

MRS. JONES: So I told the children, Mr.--a fellow, I can't even think of his name now, but anyway--I had great grandchildren over there and I was happy to go. This was history week, black history month,

February. "I want you to pay attention, and one thing I want you to do right now is zip your lips." I said, "Good afternoon, I'm so happy to come over here and talk with you. The first thing I want you to do is tell me how many ears you have." A little girl said, "Five."

(laughter) I said, "Ears, ears, how many ears?" "Oh, two." I guess she was thinking about corn. I don't know what she was thinking. "Two. And what do we do with our ears?" "Listen." "Thank you, you know how to use them. Now, this is the main thing I'm trying to tell you. If you are talking when the teacher's talking, how do you know what the teacher's saying?" "You don't know." I said, "Thank you.

Now, zip your lips." They zipped them again, and I told them a little poem about you being somebody and God giving us a brain. So I went on to tell them that He let one man named John, or somebody that walked on the moon--we don't know whether they walked on the moon or not.

We weren't up there where he was. But anyway, they said his name was John. So I heard it, "Glenn, John Glenn." I said, "Good, you got that. Somebody had to give him a brain and let him study and master that walk on the moon, right?" I said, "Then there was another man, an astronaut. This man was white, but then there was another man and he was black like me." You know, kind of proud. I broke out laughing.

I like fun. I said, "And his name was, anybody know that name?" I said, "Don't ever forget it, Buffort! You got it? Repeat it." "Buffort." Mr. (can't remember his name) said, "Mrs. Jones, will you please come down?" I said, "I'd love it." When you get a child's attention, he get something.

MAREA FOSTER: Right.

MRS. JONES: I had a funeral. I went to my cousin's funeral last Saturday and there was a full grown man--that's one of my great grandchildren.

MAREA FOSTER: He's a handsome young man.

MRS. JONES: Lives in Mebane. A grown man that sat behind me. He rattled the obituary the whole time. Now if you don't want to hear, you ought not to be behind me making noise so I can't hear, am I right.

MAREA FOSTER: That is rude. It's very rude. Now, you were going to tell me about Mr. Ralph O'Hara.

MRS. JONES: Mr. Ralph O'Hara was a lawyer, tall. His wife was tall. They were really, well, I guess by me being short, when you see tall people, you don't really stare but you do take a good look.

And Mr. Ralph O'Hara was just a friendly person. His wife was a school teacher and I was in love with her. Then when my children went to school she fell in love with my children. She had a sick girl and my oldest girl would go there and stay with her. She was smart. When you've got smart children they don't have to stay there looking at books. One of my girls would go there and stay with this girl until it was time to go to school. But Mrs. O'Hara died. Ralph O'Hara died. Their homestead is moved in that little jam up, East Front Street. Do you know where the Patterson house is?

MAREA FOSTER: Yes.

MRS. JONES: Well, not on that side, the one on this side, that



big house, got those big round columns. Is it Change Street that comes out to East Front like you're going down around the...?

MAREA FOSTER: Changed does.

MRS. JONES: Well, this house that sits up in there that's got those little forked windows. That was the old Ralph O'Hara homestead.

MAREA FOSTER: Oh, I didn't know that.

MRS. JONES: Well, you know it now.

MAREA FOSTER: I do.

MRS. JONES: Well, they moved it. They moved that house from that corner there where Pollock Street, right across from where Foodland, Gordon's (Parrot) Foodland. I cooked for Gordon Parrot's mama. I worked for Seth Parrot.

MAREA FOSTER: Oh, you did?

MRS. JONES: Oh yeah, I know a lot of them.

MAREA FOSTER: You certainly do.

MRS. JONES: I worked for Dorothy Ritchy's mother.

MAREA FOSTER: Yeah, and you've written down--oh me, where did I...?

FRED LATHAM: Mrs. Odum?

MRS. JONES: Dorothy Ritchy's mother? No, she was Mrs. Ritchy. Dorothy ain't never been married.

MAREA FOSTER: No, she's Dorothy Ritchy.

MRS. JONES: Ritchy, used to have Ritchy's Dry Cleaners. And Mildred Harker, we worked together over here in the Soup Kitchen.

MAREA FOSTER: Oh, I see.

MRS. JONES: "Frances, what you? Dorothy, look who's here?" I said, "So what? The good Lord has ways of bringing families together. Right on?" (laughter) Sister whatever her name was, she was a helper. She didn't know what was going on. "Yes, Frances took care of our mother until she passed, and she went to her funeral too." I said, "I really did." What harm was that?

MAREA FOSTER: No harm at all.

MRS. JONES: She's right in the cemetery in back of my house. So I went to the funeral.

MAREA FOSTER: I don't blame you.

MRS. JONES: That's respect.

MAREA FOSTER: It is. That was very kind and thoughtful. Well, you've also mentioned Lucy Franks.

MRS. JONES: Yeah, this was one of her sister's daughters that they buried Saturday, name was Rosina Hayes. The lady was saying how helpful she was at helping other people at Guardian Care (nursing home.)

She stayed out there a long time when she couldn't help herself, but she did help quilt and make funny things, and just doing something, helping people until she couldn't do any more. She was eighty-three.

And we are descendants of Simmons, Franks, Hatchs, and I got cousins in Oriental, and Asa Smith, and we're a whole big family.

MAREA FOSTER: You certainly are.

MRS. JONES: But she, Lucy Franks, had the first Pressing Club (dry cleaners) in the same little building that's sitting up here.

Do you know Otto White that worked for the man downtown, used to sell

the furniture?

MAREA FOSTER: Oh, there are several of them. Tolson?

MRS. JONES: No.

MAREA FOSTER: Lipman?

MRS. JONES: No, not Lipman. This man was right next door to...

MAREA FOSTER: Jones?

MRS. JONES: Jones Furniture Store. Well, this little house that sits up on that hill, that's where Cousin Lucy had her Pressing Club.

MAREA FOSTER: Well, now, what's a Pressing Club?

MRS. JONES: She did something to cleaning your pants. Just like the Pressing Club is now. And she did that through the week, and Saturdays or Fridays, whoever brought their crabs in would carry them to Lucy and she walked all over this town selling fried crabs.

MAREA FOSTER: Oh, she did?

MRS. JONES: I'm trying to tell you. We are industrious people.

MAREA FOSTER: I know it.

MRS. JONES: My family of people are. We didn't wait for somebody to come hand us some peanuts.

MAREA FOSTER: Well, did you know anyone who went up and down the streets with wagons selling vegetables in the summer?

MRS. JONES: My people.

MAREA FOSTER: Fresh vegetables.

MRS. JONES: My people, Mr. Fonville. I got Mr. Fonville trade on King Street. Miss Ritchy, the Parrots, the this, the that. I told

them to bring them all from Pembroke with his cabbage and collards and salat and tomatoes. Did you know Mr. Fonville?

MAREA FOSTER: No.

MRS. JONES: Well, Mr. Fonville had his horse and dray. Oh yes, and my people came from Tuscarora, Rhems.

MAREA FOSTER: With vegetables?

MRS. JONES: With vegetables, when they got through working. My cousin lives right there. She can verify the statement. My daddy would bring us some. He'd always tell them when they left the Curb Market or wherever, got ready to go back, "Always stop off and eat dinner at our house." I'm teaching now the great grandchild.

MAREA FOSTER: Isn't that wonderful.

MRS. JONES: God has ways of bringing families together. Did you know that?

MAREA FOSTER: I know that.

MRS. JONES: I'm telling you.

MAREA FOSTER: Now, Mrs. Jones, you're saying there was a Curb Market when you were a youngster?

MRS. JONES: There was a Curb Market. It wasn't nothing but a little hut, but you always had to have a certain place to put your vegetables out. But we would come, my daddy would come. But my cousins would bring our vegetables from Tuscarora, Rhems.

MAREA FOSTER: And then you'd sell them downtown?

MRS. JONES: They would. Downtown, walk around, "Peas, collards, cabbage." Just holler and then you'd go out and buy.

MAREA FOSTER: I know. It was wonderful. I remember it during the summer time.

MRS. JONES: It was fun. It was fun.

MAREA FOSTER: And tell me, did you ever go downtown New Bern?

MRS. JONES: Me? I was baptized right down at East Front Street.

MAREA FOSTER: Oh you were? Please tell me about your baptism.

MRS. JONES: (laughter) 1925! Talk about a cold, frosty Easter morning, Lord have mercy. My father was living then. He didn't die until '27. He had a blanket. I don't mean these little thin things where they call blankets now, the thermal. He had a blanket and a quilt to wrap this darling up. (laughter) I have a friend. He comes down sometimes, usually in the spring, but he was down here last year for Thanksgiving and he came to prayer. He told them the story of our baptism. His name is Haywood Attmore. His brother, Arlestus Attmore, is deacon at our church now. His brother George is dead. That's the only ones I knew. But anyway, Haywood and I were baptized on that Sunday morning. And the man that baptized us was not much taller than we. So we were wondering (laughter) how far he was going to take us.

MAREA FOSTER: Now, tell me what did you have on? Did you have on a white dress or robes?

MRS. JONES: I had on a sheet wrapped around double and triple.

MAREA FOSTER: Oh, you had a sheet wrapped around you?

MRS. JONES: Just a sheet, didn't have no robes then. No indeed, well, you know, ten years old, couldn't you wrap a ten year old child

up in a sheet?

MAREA FOSTER: Yes, you could.

MRS. JONES: Well, that's the way it was. Went inching along like this.

MAREA FOSTER: I bet you did.

MRS. JONES: And he, Haywood, was just about this much taller than I. He was first and I was next. "What you going to say?" "I'm going to say, Thank God Almighty. What you going to say?" "Hallelujah."

(laughter) By a Rev. Sam Mann. He was pastor of Guilfield Missionary Baptist Church, 1925. I can't put the date right on it now, but I got it in my thing-a-majiggy, where I write down. But anyway, it was fun. There were about twelve of us. But honey, when we came up out of the water, my daddy had that blanket and that quilt and he just wrapped me right on up and took me up and put me in the car. Mrs. George Attmore wrapped up Haywood. He was chubby, fat and chubby, got him and they went on home. Mr. George Attmore (father of Haywood and Arlestus) was one of my father's dearest friends, which was Haywood Attmore and Arlestus Attmore's father, and he stood up with my father in 1911. He was to my father and mother's wedding in 1911. Was in Worster, Massachusetts. So these are people I know.

MAREA FOSTER: Where was it?

MRS. JONES: Worster, Massachusetts.

MAREA FOSTER: In 1911. Isn't that wonderful.

MRS. JONES: And still here to tell it.

MAREA FOSTER: I think that's great.

MRS. JONES: Don't you tell me.

MAREA FOSTER: Well, let me go back to your baptism and after your daddy wrapped you in the blanket.

MRS. JONES: We came home and got out of that wet stuff and got another right in that... You know, they didn't have a whole lot of tin tubs. Everybody didn't have tin tubs, but we had tin tubs. Everybody had the wooden tubs that you had to keep the water in so it wouldn't fall apart.

MAREA FOSTER: Exactly.

MRS. JONES: And everybody didn't have bathrooms. We had running water in the house but we didn't have no bathtub.

MAREA FOSTER: So you had a tin tub.

MRS. JONES: So we had a tin tub, and you got in that tin tub, and my first cousins, that gave the bath, you understand. Didn't have no boys and girls mixing way back yonder. So there was no ideas.

MAREA FOSTER: So you came home...

MRS. JONES: Came home and changed my clothes and got ready for Sunday School after I ate my breakfast.

MAREA FOSTER: You ate your breakfast and then went back to Sunday School.

MRS. JONES: Sunday School Guilfield Missionary Baptist Church. Done it every Sunday. I had a little Sunday School choir over in there. Played the organ, pump organ. You've got to do something. Don't sit up and wait, find something to do. You make it happen.

MAREA FOSTER: You're right about that.

MRS. JONES: I try to tell the children over there. You make it happen. You make it happen.

MAREA FOSTER: Well, now tell me, the house that you grew up in, was it brick or made of wood?

MRS. JONES: No, it was made of wood. But my grandfather had put a brick plaster railing, just like a step-up, low, and put his mark there, 1895. It was in there, had been done by my grandfather. The walls were lathered. The house wasn't brick but the walls were certainly lathered and plastered, and we didn't write on them either.

MAREA FOSTER: I'm sure you didn't. Inside the kitchen, did you cook on an electric stove, a gas stove, or a wood stove?

MRS. JONES: Wood stove, darling, wasn't no electric stove. Hadn't made the electric stove.

MAREA FOSTER: Didn't have electricity?

MRS. JONES: Had it on a platform. Yes, we had electricity.

MAREA FOSTER: But not for stoves.

MRS. JONES: Well, I'm saying not for stoves. We had the wood stoves.

MAREA FOSTER: Oh, that's good cooking. Makes good cornbread and biscuits.

MRS. JONES: When I worked for the Pattersons (Dr. and Mrs. Simmons Patterson)--I don't know, there's always somebody who's going to take a liking to you. The baby girl and Stevie, they were my buddies. "Mama, we want to eat with Frances." I said, "Come on." Put one at one end of the table and one to the other and I'm sitting in the middle.



They were cutting chicken, trying to use the knife. I said, "Boy, take that napkin, wrap it around the end of that..."

MAREA FOSTER: Drumstick.

MRS. JONES: "And get on with it."

MAREA FOSTER: (laughter) And I know you made wonderful biscuits and cornbread.

MRS. JONES: Yes mam'm. Stevie say, "Daddy, Frances done showed us how to get all the meat off the bone." (laughter) I said, "Do you think I'm throwing any of it away with my children?" They don't throw nothing out but the bone. You can't eat that.

MAREA FOSTER: That's right. But you can boil the bone and get some juice out of it for, you know, stock for soup.

MRS. JONES: Yeah, but what I'm saying, when I left the Pattersons, Isabelle cooked a cake and brought it to me.

MAREA FOSTER: That's so nice.

MRS. JONES: I said, "Girl, I thought you liked pizza," the store boughten pizza. She didn't have anything, but she had a piece for Frances. Their first grandchild is named Frances. The middle boy is named David. He named his child Frances.

MAREA FOSTER: How nice.

MRS. JONES: My children gave me a big bash, party, when I was seventy, and we invited the Pattersons, classmates, old people, choir, prayer groups, you know, just come. They didn't want no preaching and all that. Sick of that. go to church every Sunday, tired of preaching. So we let everybody express themself and then they went

down in the basement. Dr. Patterson was there. He kept telling, he says, "You know, after fifteen years, you just don't have anybody working for you. They just get right in the family, and that's what Frances did." He looked (laughter) tears. I said, "Well, what is he crying for?" to myself. But there's a warmer closeness or something.

You know, people been fussing and stealing people's pans and pots and doing this. I didn't do any of that. People lay things in the windows, I guess to see what I do and I got rings. I got diamonds.

My daughter bought me a diamond ring, right? My daughter works at Cherry Point. Somebody had left their pin in the window in the bathroom.

"Lord, Miss Dillon, I left my pin." She said, "I saw it in there."

"I wish you had gotten it." She said, "Well, you have to see Frances about that. She taught us early what was mine and thine." I don't do that. If I didn't put it there, I'd pass by it ten years and didn't bother it. Miss Mills (Martha Kirven - Mrs. Hugh Bryan Mills, Sr.), I guess, is still going up to Tryon Road. You know where the bank is? What's Mrs. Mills' name?

MAREA FOSTER: Martha Mills?

MRS. JONES: Martha Mills, you know she had the pear trees. Ask her how long Frances walked by and didn't pick them. She gave me a bushel of pears. She's standing in there watching, standing there watching to see if Frances going to pick up a pear. Uh, uh, uh. I hadn't planted no pear trees. Went on around that corner. Went on to Dr. Patterson's, 1507 Tryon Road. Fifteen years, ain't never picked up no pears. She gave me a bushel.

MAREA FOSTER: I'm sure she did.

MRS. JONES: "Frances, I've never seen nobody just like you in my life. Sometime I'd be right here to the window looking." I said, "Them wasn't my pears. They were not my pears. I ain't planted no pear tree." "Frances is something else." I said, "Well, I'm just me, and I can't help it."

MAREA FOSTER: You don't take what isn't yours.

MRS. JONES: That's the way I've been taught.

MAREA FOSTER: That's right.

MRS. JONES: If it's not mine, then leave it there. I don't care.

MAREA FOSTER: That's right. I want to ask you something else about your home because I have no idea when central heating was put in the homes. If you didn't have central heating when you were young, how did ya'll heat your house, or did you have central heating?

MRS. JONES: We heated our house with the big, fat bellied stove -- wood and coal.

MAREA FOSTER: Okay, and what did you feed it with?

MRS. JONES: Oak wood and coal.

MAREA FOSTER: Makes the best fire.

MRS. JONES: Made the best fire. We had upstairs and down. You could go upstairs and walk around naked, and that bad boy got warm, sure enough. But you see the houses were compact, we didn't stretch it out like this. This house, there's eight rooms up here, and then it's four more back there, another bathroom and all. Wasn't like that.

We had a front living room and a parlor. We had a dining room and

what they call now a den, but this was what we called catch-all. Then underneath the stairs, you go up the stairs was a closet to hang your clothes, put your shoes, put your books, or whatever. They weren't all over our floor. Then we come out of that house and there was a dining room and kitchen. They were to the house, but they weren't all jammed up there together. Like you see, there's the kitchen right there. There's the dining room right there. It wasn't like that.

You had the central part, and then upstairs was bedrooms, right? But the big stove downstairs sent the heat up. You know heat goes up. So I don't know about the central heat, but we kept warm. I've been here seventy-five years and ain't froze to death.

MAREA FOSTER: So one big, pot bellied stove heated your house.

MRS. JONES: Right. Then when you went in the kitchen...

MAREA FOSTER: You had the wood burning stove.

MRS. JONES: This was wood burning stove. The big stove was wood burning. They had pot bellied stoves in church.

MAREA FOSTER: Yes, they did.

MRS. JONES: Churches ain't always had central heat.

MAREA FOSTER: No, they haven't.

MRS. JONES: All the church, black, white, they didn't always have no central heat.

MAREA FOSTER: Let me ask you, going back to the kitchen stove, did you burn oak wood?

MRS. JONES: We burned oak wood and ash wood and strips. We used to have a man named Mr. Hill, you could get strips from the mill for

\$2.00 a load.

MAREA FOSTER: Which mill was that, Roper (lumber mill)?

MRS. JONES: Broaddus & Ives Iron, Roper, or whatever it was, over here right by Mamie Sadler. He's be sitting on top, way up there in the air, with strips. And then you had that to start your fire, and then you lay your oak and stuff in there.

MAREA FOSTER: Oak makes a good fire for cooking.

MRS. JONES: And then right over here where the ice house is, North Craven, you could go back in there and get you a bag of coal, bank that fire down, and you were just laying up there right.

MAREA FOSTER: Oh yeah. Now, did you have a ice box when you were growing up?

MRS. JONES: Sure, we had an ice box. I told you my daddy was a cook.

MAREA FOSTER: I know it, so tell me about the ice box because I've never seen one.

MRS. JONES: Well, the ice box had top and bottom, and the ice, of course, went in the top. A man named Mr. John Davis, they had ice then who would go all over this house. You could get a fifteen cent piece, twenty-five, thirty-five, whatever, and he'd fill up the ice box. And it was insulated. It kept your food cold, and it sat right in the dining room, always near the kitchen, because here's the kitchen here, and you step right in there to the dining room. And the table, what you call now, let me see what they called it. They don't call it sideboard now, what do they call it?

MAREA FOSTER: A buffet?

MRS. JONES: Yeah.

MAREA FOSTER: (laughter) I know, but you're right, it was a sideboard. Well now, Mrs. Jones, what about the streets, were the streets paved?

MRS. JONES: Paved, no.

MAREA FOSTER: Dirt?

MRS. JONES: Dirt, my father and I. P. Hatch and they were undertakers and we had a car. But we also had horses and we had a cow. I know how to milk a cow.

MAREA FOSTER: Oh, you do. You had fresh milk then.

MRS. JONES: Always. And if I tell Maola what they're putting in these bottles and cans now, they'd sue me. They'd put me in jail. Ain't a bit more milk, it ain't fitting to drink.

MAREA FOSTER: Not after you've had the real thing, fresh from the cow. (laughter)

MRS. JONES: I used to have to milk that cow. It's the funniest thing. Our cow was a Guernsey, Golden Guernsey, reddish brown. But Mr. Barber had a black and white.

MAREA FOSTER: A Jersey.

MRS. JONES: So I asked him, "Mr. Barber, does your black cow give white milk?"

MAREA FOSTER: (laughter) What did he say?

MRS. JONES: "Get on across that street there. I'm going to tell Simeon about you."

MAREA FOSTER: (laughter) He didn't like that joke, did he?

MRS. JONES: I didn't know. I didn't know whether the color of the milk was as of the cow. I didn't know. I asked a question. He finally told me.

MAREA FOSTER: He thought you were teasing him.

MRS. JONES: Well, no, he knew I wasn't no sassy child, 'cause he knew what I would have gotten had I did. But I asked him, "Mr. Barber, does your cow give white milk like ours?" "Get on across that street I. P. I'm going to tell Simeon on you." Tell me about both of them.

MAREA FOSTER: Do you remember when the streets were paved?

MRS. JONES: Yeah. I remember mostly when North Cool Avenue was paved, because that was one of the bad streets and they weren't going to pave it. I moved there 1941, and in 1959 I went to see if there were any taxes due on my property. I told the lady (Theresa Shipp - Register of Deeds) when I went there that the money wasn't flowing like it was in '59. I said, "Any taxes due, you may see Frances M. Hatch and Simeon C. Hatch, or you may see Simeon Hatch's heirs, or you may see Frances H. Jones, but it's on page 308. That's what my deed says." "Oh, just a minute, just a minute. No, Frances, there's no taxes due." I said, "i know because I didn't think there were.

I've been paying them." I'd pay half in June and half in December, so that when January come... I said, "You're sure now?" "I'm sure."

I said, "Well, you tell whoever if they don't pave my street, I'm going to sue the city. I've been in that spot thirty-nine years and

I'm tired of tearing up my good shoes on them oyster shells."

MAREA FOSTER: Oh, you had oyster shells for your street?

MRS. JONES: Yeah, they come there and scraped that mess up for you to walk on.

MAREA FOSTER: Fresh oyster shells?

MRS. JONES: No, honey, just put some dirt and push it from down yonder and push it back up.

MAREA FOSTER: But oyster shells mixed with the dirt?

MRS. JONES: Man come out from the Clerk of the Court's office, little further down, Theresa Ship was there. "What street you live on?" I said, "You're going to find out if you don't pave it." I was out the door.

MAREA FOSTER: (laughter)

MRS. JONES: Lee (Leander) Morgan was Mayor Pro-tem. He came and knocked on the door.

MAREA FOSTER: And asked you what you were fussing about?

MRS. JONES: I heard you had been down... "Ernell, is your mother here? My wife said she went to school with Ernell." I said, "They did, to West Street School." "Mrs. Jones, we're going to pave your street." I didn't know they was paving all over in Duffyfield because I keep busy. I don't try to tend to nobody's business but mine. I'm a noisy neighbor here. I'm a noisy neighbor for that one there because they're older than I am. They would teach and they're sick. I'm not sick. I call them. I'm a noisy neighbor. The Rhone sisters.

MAREA FOSTER: No, I call that being a good Samaritan.



MRS. JONES: I told them you could call it if you want, I'm the noisy neighbor. But anyway, when I get through telling this one and that one something, then I end up, if I find out they're all right, I'll say, "Now, Father, come out on the porch. Don't sit in there looking at them four walls. They won't say nothing and the T.V. don't talk back to you." Now, I've seen some people talk to the T.V., which is a little silly for me because the people don't hear what you're saying.

MAREA FOSTER: That's right. (laughter)

MRS. JONES: I mean, but you'll be sitting there. My daughter's forty-six, she talks to the T.V. I said, "Well, Shirley, it's time for you to go to bed, baby, because you've got it bad."

MAREA FOSTER: You're awfully lonely when you have to talk to the T.V.

MRS. JONES: Game shows on, and she can guess the puzzle. They got good heads, right? But I said, "Why are you getting so upset? The person's not listening to what you say. He can't hear you through that glass." Nothing but a tube. Anyway, she really gets into it and blanks out. I wouldn't even buy no cable. No, I've got a little black and white. I'm happy.

MAREA FOSTER: So you're happy with that. But you finally got your street paved?

MRS. JONES: Got my street paved. Morgan said, "Tell your other we're going to pave her street." And it was shortly after I put my foot down. I said, "It's not Jenkins Alley" Sewing room was something

else. Y'all cool people came from Baltimore and the man brought me some applications. He said, "You sew?" I said, "Sure, I can sew. You see all these girls I got? You think I can go to the store every day?" "Well, put your application, you know." I said, "Yes sir I understand. Give me some more." And he gave me about six applications.

MAREA FOSTER: Was this to work in the sewing room?

MRS. JONES: This was to work in the sewing room. They said they wasn't going to have no colored people in there, but colored people did go in there because I helped them fill out their...

MAREA FOSTER: What was the name of that sewing room? Was that Cohen-Goldman?

MRS. JONES: No, it was, had another name.

MAREA FOSTER: Oh, I can't think of the name right now.

MRS. JONES: But anyway, the man that tended to that lives up in Ghent by, you know Mrs. --oh Lord, I've been all up Spencer Avenue making yeast bread.

MAREA FOSTER: Oh, Mr. Posta.

MRS. JONES: Mr. Posta, this was his son. You're perfectly right, but I can't think of the name of the sewing room then. But after these other people came from Baltimore, and gave me these applications, they did have colored people working in there. Mr. Posta soon got out, and the man brought some of his crew down and they took over. But anyway, I didn't get a job in there but I got other people jobs in there.

MAREA FOSTER: Oh, I wish I could think of the name of that sewing

room but I just can't think. (North Cool Sewing Room).

MRS. JONES: Maybe it'll come to you. But it's still in the same...

MAREA FOSTER: Right, it's still there.

MRS. JONES: I lived one block from the plant. You know the big brick place where they tore down, said Pepsi Cola was made there, the Pepsi Cola place?

MAREA FOSTER: Yes.

MRS. JONES: Well, that's over Central School. My baby boy and my grandbaby were two of the first ones, the darkies that went to the...

MAREA FOSTER: Oh!

MRS. JONES: Yeah, the darkies. Said they weren't going to have no darkies in there. (laughter)

MAREA FOSTER: So now we're talking about school integration?

MRS. JONES: Get on back in school, and what's his name, Will Pittman's wife (Frances Harris Pittman - wife of Will Bishop Pittman)?

MAREA FOSTER: Frances.

MRS. JONES: I went in there and there's a roach that big. I said, "Jesus!"

MAREA FOSTER: (laughter)

MRS. JONES: "What's the matter?" I said, "Don't you see?" "Oh, get rid of it, oh!"

MAREA FOSTER: (laughter)

MRS. JONES: I was acting like I was scared to. When Frances Pittman saw me, she said, "Frances, what?" I said, "You didn't see that big roach?" Honest to God, he was that big. (laughter) With

the PTA. When I got through skipping in there, everybody was laughing.

I said, "Doesn't ask me where he went. And if this is where my children have to come, they got to come out here. They're libel to bring some of these bugs in my house. I don't have any bugs in my house." I was a clown. I was just messing.

MAREA FOSTER: Well, as far as you know, integration in the schools went okay?

MRS. JONES: Yes, it was fine. Dr. Patterson's baby girl and one of mine went to school together. Had the same teachers and the same room. Dr. Patterson said, "Frances, if any of your children ever go to school..." I said, "Oh, they're going. They're going to school somewhere. They're going to meet somewhere." "Well, I know one thing about it, there's not going to be any trouble." I said, "It better not be. It better not be. Don't I'll take care of business with you."

You understand what I'm saying? So then they had the sit-in, you know, Greensboro, where them boys went in the store? Had the people to come down here to tell the children about getting in the Freedom March.

MAREA FOSTER: They didn't participate in a Freedom March, did they?

MRS. JONES: Mine? No. I told Dr. Patterson there's other ways of participating without getting in the March. Because he said they told me when they come down Broad Street last night that those people in the Water's house, which was kind of a big house on the corner across from the bus station, said they poured hot water out the windows.

I say, "If they had poured any hot water on one of my darlings, I'd a been in hell this morning with my shoes on." Some of these children come, "Daddy, what's the matter with Frances?" "Nothing." "Yes it is because she said a bad word. We ain't never heard her say that."

(laughter) "Frances, is everything all right?" I said, "Everything is fine." "Daddy, you better give her a raise because we don't want Frances to leave." (laughter) Honestly, I'm telling you the truth.

I said, "Dr. Patterson, when they pass the collection plate in church, that's where I put mine in. But this standing out in the street at night, and my children can't do that because some trouble is coming."

If anybody hurts one of my children, he's going to have trouble with me. I'm going to take my gun and blow his fatal brains out." I'm like my uncle. I don't play. I'm either for you or against you. Now, I'm not for that, right? So if mine aren't in there, then they won't have us leg breaking and no pushing down. And I had girls. I had girls. No, indeed. I told him, "No sir." "Well, Frances, I'm glad." "No sir. No indeedy. They'd a poured any hot water, a drop of hot water, on one of my babies", I said, "I'd a been in hell this morning with my shoes on. (laughter)

MAREA FOSTER: I think my mother would have reacted that way.

MRS. JONES: That upset those Patterson children. "Daddy, what's the matter with Frances?" They'd never heard me say. I ain't joking.

That's what I'm telling you. I said, "Where would you be if somebody poured some hot water on yours, Dr. Patterson?" "Now, Frances." Ruth (Mrs. F. M. Simmons Patterson) said, "I don't know where he'd be, but

they'd have trouble with me." That's his wife. It's just the difference in the daddy and mama. See, the mama carries the baby, and that's her love. That's her body just transported over into another body. Are you getting it?

MAREA FOSTER: Yes mam'm.

MRS. JONES: 'Yes, Frances, cool down now. Let me fix you a cup of coffee." (laughter) Oh, honestly, I can sing "Amazing Grace - Through many days of toil and snare, I have already come. I can't go but no further. But it hadn't been for God's grace, I'd a been gone. I've been in it and out of it, but I thank God for Jesus because he goes with me everyday. Don't you think I don't pray and ask him neither. I don't even get up. I used to get up and stretch. I don't get up. I roll up. I roll down on my knees, and the 7th day of June I'll be seventy-six years old.

MAREA FOSTER: I think it's wonderful.

MRS. JONES: It's wonderful. I ain't playing. People are crazy. You have any prayers. Wasn't anybody there until about quarter past twelve today but me and Him, me and Jesus, and we had a good time, do you hear me?

MAREA FOSTER: This interview has been absolutely wonderful.

MRS. JONES: Thank you.

MAREA FOSTER: And I have appreciated it so much. The Memories of New Bern appreciates this. Your tape is going to be placed in the New Bern library where anyone can listen to it, any New Bernian or any out of towners. And we will, in the future, we hope in a couple

of years, be able to take some of the information and put it into book form. And you have really helped to bring this project alive for us, and you're going to make our book come alive.

MRS. JONES: I'm a New Bernian.

MAREA FOSTER: I know you are, southerner.

MRS. JONES: I started to put down that in 1960 I took a census, Howard Street, Pasteur Street, and Jenkins Alley. They ain't paid me a penny yet. These people going by here skipping people and paid them money.

MAREA FOSTER: (laughter) I agree with that. Well, our tape...

MRS. JONES: I ain't joking. Man come here three times had done left my daughter off, same house.

MAREA FOSTER: Our tape is just about out, so again on behalf of Memories of New Bern, I thank you very, very much. This has just been wonderful.

MRS. JONES: You're welcome. And I'm sorry, but when the Holy Spirit has got something within, it comes out.

MAREA FOSTER: I think it's beautiful. It's perfectly beautiful. And thank you again.

END OF INTERVIEW

