

MEMORIES OF NEW BERN

ELIZABETH TAYLOR HODGES  
(MRS. JAMES M. HODGES)

INTERVIEW 1050

This is Joseph Patterson representing the Memories of New Bern Committee. My number is 1000. I am interviewing Elizabeth Taylor Hodges (Mrs. James M. Hodges) at her home at 4511 Greenview Road in New Bern. The number of the interview is 1050. The date is April 14, 1993.

DR. PATTERSON: Well Lib, the tape is running now and while Fred is taking all these pictures around the house let's just you and I talk. I want to tell you I am very glad to be here and glad to be talking to you.

MRS. HODGES: Thank you, Joe Pat.

DR. PATTERSON: Just plain glad to see you again. Why don't we start with my asking you about where you were born and the date of your birth.

MRS. HODGES: Alright. I was born on National Avenue. I don't know the number. Right next to the Barden home on National Avenue.

DR. PATTERSON: The date?

MRS. HODGES: January 5, 1918. The big freeze when a car drove across the Neuse River in 1918 because it was either your daddy, Dr. Patterson or Dr. Jones who delivered me.

DR. PATTERSON: At home?

MRS. HODGES: At home. And to get daddy out of the way they sent daddy down to put some water on to boil and he got down to the dining room to push the door open to go into the kitchen and he couldn't open it. The pipes had burst and, so mother told me, water was all over the floor frozen thick.

DR. PATTERSON: Now Lib, let's just stop a minute and let me check. Was the house flooded, Lib? The whole house?

MRS. HODGES: No, it was just confined to the kitchen fortunately because that would have been a terrible mess.

DR. PATTERSON: But you said the river was frozen over then?

MRS. HODGES: That's the year that, that's what mother and daddy always told me, that was the year that someone drove the car...

DR. PATTERSON: Was it a Model-T Ford?

MRS. HODGES: Un-huh.

DR. PATTERSON: Across the river.

MRS. HODGES: Across the river.

DR. PATTERSON: Yep. Well, I think that's a true story. What's your full name, Lib?

MRS. HODGES: Mary Elizabeth Taylor. I was named for Mrs. Mary Dunn, Mary, and Elizabeth, I don't know where that came from. Oh, I do. It was my grandmother's name but she always told us her name was Alice E. Brinson. That was mother's mother. And she always said it was Alice Euphemia and records have proved she was not right. That when she was baptized she told the minister her name instead of Elizabeth, she told him it was Euphemia. (Laughter) Can you imagine swapping Elizabeth for Euphemia?

DR. PATTERSON: Lib, how about siblings?

MRS. HODGES: My sister Alice Iola named for both grandmothers, Iola for my daddy's mother was born in 1914.

DR. PATTERSON: And she now lives in Greensboro?

MRS. HODGES: Greensboro. She has two boys.

DR. PATTERSON: She married Bill Stanley?

MRS. HODGES: She married Bill Stanley. They have two boys, Bill, Jr. who is married and has four boys and John who said if he was married he couldn't come by to see me like he does. (Laughter) So I guess that's the way it is. Brother married Susan...

DR. PATTERSON: This is Jack, John R., Jr.

MRS. HODGES: John R. Taylor, Jr. He married Susan Slye of Massachusetts.

DR. PATTERSON: Is that S-L-Y-E?

MRS. HODGES: Un-huh. And they had two children, two girls. Sister had two boys and brother had two girls and I had one of each. Doris, I don't know what her middle name is, Doris Ann Taylor who married Joseph Horne and she has two girls. And Allie named for mother, Alice Land. Doris Ann is her middle name. Alice Land who married Richard Earlyewine.

DR. PATTERSON: That's alright. Lib, you have two children.

MRS. HODGES: I have two children. My Libby who was born in 1942 on my birthday, the best birthday present I ever had and incidently, your daddy delivered her. And well, he set the time for me to come into the hospital for me to deliver. She was Caesarean section. I said I can't, Dr. Patterson. He said why not. I said that's my birthday. He said well that's no reason to stop. (Laughter) So it was the nicest present I ever had. She has four children. She married Lindley White, III. Libby has four children, Elizabeth Land White, C.L. White,

IV, Ann Richmond White who graduates this year, 1993 from high school and then the baby named for my daddy, John Taylor White. My son, Jim Hodges, Jr. is a dentist here now but is not married. He is so good to me.

DR. PATTERSON: And your husband?

MRS. HODGES: My husband was James Marcus Hodges. And something unusual about that, he was born in Greensboro. My daddy's mother came from Seven Springs. But for some reason my grandfather Taylor and my grandmother Taylor went to La Grange to live for awhile. Maybe it was for her to be close to her family, I don't know. But anyway, my husband Jimmie's grandfather, Dr. James Marcus Hodges delivered my daddy. Isn't that something? That's real interesting. And he came from Greensboro to New Bern and I met him when I was in high school, last year in high school.

DR. PATTERSON: Do you spell that J-I-M-M-I-E? Not Y but IE?

MRS. HODGES: Un-huh. That's the way he always spelled it.

DR. PATTERSON: Now Jimmie died just recently.

MRS. HODGES: He died January 31, 1992. Not January, excuse me, July.

DR. PATTERSON: And Jack died?

MRS. HODGES: He died March 2, 1992. It's been a bad year.

DR. PATTERSON: Yeah. Libby, let's go back and talk about your parents a little bit. Now, did you say your mother and father came from Seven Springs or did I get that wrong?

MRS. HODGES: No, no. My daddy's mother came from Seven Springs.

No my mother was a native New Bernian.

DR. PATTERSON: What was her name?

MRS. HODGES: Her name was Alice Grace Land. Her father was James Kenneth Land and her mother was Alice Brinson Land.

DR. PATTERSON: Your father was John R. Taylor.

MRS. HODGES: John R. Taylor and daddy always used the R. because he never liked his middle name which incidently, he was named for a Methodist minister, Rose.

DR. PATTERSON: Rhodes?

MRS. HODGES: Rose. The flower, Rose.

DR. PATTERSON: Yes. Now where was your father from?

MRS. HODGES: Daddy was born in La Grange. His father was from New Bern, Elijah Taylor. And his father before him was John Taylor from here in New Bern.

DR. PATTERSON: Let's talk about your dad for a few minutes.

MRS. HODGES: I'd love to.

DR. PATTERSON: He was such a well known person in this town and so many people thought so much of him. He was outstanding and I remember him as a friend and I remember him as a great walker.

MRS. HODGES: Yes he did.

DR. PATTERSON: He used to love to walk. And my, he walked at a fast pace.

MRS. HODGES: He did. As one old colored man told my mother, said I declare, Captain Johnny walks like he owns the whole universe.

(Laughter)

DR. PATTERSON: Why don't you tell me the things about your father that you remember that are important to you.

MRS. HODGES: The important thing was my daddy was a loving man and he had great compassion. He loved his family. He loved his town and he loved the history of his town. But he had great compassion for individuals. Mother and all of us were amazed after daddy died. We found a book where he had given people money and they had never paid it back. He never asked for it. Just amazing. He always had his hand in his pocket. But he gave a lot of his time to his children and his church and to the community.

DR. PATTERSON: He was very active in the Historical Society.

MRS. HODGES: Well, the Historical Society which Mrs. Minette Duffy had organized many years back, I don't remember the date that she organized it, but it had died out. I guess the Depression had something to do with it. I don't know. But daddy reorganized it and I gave you the clippings about that. He reorganized it and was president for ten years. He retired in February of 1965 and he had reorganized it and had been the president of it for ten years when he retired. So that would make it, it was reorganized I would assume in January. They got started in January of 1955. Daddy used to love to visit Miss Mary Oliver and talk about old things that had taken place.

DR. PATTERSON: When she was living here in this house.

MRS. HODGES: When she was living in the Attmore-Oliver house. As sister told me that daddy and Miss Mary were very close but Miss Mary told him she was sorry to tell him he was no blood kin. (Laughter)

But anyway, that was a cute little old lady if I ever saw one. You know whenever anybody got married she'd go down to the jewelry store and ask them what their silver pattern was and they would tell her.

She said well I don't want that, I want something else. And she would always send a piece of silver in a different pattern from what the bride had selected. (Laughter) Oh, I love these little things that make up people. But daddy did love that history of New Bern and he wanted to preserve it.

DR. PATTERSON: Well he had a great deal to do with the preservation of the Attmore-Oliver house.

MRS. HODGES: That's right.

DR. PATTERSON: Tell that story.

MRS. HODGES: He put a lot of his time, his money, and his love in that. He spent a lot of time. I went around there with him one day after they had purchased it and they found a lot of old medicine bottles underneath the house. I can't remember who was with daddy.

It may have been Johnny Dunn. I can't remember. It may have been Mr. - came here to do the diggings for the Tryon Palace - Morley Williams. I think they decided that at one time the Attmore-Oliver house had been used as a hospital probably during the Civil War.

DR. PATTERSON: Wasn't there a great danger that the house was going to be torn down and your father saved it?

MRS. HODGES: Oh, I failed to tell you that. Thank you. Yes, daddy heard after Miss Mary died that the house went to her heirs who were the Husk boys in Fayetteville, North Carolina. And he heard it



was to be torn down for a parking lot and that really upset daddy because that's a beautiful old home. And he asked Johnny Dunn to go with him and they drove over to Fayetteville to the Husk family and negotiated with them to buy the Attmore-Oliver house with permission by the Historical Society. He had talked with them about it. And so that's why we have that lovely building today.

DR. PATTERSON: And this was bought with Historical Society funds?

MRS. HODGES: Donations, let's put it that way and borrowing money. They had all kinds of sales. They had bake sales. They had antique sales in the back yard of the Attmore-Oliver house, beautiful antiques and silver sales, anything to raise money to help pay for it. And a long time ago when they first started they used to have little afternoon teas where they served tea.

DR. PATTERSON: In the house?

MRS. HODGES: In the house, un-huh. And then I think they graduated to at Christmas time having a sherry party. That's as far as it went while daddy was president.

DR. PATTERSON: So your dad really, and Johnny Dunn, were the two who saved that house from destruction.

MRS. HODGES: That's right.

DR. PATTERSON: And it's been with the Historical Society ever since.

MRS. HODGES: That's right. And it's used now by many people as a place that they can have receptions or little parties.

DR. PATTERSON: What are some other activities that your father

was engaged in? I know he sold insurance and was very successful at that. But beyond that and the town, what sort of things did he do?

MRS. HODGES: Well, my father was named Tarheel of the Week in 1957. And he organized and was president of the New Bern Executive Club. And he served as chairman of the New Bern Board of Education for a number of years and prior to that served as just a member of the board. Then he later served on the Board of Trustees for the city schools. And he just, he loved New Bern.

DR. PATTERSON: He was a very well known person in this town.

MRS. HODGES: And he always stopped and visited with people while walking.

DR. PATTERSON: Did he have a certain path that he walked in town?

MRS. HODGES: Yes, he usually went down by the Attmore-Oliver house and down - no, he would come back that way. He would go down Metcalf Street and then walk down the old historic area and then come back up and go by the Attmore-Oliver house. He always liked to check it.

DR. PATTERSON: Your mother was active in affairs in town too.

MRS. HODGES: Yes she was at one time a member of the Garden Club and the Current Events Department in the Woman's Club. Mother was a member of the Methodist Church. Daddy was a member of the Broad Street Christian Church. But I think his mother before him was a member of the Episcopal Church and daddy had a leaning to that Episcopal Church. He loved that church. Mother worked in the Christian Church as one of the ladies. They put on a lot of meals over there.

DR. PATTERSON: Was she involved in the building of the Women's Clubhouse at Union Point?

MRS. HODGES: Not actively. It was more my age that did that, Genevieve's age. We got out, how many places I have been to solicit funds to put on benefits, benefit bridge parties and we'd ask them for donations of money or gifts that we could give as prizes. I was almost embarrassed to go out and solicit I had done it so much to build that building.

DR. PATTERSON: There's a lot of talk now, of course, about moving the Woman's Clubhouse to a different location at Union Point. How do you feel about that?

MRS. HODGES: Well, as my sister said every time she comes to New Bern she says they have moved something else again. Said why don't they leave the town like it was. (Laughter) That's such a lovely location I hate to see it moved.

DR. PATTERSON: So Charlie Kimbrell's efforts are approved by you then?

MRS. HODGES: Un-huh. I concur with that.

DR. PATTERSON: Let's go back to National Avenue where you were born. Did your family live in that location for quite a while?

MRS. HODGES: No, un-uh. I don't know how old I was when they moved to Metcalf Street. I must have been a little thing. I was living there when the great fire occurred.

DR. PATTERSON: On Metcalf Street?

MRS. HODGES: Un-huh.

DR. PATTERSON: Where on Metcalf Street was your place?

MRS. HODGES: In the 400 block. I lived at 410 right next to the Tolsons. That was daddy's house.

DR. PATTERSON: Now as you face the Tolson's house, were you on the right or the left?

MRS. HODGES: I was on the left. On the right was the Berry home. Remember Miss Ruth Berry, the teacher?

DR. PATTERSON: Yes.

MRS. HODGES: Well that was her home on their right.

DR. PATTERSON: As you face the house?

MRS. HODGES: As you face the Tolson home. And mother and daddy's house was on the left.

DR. PATTERSON: That's where Ben Jones lived.

MRS. HODGES: That's right. Mr. Ben Jones rented from daddy for years.

DR. PATTERSON: He rented that house?

MRS. HODGES: Un-huh. That was daddy's.

DR. PATTERSON: So how long did you all stay there, Lib?

MRS. HODGES: I was six years old. Mother had me a birthday party but she had it on Metcalf Street and then right after my birthday, two or three days, we moved to our house on Broad Street. So I grew up there.

DR. PATTERSON: On Metcalf Street I imagine you and Genevieve Tolson were quite close.

MRS. HODGES: Genevieve, Teresa...

DR. PATTERSON: Teresa Shipp.

MRS. HODGES: Teresa Shipp and Mary Brent Holland lived somewhere there because we were good friends. And Mary Brent and Frances Roberts. And I was just devastated when I couldn't go to school when they did. My birthday unfortunately fell in January and they all went to school a year ahead of me and I just felt like I was left out. (Laughter)

DR. PATTERSON: So everybody looked at you as a young person then, too young.

MRS. HODGES: Yeah, they continue to. (Laughter)

DR. PATTERSON: That was a happy time?

MRS. HODGES: Oh, Lord I loved growing up.

DR. PATTERSON: Who were some of your other neighbors on Metcalf Street?

MRS. HODGES: Across the street lived Mrs. John Smith and her sister, Mrs. Pigott. And she had three girls, Johnette Smith, Marie Smith who became Mrs. Grey and Johnette Smith married Red Taylor.

DR. PATTERSON: Red.

MRS. HODGES: Red, yeah, I can't think - he was in Chapel Hill. He worked at the hospital.

DR. PATTERSON: I worked with Johnette very closely in Chapel Hill in the outpatient surgery program and our friendship was renewed up there.

MRS. HODGES: Nice girl. Red, I can't think of his name. And then Katie Bell Smith, the oldest one, married a mighty nice boy and I can't remember his name. I knew him. And then El Ivey. Mrs. John

Smith, her name was Ella and so we all said El Ivey, just combined the two names. She married a boy over in Windsor. We all grew up together. We had a good time together. I don't believe there were any boys on that block. (Laughter)

DR. PATTERSON: Doesn't sound like it.

MRS. HODGES: To think of it.

DR. PATTERSON: When you moved to Broad Street did your father build that house?

MRS. HODGES: Yes, my daddy and my daddy's father, Elijah Taylor, was a contractor and he got the finest quality of everything to go in that house. That house was well built and my grandfather was quite an artist. He did the mantels in both the library and the living room and they are perfectly beautiful.

DR. PATTERSON: Now there's a house in town with his name attached to it, isn't there, the Elijah Taylor house? Am I wrong about that?

MRS. HODGES: No, un-uh. After mother's death we sold the house on Broad Street, 709 Broad Street, to a young couple from Phoenix, Arizona and they made a bed and breakfast out of it. They named it the New Berne House.

DR. PATTERSON: And filled it with ghost stories.

MRS. HODGES: Yes. Well, somebody said aren't you angry about it? I said no. If she believes that it's alright with me. There are no ghosts in that house.

DR. PATTERSON: At that time when the house was built was there vacant land all along there?

MRS. HODGES: No. Joe Pat you remember. There was a house that Mr. Ellison and his two boys and wife lived in. Hubert and Frank..

DR. PATTERSON: Charlie.

MRS. HODGES: And Charlie, Mr. Charlie Ellison. And then that house was sold to the hospital to be used as a nurse's headquarters. Then your daddy bought it I think or took it over for his office. Daddy bought it, who did he buy it from? It must have been from your father.

DR. PATTERSON: At that time there was just that one vacant place where ya'll built?

MRS. HODGES: Un-huh because on the other side of the house was where Mr. Henry Henderson lived and then on the corner was Mrs. Waldrop, Eula Waldrop. That was a dear friend of mother's. On the other side of mother and daddy's house, interesting enough the house where daddy bought, the block where daddy bought to build his house, used to be a Negro bank.

DR. PATTERSON: A what?

MRS. HODGES: Negro bank. And right next to it, Dr. Barker's house, was a Negro family's house a long time ago.

DR. PATTERSON: That had all changed by the time you all built?

MRS. HODGES: Oh, yeah. No Negroes on that block.

DR. PATTERSON: I had not heard that story. Who lived across the street from you?

MRS. HODGES: There were two big houses across the street next to the hospital. One belonged to the Parkers, Mr. Roy Parker. And

one belonged at that time to...

DR. PATTERSON: Nicky Simpson?

MRS. HODGES: No, not yet. These are two big houses I'm talking about. One belonged to, oh Lord knows, cut that off a minute and let me think. One belonged to Mr. Clyde Eby who was brother to Mrs. Ellison and also brother to Mr. Don Hanks. So they lived in that house until they built the house down, further on down Broad Street in the 200 block. Then that was later sold to become the tourist, I guess, place.

DR. PATTERSON: Mary Charles Maxwell and her husband bought it from the Elys.

MRS. HODGES: Right.

DR. PATTERSON: Now it's been moved down on Middle Street at the foot of Middle Street.

MRS. HODGES: Correct. I think it's a tourist center, isn't it?

DR. PATTERSON: Yes. The Chamber of Commerce was located there before it moved and I think maybe Weyerhauser has it now.

MRS. HODGES: And then next to them was Mr. and Mrs. and they had a son Ernest - Ernest and he and Dickie Duffy were very good friends and he became a doctor up at Chapel Hill.

DR. PATTERSON: Ernest Wood.

MRS. HODGES: Ernest Wood, thank you. I told you my mind doesn't remember everything.

DR. PATTERSON: So that's where the Wood family lived?

MRS. HODGES: The Wood family lived almost directly in front of us. They were closer down to the corner of us too.



DR. PATTERSON: Ernest Wood is one of the remarkable people to have grown up in New Bern. He became the first professor, first chairman of the Radiology Department at Chapel Hill. He was world renowned.

MRS. HODGES: Yeah, I saw him when I used to go up there. I carried his mother up there one or two times when I was going. He's moved away. I don't know where he's gone up north somewhere.

DR. PATTERSON: Well, Ernest died.

MRS. HODGES: Oh, I didn't know that.

DR. PATTERSON: Yes, he died many years ago. He went back to Columbia in New York and died there and now his wife Ruth moved back to Chapel Hill and she's been in Chapel Hill a long time and Ernest is buried at Chapel Hill.

MRS. HODGES: And then next to the Woods going west, next to the Woods was Mr. and Mrs. Willis, Rexford Willis' mother and father, Mr. Jack Willis.

DR. PATTERSON: Now did that house stand where Hardee's is located at present?

MRS. HODGES: Not quite, not quite. The Wood house was here and then the Willis house was there and our house was across the two of them. Those two faced it.

DR. PATTERSON: Across the street, un-huh.

MRS. HODGES: Then next to the Willis house was Miss Ethel Cook and Mr. and Mrs. Allie Cook lived there. They had a daughter named Elsie. Do you remember that? Then next to that house was Mr. and Mrs. Nelson. And they had several children - Ben and Edmund Nelson

and Sarah Nelson and Rosa Nelson and Eleanor Nelson and Alma Nelson.

They had four girls and I think it was two boys. Next to them was a Captain Davis. I can't remember his full name but that was a big house. That is more where, the Nelson house and the Cook house and all that takes up that whole block area right in there. Next to that was where my Uncle Herbert lived, H.K. Land. Then there was an empty house which was more rental. Then on the corner was Charlie, the dentist, Charlie Johnson's mother and father.

DR. PATTERSON: I think your memory is pretty remarkable, Lib. That's great.

MRS. HODGES: (Laughter) Well, it's better. I'm on prednisone and that adds to confusion and I have had a rough year so I guess I'm doing pretty good for my age.

DR. PATTERSON: Getting back to the corner across from St. Luke's where the Waldrops lived, they had two children, Grayson and Carolyn.

MRS. HODGES: That's correct.

DR. PATTERSON: I don't know if you saw this in the paper recently but there was a lady in Durham in I think a rest home whose clothing caught fire while lighting a cigarette, Carolyn Hinnant.

MRS. HODGES: That was she.

DR. PATTERSON: I think that must be who that was.

MRS. HODGES: That's exactly who it was. Was she killed?

DR. PATTERSON: I don't know. She was burned badly.

MRS. HODGES: She smoked.

DR. PATTERSON: You knew about that, didn't you?

MRS. HODGES: No, I didn't know about it. I hadn't seen her in so long. Neither one of them have been to New Bern in many years.

DR. PATTERSON: Yes but she was in the paper and we noted that which is a sad thing. Well, you stayed in the house on Broad Street then for most of your younger life.

MRS. HODGES: That's right. That's where I grew up and I had good friends.

DR. PATTERSON: Who were your friends there?

MRS. HODGES: Well, as I said on Metcalf Street I felt left out because I had to go the following year. The girls in my age group, my class, were Olier Jacobs and we still correspond. She lives down at Hilton Head now, Olier Coowee. And Mary Turner Willis who became Mary Turner Lane. And Sarah Nelson across the street. Now I have not kept in close contact with her. I see her every now and then.

Jane Gibbs Baskerville. Julia Bishop Smallwood and I can't remember her name. She moved away and we have not - Caroline Willis Wagner and we stay in touch with one another. Kathleen Stallings who married Mr. Orringer. I don't know, we had a good time.

DR. PATTERSON: Yeah, that was a nice crowd of folks. You went to school, of course, at Central School.

MRS. HODGES: Yes. I went to school at Central School to the primary building and I had a dear teacher, Miss Molly Heath. And I started school there in the first grade and I never was on time. Miss Molly always would send me to Mr. Smith to get permission to come into school because I was late. Why I couldn't get there on time, I don't

know. I think I stopped along the way and talked to everybody.

(Laughter)

DR. PATTERSON: Just like your daddy.

MRS. HODGES: Probably. (Laughter) I don't know.

DR. PATTERSON: So you walked to school?

MRS. HODGES: Oh, sure.

DR. PATTERSON: It was not a long walk.

MRS. HODGES: Un-uh.

DR. PATTERSON: And your folks didn't think anything about your crossing Broad Street.

MRS. HODGES: Heavens no!

DR. PATTERSON: This is a good time to ask you what Broad Street was like in those days.

MRS. HODGES: Oh, it was a beautiful old street. It was the widest street in New Bern but it had almost a canopy of trees. Down Broad Street they had beautiful old trees. In front of our house on Broad Street was a virgin oak and they cut it down. But it was diseased, it was decayed on the inside so I guess it was a good thing they cut it down but still it was so beautiful. Mother was out front one day when, this was some years later after the highway had been routed down that street and they had cut down all the trees, she said what in the world has happened to your beautiful little town? Said we just can't believe this destruction. But it was. It was a beautiful old street. But I guess that's progress.

DR. PATTERSON: Was Miss Molly Heath a nice lady?

MRS. HODGES: I loved her to death. She was so cute, just a dear lady. She told mother one day, she said I declare I don't know what I'm going to do with your Elizabeth. I think I have her seated and the next thing I know she's up over across the room talking to Helen Stevenson. (Laughter) Helen and I were real good friends.

DR. PATTERSON: And you went through school, through the eleventh grade.

MRS. HODGES: I went through the eleventh grade and then I went to Woman's College part of the University of North Carolina in Greensboro and I majored in music.

DR. PATTERSON: Lib, do you remember other teachers very well?

MRS. HODGES: Oh, yes, I surely do.

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

MRS. HODGES: Well, let's see, in second grade I had Miss Lizzie Hancock who was a dear little lady too.

DR. PATTERSON: A gentle lady.

MRS. HODGES: Very gentle. Then in the third grade I had Miss Ruth Berry. Miss Ruth Berry was a fine lady but she and I didn't always see eye to eye. She was very strict. (Laughter)

DR. PATTERSON: A little stern.

MRS. HODGES: Very stern. (Laughter) And in the fourth grade I had Miss Louise Bell whom I adored. And then in the fifth grade, oh, I had a teacher, she was a nice lady, Miss Ida Folk, but she was large.

DR. PATTERSON: Mrs. Ida who?

MRS. HODGES: Folk. F-O-L-K. She was a large lady and she had a habit of walking up and down the aisles and sitting on somebody's desk. This particular day she sat on my desk and it was awful. I got tickled because I heard it creak and I had a mental picture of her, that great big lady, sitting in my lap and I started laughing.

I think the class knew what I was laughing about because they all started laughing too. She sent me out of the room until I could get quiet. (Laughter) She came out one time to see if I wouldn't like to come back in because I'd think about it and I'd start laughing again and she came to the door and she said are you ready to come back in yet, have you stopped laughing? I said no ma'am and with that I started all over again. (Laughter) But I finally got back in later on but it was awful. It was rude of me. But I just couldn't help myself.

And then in the fifth grade...

DR. PATTERSON: Sixth grade.

MRS. HODGES: That was fifth. Sixth grade, who did I have? I don't believe I remember who I had in the sixth grade. Oh, I don't remember. Isn't that something. Now the seventh grade I remember because I thought that was just so grown up, I had four teachers; (Laughter) Miss Lanta Winslow whom I was crazy about and Miss Masie Bookhart and one I thought was the prettiest teacher, it was her first year was Margaret Willis. She married Guion Willis and it was her first year teaching. And I told her not too long ago, I said Margaret I thought you were the prettiest thing when I had you and she was an excellent teacher and remained that way all of her teaching career.

Just a great teacher.

DR. PATTERSON: There was one other one.

MRS. HODGES: Yes and she was a local lady and I can't think right now what her name was.

DR. PATTERSON: Pretty good, three out of four though. You did very well.

MRS. HODGES: She was a local girl. Naomi, was it Naomi, no. I can't remember. I just can't.

DR. PATTERSON: Then on up?

MRS. HODGES: On up I had Miss Blanche Rowe my first year in high school English and she never called me anything except Alice. She pronounced sister's name Ahlice and she called me Alice. (Laughter) I went through her classes as Alice. But yes, I had mighty good teachers.

DR. PATTERSON: How about your high school teachers?

MRS. HODGES: Miss Blanche Rowe was freshman English. And I had Mr. Henry Whitehurst for history one year and he was a dear man.

DR. PATTERSON: Was he an enjoyable teacher?

MRS. HODGES: Yes but he kind of rambled. But he was a dear man. I know he left me in charge one time of class while he went out and talked with people and questioned them about, we were all required to read The Tale of Two Cities and he was questioning them individually outside the room to see what they remembered if they'd read it I guess. And Piggy Smith, I don't know whether you remember him or not.

DR. PATTERSON: I remember Piggy.

MRS. HODGES: Piggy asked me if he could go out and I said no Piggy, you heard Mr. Whitehurst. Everybody was to stay in. Well the next thing I knew he had a fire going in his pants pocket. (Laughter)

I had to let him go out to get some water to put it out. More than one way to skin a cat, wasn't it? But, yeah I enjoyed high school.

DR. PATTERSON: And you went to what was then called Woman's College in Greensboro. And you majored in music.

MRS. HODGES: I majored in music.

DR. PATTERSON: What facet of music?

MRS. HODGES: I majored in voice. I took piano. Incidentally, I played Rachmaninov's Prelude in C-Sharp Minor at high school graduation my senior year. I had Mrs. Abernathy as a teacher and I thought daddy and mother wanted me to major in music so that's what I did. Daddy said no, honey, I just thought maybe you might like to take it on the side. But I majored in music and I enjoyed every bit of it. It was hard work.

DR. PATTERSON: Does that stick with you still? Do you play the piano?



MRS. HODGES: No, I don't play the piano. I broke my hand. Joe Pat you remember it. I twisted it and I just can't get my hand open wide. And my eyes are bad. I can't see and it's real frustrating.

DR. PATTERSON: But you were singing also?

MRS. HODGES: Yeah. I majored in voice.

DR. PATTERSON: Did you do a lot of singing in high school?

MRS. HODGES: In the Glee Club. I didn't do solo work but I did solo work with my daddy. I mean he and I used to sing duets together a lot at Broad Street Christian Church because I grew up in that church. And I sang in the adult choir from the time I was thirteen. Yeah, I did a lot of singing. And Mrs. Mary Whitehurst, bless her heart, who was organist at Centenary Methodist Church, she had a group of us girls - Helen was one of them, Helen Stevenson, Dorothy Poole and I and Liza Mitchell. And we used to do a lot of singing together.

DR. PATTERSON: I remember Helen had quite a good voice.

MRS. HODGES: Yes, she did.

DR. PATTERSON: She used to sing with some of the bands that would play at the dances.

MRS. HODGES: Un-huh. And I took toe dancing from Frances Perry for a number of years. I used to be rolled out in a carriage when I was little by some of the older crowd, Louis and Peyton Foy and other girls would roll out to see Louis Foy and those girls (Adelaide) and I'd come in with pennies in my hand and mother would say, where did you get that money. And the boys down there at, I guess it was Bradham's Drugstore where the Williams Cafe is, was that Bradham's Drugstore?

DR. PATTERSON: Yes.

MRS. HODGES: They used to give me pennies for me to get out of the carriage and do the shimmy. (Laughter) Can you believe that? And my daddy said you are not to do that anymore. Oh I loved dancing! I was wearing out all of my shoes trying to dance on my toes so finally one year daddy went to New York and brought me back a pair of black kid dance shoes, toe dance shoes. I was so thrilled.

DR. PATTERSON: Now Frances Perry married Fred Hussey.

MRS. HODGES: Correct.

DR. PATTERSON: What was her school like and where was it located?

MRS. HODGES: It was on Middle Street right across from the First Citizen's Bank at that time. And Kafer Bakery. It was upstairs. I think Mr. Moore later had an office there.

DR. PATTERSON: Excuse me, when you say First Citizen's Bank that's the old bank where the Bank of the Arts is now.

MRS. HODGES: Right.

DR. PATTERSON: Right across the street from there.

MRS. HODGES: Right. Yes, I enjoyed it. We used to do a lot of exhibition dancing. I used to do dances during intermission down here at the country club. Frances would put on programs and Billy Arthur, I noticed that you had mentioned him, he used to sing and he had a powerful voice. He had a great voice. He used to sing at those.

DR. PATTERSON: So Frances Perry's dance studio was across from the bank?

MRS. HODGES: Un-huh.

DR. PATTERSON: Who were some of the other folks taking lessons with you?

MRS. HODGES: Helen took tap, Helen Stevenson.

DR. PATTERSON: And you were taking tap?

MRS. HODGES: No, no. I took toe, ballet.

DR. PATTERSON: That's right.

MRS. HODGES: I'm not a tap dancer. I like to ballet. I can't remember. Dorothy Poole, un-uh, Dorothy Sanderlin.

DR. PATTERSON: Was Frances a good teacher?

MRS. HODGES: Excellent. She would go up to New York and get the dances and we'd work them out together as I got older.

DR. PATTERSON: She was quite a small lady.

MRS. HODGES: Very small. She had two daughters, Frances and Pat. I've had a right interesting career, come to think about it.

DR. PATTERSON: You have. You were developing it more and more.

MRS. HODGES: After I graduated from college I was offered a job. I loved French. I went with my daddy one time up to Quebec City and he had to go to meetings and so he said "Now, Baby, you stay in the room or go sit in the lobby and some of those ladies with the convention will check on you." And I said "Well Daddy, I like to stay in the room because I like to read." And I also liked to talk to the chamber maids who came around to fix the rooms, clean up the rooms and straighten them up. And I got interested in French. I loved French. And so I had, Miss Laura Roberts was my Latin teacher and then Rexford Willis' wife, Jane was my French teacher. I had two years of French here in

the local schools. Then when I went to college I wanted to take four years of French to get a minor. That would give me six years of French.

And I was not allowed to my last year. I had to take German to get that guttural pronunciation for my voice recital. And the first job I was offered was at a girl's school, private school teaching voice and French if I'd had my minor and I didn't have it. So I couldn't do it. So I had minored in public school music and then I was offered a job in Wingate teaching public school music in the public schools and my pay would be thirty dollars a month. I want you to listen to this. My room was free but my board bill would be twenty-seven dollars a month and if I wanted to teach after school hours that money would be mine and my daddy said no, not with the cost of what your education was are you going to work for that. So I came home and took a two month commercial course, typing and shorthand from Mrs. Woods right across the street, private lessons and I went to work for my daddy down at his insurance office. The girl who had to stop was Elizabeth Chagaris who married Pete Chagaris and she was expecting her first child. So Elizabeth helped me out. She wrote down and put the signs in shorthand for a lot of terminology that daddy used in dictation and that helped me so much and he also had a dictaphone which was a big help to me. And daddy would put the letters on the dictaphone.

I worked there.

DR. PATTERSON: Now where was this office located?

MRS. HODGES: At that time daddy's office was in the Hughes Building which was at the corner of Middle and Pollock.

DR. PATTERSON: Upstairs.

MRS. HODGES: Upstairs and daddy had the corner room, had the corner offices upstairs.

DR. PATTERSON: I remember going up there and talking insurance with him.

MRS. HODGES: In fact, that's where his office was located the year that President Truman came here and we all went up there and leaned out the window so we could see and we did. But going back, you know I think you have to do what you have to do. After my children started going to school I didn't have...

DR. PATTERSON: Lib, you were talking about your children leaving home and you were going back to school as a part-time teacher. Now, had you been working with your father all that time?

MRS. HODGES: Un-huh.

DR. PATTERSON: Even after you were married?

MRS. HODGES: No, no. I didn't work with daddy after I got married. I started a family.

DR. PATTERSON: When were you married?

MRS. HODGES: I was married in 1941.

DR. PATTERSON: So you stopped work then?

MRS. HODGES: That's right. And Mr. Bill Flowers was principal down at Central School, the school downtown, it's all gone now. I can't believe it. Anyway, he used me a lot as a substitute teacher.

I'd go to a woman's meeting and he would call me down at the hotel - I need you, can you come. So finally one day Mrs. Eloise Flowers

whose husband had cancer, terminal cancer, and he said I'd like to count on you to be her substitute because she has to be out so much.

Rather, Mrs. Flowers asked me that. And I said well, I could do that.

DR. PATTERSON: What was this teaching?

MRS. HODGES: Seventh grade. See when you get a music teacher's certification you are certified to teach either in elementary or high school level. So I was alright but my teacher's certificate had expired but as far as a substitute, that was alright. So I taught for her all that year as she needed me and then Mr. Flowers called me and he said Mrs. Hodges, she wants to stop at the end of January. He said would you take over her place? I said Mr. Flowers, I don't have a teaching certificate. He said well, that's no problem, we can get one, you can get one. Well, in order to get one you have to have, at that time you had to have six semester hours of credits. So I told him alright. So I was allowed to teach the seventh grade because I was familiar with all the children and that was the year that Glen Dunn and Shirley Wheeler and I can't remember all the children who were there, Jenny Hollister were in that class. But my daddy who was chairman of the school board at that time he said I sure hate to write your check, you're the lowest paid of all the teachers in the whole system, city school system. And it was pitifully low but I enjoyed it and I learned. I took courses and got my certification up so the next year I was alright. But I did love teaching the seventh grade.

The children came in as little boys and girls and went out as ladies and gentlemen. They matured.

DR. PATTERSON: How long did you teach, Lib?

MRS. HODGES: I taught seventh grade for ten years and then I heard that Mrs. Tucker who was a public school music teacher was leaving. She was to be married. So I went to her and I said now I'm not trying to take your job but I heard you were going to leave. She said I am. I said well, I just wanted to get permission to apply for your job. She said go right ahead. I said well I'm going right now.

So I went and talked to Mr. McDonald and he said well you've got the job. And I never will forget the first class I taught at Eleanor Marshall School which is no longer again. It used to be in Ghent.

It was named for Miss Eleanor Marshall who was principal out there for many a year. And I walked into the principal's office who was Miss Eudora Spencer and she said Elizabeth, I want to tell you, when they asked me who was going to be the music teacher I told them you were. They said what does she know about it? (Laughter) I was scared to death teaching there but that was a wonderful group to work with.

I enjoyed it. In fact, I enjoy music. As it turned out, I didn't plan it that way, but that was the year of total integration and the seventh grade teacher said you got out at the right time. It is unbelievable. But you know I never had any problems with discipline.

DR. PATTERSON: Were you actually there when the integration started?

MRS. HODGES: Yeah, I sure was.

DR. PATTERSON: So you had blacks and whites then for the first time together?

MRS. HODGES: No, I had - I said this was total integration the year I started teaching music. But I had had blacks in my class, one or two in my class and never any problems.

DR. PATTERSON: You said you had no problems with the total integration part?

MRS. HODGES: In teaching music.

DR. PATTERSON: Did children get along alright?

MRS. HODGES: Yeah because they all liked music, especially the blacks. I never will forget one little boy down at Central School.

I had a rhythm band and I had them play on the beat with their rhythm instruments. And this little boy, every time he would syncopate he would look at me and wink like I know I'm not doing it right but I can't help myself (Laughter) and I didn't say a word to him because it was perfectly natural for him.

DR. PATTERSON: How old were these children?

MRS. HODGES: That was first grade then, that class was.

DR. PATTERSON: Did you teach all different grades?

MRS. HODGES: I taught grades one through six and special ed. And I loved the special ed. The first year I had them it was real frustrating because I couldn't get close to them because they had been used to Mrs. Tucker. But after they found out I wasn't going to hurt them they were the dearest children. I can hear them right now. I taught in a trailer at Central and they would count so loudly you could hardly hear the music for their counting. (Laughter) One, two, one, two, one, two, three, four, whatever. But they loved it and one little



girl later when I went there one day she said Mrs. Hodges, when you're not here teaching I'm the music teacher. She learned to play the auto harp and that was just great. I was just really thrilled at how well she did.

DR. PATTERSON: And so how high up with the students did you go with this music teaching?

MRS. HODGES: Sixth grade.

DR. PATTERSON: And when integration came there was no problem? The children just...

MRS. HODGES: Not with music, un-uh, not with music because they related to it.

DR. PATTERSON: Were there problems in other areas of the school?

MRS. HODGES: Un-huh.

DR. PATTERSON: This was at Central or Eleanor Marshall.

MRS. HODGES: This was all schools. I taught six first primary schools, Marshall, Riverside, Oaks Road, Trent Park, Bangert. What have I left out - Central - Central I guess. I taught six and then with the integration the schools just changed all around and Blonza Rich and I taught the elementary program.

DR. PATTERSON: What do you remember about difficulties in other areas with integration in the schools? What was it like?

MRS. HODGES: Well, every now and then I had one - when I taught seventh grade we did what we called team teaching. I taught the language arts and history which was the bulk. Believe you me, twice a day. And you would teach a high level group and a lower level group. And

the problem with the whites in the lower sections, they would write on the black board "nigger" or they would write Ku Klux Klan every now and then. And that would just really burn me up because those children didn't deserve that. So I just didn't allow it.

DR. PATTERSON: In classes that you didn't teach, do you remember problems that occurred?

MRS. HODGES: Yes, one time a black teacher, Mrs. Bundy, who I thought a great deal of out at Oaks Road School told me one day, I wasn't there, I didn't see it but she told me one day that a child threw a stapler at her across the room, threw a stapler.

DR. PATTERSON: Was there trouble in the high schools?

MRS. HODGES: I think there was some and I can't remember the principal who went there. He was a black man. He nipped that in the bud. He knew how to handle that.

DR. PATTERSON: Lib, when did you stop teaching?

MRS. HODGES: I believe it was 1977. Yes it was 1977.

DR. PATTERSON: While we are talking about integration, let me just ask you what you remember about the way things used to be between blacks and whites when you were growing up in New Bern.

MRS. HODGES: Well, you know I never thought about blacks and whites when I was growing up. We were people. Mother had a little colored lady as a wash woman who asked mother if she would take her grandchild and keep him around at her house during the day to do odd jobs and things like that just to keep him off the streets, old Aunt Caroline. So mother brought James Becton, he was. I'm glad you asked

me this because he was a right interesting boy. James Becton to come and to be out in the yard playing with brother because brother was so much younger than I. Brother was five years younger than I. James was brother's I guess you'd call nurse until brother resented it. (Laughter) He didn't want a nurse. So mother tried to get James to work in the yard. Well, he just couldn't work in the yard. He didn't know how to do anything in the yard. So mother brought him in the house and he loved to dust and run the vacuum. And I swannee, if you'd see him running the vacuum, you'd walk in and see him running the vacuum, you would have laughed too. He was as much like "Step'n Fetchit" as anything in this world. He'd be trucking along and just singing with that vacuum going not knowing a soul was around him. (Laughter) He was right funny. But anyway, James was my age and he and I had sat a many a time at the kitchen table getting our homework together. No, I didn't think anything about it. And I'll tell you the truth, one time out at the Oaks Road School a young somebody broke into the school and I had a music box that I carried around, a great big apple box that I had reinforced with the top and the bottom together because I had a lot of things in there and also the case that my auto harp was in. And they did not take my auto harp but they took the case and all the crackers they could get from the machines and scattered my music all over everywhere. Morehead who was a janitor there and he also was a colored minister came in and he said Mrs. Hodges, I know exactly who did this. I said you do? He said yes ma'am. He said I know exactly who did it. The police came out and everything. He

said let me tell you something Mrs. Hodges, don't you ever go into Dodge City. I said where is Dodge City, I've never heard of it. He said up there around Duffy Field School. I said, "Well Morehead, I've gone there all my life. Mother used to have a woman work for her, Ruth Hatch, who lived up there in that area. And as a music teacher getting the children ready for the North Carolina Symphony I would go up to Duffy Field School to work with the children to get them prepared because I would lead them at the program." I never thought anything about it. And I'd go up there and all these little colored children hey, Mrs. Hodges! I never thought a thing about the danger.

But he said, "Please, Mrs. Hodges, don't ever go up into Dodge City, not anymore.

DR. PATTERSON: He didn't say anymore than that?

MRS. HODGES: That's all he said.

DR. PATTERSON: Did you ever go back?

MRS. HODGES: Yeah, I had to in teaching. I had to go to Duffy Field School.

DR. PATTERSON: Was there much trouble in New Bern during those days of integration and the Martin Luther King tragedy?

MRS. HODGES: Frankly Joe Pat, I've heard so much about it, as far as I know we didn't have the trouble that other places had. We all, of course we all had trouble. Bangert School was, the first year it opened they had a lot, I wouldn't say a lot, they had several black teachers out there and I taught there when they first opened at Bangert School and I loved that school. But yes, there was some trouble.

They went in a brand new school and vandalized it and it happened to be two girls from nice families.

DR. PATTERSON: Two girls from what?

MRS. HODGES: Nice.

DR. PATTERSON: White families?

MRS. HODGES: White families, yes, that did it.

DR. PATTERSON: They vandalized the school?

MRS. HODGES: Un-huh. That was in retaliation for being given a black teacher. It was the first they ever had. They did it wrong, Joe Pat. If they had started the first year integrating in the first grade and then the next year in the second grade I don't think they would have had any problems at all. But they did it in mass so it just didn't work at first. But no, I didn't have any problems.

DR. PATTERSON: Lib, I said earlier that you had a chance to look over this list of topics that we've put together and that maybe a good way to go would be just to ask you to speak about some of the things that you particularly remember. So why don't we do that.

MRS. HODGES: Alright. You know I told you about the Tabernacle Church.

DR. PATTERSON: Tell me about it again.

MRS. HODGES: I see that you did have it down here. February of 1931, that was my first year in high school. At that time parents allowed their daughters, believe it or not, to walk the streets - maybe I'd better rephrase that - to go to the theater walking with other girls. And we would go and after seeing the movie, the first movie,

we would go to somebody's home and have a drink and crackers or cookies or whatever and socialize a little while. This particular night we went to the Masonic Theater and I came out and the whole heavens were ablaze with this fire and it looked in the direction of where my home was at 709 Broad Street. At that time it was 119 Broad Street. I didn't even wait for the other girls. I just ran ahead across the school green and went down Metcalf Street and then I saw that it was the Tabernacle Baptist Church. But it was destroyed. Then another time...

DR. PATTERSON: May I just interrupt you a minute? Mr. Hodges was the pastor there then?

MRS. HODGES: Mr. Joseph Hodges.

DR. PATTERSON: No relation to your family?

MRS. HODGES: No relation. He had a son named Joseph Lorenzo. I remember that.

DR. PATTERSON: And the fire, how did it start?

MRS. HODGES: I don't know.

DR. PATTERSON: But when you saw it the whole building was...?

MRS. HODGES: Oh, it was just almost in shambles then.

DR. PATTERSON: Was St. Luke's Hospital threatened?

MRS. HODGES: I don't think so because that was a concrete building, not concrete.

DR. PATTERSON: Brick.

MRS. HODGES: Brick, un-huh, a brick building and I don't think so. But speaking of the hospital, you know Joe Pat, your daddy and

Dr. R.D.V. Jones had it built. That was their hospital and I loved that hospital. I remember mama and daddy if anything happened to one of us they would also say is Dr. Jones or Patterson in? And whichever one was in would come over. They did that then. They'd come over.

I remember one time when I was in high school I was taking a French test. I guess it was an exam, I don't know. But anyway, I had the worst pains in my stomach. I thought I was going to die. But I was taking that test and I had to finish. So when I finished and walked home my stomach hurt me so badly I didn't know what to do and I went home and told mama my stomach hurts and she called. Is Dr. Jones or Dr. Patterson there? I believe Dr. Jones came. I think he operated.

No, it wasn't. It was your daddy. He came and he said she's got to have an operation right now and your daddy took out my appendix and as soon as he got it out it burst. I guess walking home is what did the damage. But I was lucky that it burst after it was taken out.

Another time when I was in the hospital Dr. Jones, there had been a terrible wreck. If you remember Mary Maderia - she and Bill Lane were in a bad automobile accident. Well that particular night there was a lot of commotion in the hospital and Dr. Jones came up to my room at nine o'clock at night and he said Honey, he said, I just wanted to let you know everything is alright. You go on to sleep. It's nothing wrong bad happening. You just go on to sleep. I thought that was so caring.

DR. PATTERSON: Lib, before we get away from the fire situation, let me ask you about the fire of 1922 if you have memories of that

fire.

MRS. HODGES: I do remember. See I was born in 1918. I just remember that we all got out on the sidewalk. Daddy was out of town.

I guess he had gone to the ballgame like so many people there. Living at 410 Metcalf that was not too far as the crow flies from where the fire was. I think daddy wanted to take us somewhere when he got home but he got the hose and wet the house down real well. And I guess somebody else had done it while daddy was gone. I can't remember.

But I do remember that and I remember after the fire we were riding up there to see it, it was a pure tent city. It really destroyed that area.

DR. PATTERSON: But the houses along Broad Street were not bothered?

MRS. HODGES: I wasn't at Broad Street then. I was on Metcalf. No they were not. Not any of them in the 400 or the 500 block which would have been even closer.

DR. PATTERSON: I'm skipping around with you but getting back...

MRS. HODGES: Well, that's the way my mind goes so we'll get along fine.

DR. PATTERSON: Getting back to the hospital for just a minute, what was St. Luke's Hospital like in those days that you are talking about?

MRS. HODGES: It was great. It was a good, caring hospital. They had a teaching nursing program there and they had fine nurses that came through that program.



DR. PATTERSON: Do you remember some of them?

MRS. HODGES: Sure. One of them was Annie Humphrey, Jean Harris, Penny Kafer. The nursing program was right next door to our house on Broad Street.

DR. PATTERSON: The nurses lived there?

MRS. HODGES: Un-huh. That's where they lived. And then Thelma Lewis was a lab technician. They all lived there, well not all of them. Teenie Burnette when she got out I asked your daddy if he would give an interview to Teenie about getting a job there and he did and she did. I can't remember all the teachers but they were just wonderful, wonderful nurses. And then when your daddy sold it to the Catholics that was another good, caring facility. My Libby, my daughter, you operated on her for appendicitis and I never will forget it. There was no place for her in the hospital so she was put in the maternity ward and she was in high school. (Laughter) It struck her funny. But Sister Aloysius was one of the nurses there and she was so dear to Libby. She would come in and just chat with her you know and tried to make her feel at ease being in the hospital.

DR. PATTERSON: Who were some of the other doctors you remember in those early days? Do you remember Dr. Latham?

MRS. HODGES: Dr. Latham, sure I do remember him. In fact, Dr. Latham gave me shots that up at Duke they had made a culture of Dr. Banks Anderson had to have a scraping of my eye right after Jimmy was born because my eye was bloodshot all the time. Dr. Latham gave me the vaccine culture. Let's see, Dr. Latham, Dr. Barker used it. Dr.

Wadsworth, Harvey Wadsworth and of course Dr. Richard Duffy. And I think a little bit later Charles Duffy used it. Let me see, have I left any?

DR. PATTERSON: Dr. Bender?

MRS. HODGES: Oh my Lord, the baby doctor, oh yes.

DR. PATTERSON: You remember him?

MRS. HODGES: Yes I do remember him. In fact, Nettie Cox said the other day said Elizabeth, I think about you would ask that doctor all the time when was Libby ever going to lose her stomach? (Laughter) She had the biggest tummy when she was little but she hasn't had any stomach in so long. Now she's so thin.

DR. PATTERSON: Did the student nurses who lived next to you raise a lot of ruckus in that nursing home?

MRS. HODGES: No.

DR. PATTERSON: They were quiet people?

MRS. HODGES: Well, I wouldn't say they were quiet but they were young. They were mighty nice girls. I enjoyed them.

DR. PATTERSON: Well you go right ahead with your own memories.

MRS. HODGES: Now, I told you that I had been trying to get some information and I don't have that, the dates. There was a beautiful old wooden church on the block, I'm trying to think which block that would be. Probably the 300 block, yeah, the 300 block of Hancock Street where Miss Lelia and Inez Styron, well in that area there was a Christian church.

DR. PATTERSON: Where Miss Lelia Styron lived? Next to that or

in that area?

MRS. HODGES: In that general area because I don't remember it but I heard mama and daddy talk about it. But it was destroyed by fire one night. And so then they built the Broad Street Christian Church and that was a beautiful site for it because it was a hill.

And you know they cut the hill down to build it. They did. It was a hill there.

DR. PATTERSON: Was it a high hill?

MRS. HODGES: No, but it was just I guess you would say...

DR. PATTERSON: Well anything that has a curve to it is a hill in New Bern.

MRS. HODGES: Well I guess a hammock, is that the right word?

DR. PATTERSON: Hummock.

MRS. HODGES: Hummock. But they did, they cut it down, yeah. I remember, you asked me about the hospital, I remember one time I was at a Easter egg hunt at the Broad Street Christian Church and I had something wrong with my finger. This one. It was puffed, so swollen so badly and daddy came and got me and carried me to the hospital and Dr. R.D.V. Jones took a knife without deadening it or anything in this world and split it open and I had a bone felon. I had to go back three times for him to do that to get all of that inflammation out of my finger.

DR. PATTERSON: That's a very painful thing.

MRS. HODGES: Boy, that really was. But they were very caring people in that hospital. And then later on after the church was built,

the second Christian church in the city, Mrs. Verona Jackson Ziegler who was head of the primary department always put on a Christmas program.

And this particular year I would say it was probably about, I was probably about ten years old and that would make it about 1928. Now I'm just guessing at the date. But the theme of the program was the Christianity around the world. My brother who was five years younger than I which would make him about five or six years old, he was to be an Eskimo and mother had made him a little Eskimo suit out of white flannel and trimmed it with cotton batting to represent white fur.

The altar was draped with the cotton flannel and on the floor was the cotton batting to represent snow. Each child from the different countries that they represented dressed up in the costumes held a lighted candle to show that Christianity was lighted around the world.

And I remember that being a Red Cross nurse I was right at the front of the pulpit.

DR. PATTERSON: You were impersonating a Red Cross nurse?

MRS. HODGES: Un-huh, yes, thank you. And during a prayer, they were closing, during a prayer - the church was packed, they had even put chairs in the aisles - during a prayer I saw Dr. Barker, I heard this commotion and I opened my eyes and peeped and I saw Dr. Barker, Dr. C.S. Barker running up the church aisle taking off his coat. I thought what is the matter with him. Then I saw people's expressions on their faces was one of just, they were just real upset, worried, aghast is the word. I looked around and there was my brother enveloped in flames. Absolutely enveloped in flames. And I passed out. It

frightened me so badly I passed out and fell down. Because the floors were alighted, flames. The walls were covered with flames and the children up there. So they did a wonderful job with all that crowd there of getting the children out. And somebody, I don't know who it was, got me out and put me down in the basement and I got out. And we stood - I didn't know whether my brother was alright or not.

This was before Christmas and Christmas day we didn't know whether he was going to live or die.

DR. PATTERSON: Was he kept in New Bern in the hospital?

MRS. HODGES: He was at home but he had a bad, bad time.

DR. PATTERSON: Yes, it sounds like a terrible time.

MRS. HODGES: It was a bad experience.

DR. PATTERSON: But he came out alright?

MRS. HODGES: Thank the Lord.

DR. PATTERSON: Okay, what else do you remember, Lib, that you want to talk about?

MRS. HODGES: Well, as Jimmie used to say, alright Uncle Herbert because when I talk I ramble. (Laughter) My Uncle Herbert was long winded too and he could ramble. Nothing except my childhood was so happy. It seems like especially in high school so many nights mama would be in the kitchen at ten or eleven o'clock at night making lemonade and cookies for the young crowd that had gathered there. We had a screen side porch and the young crowd just gathered there and we had a good time together. We played cards and had fun.

DR. PATTERSON: Libby, when you grew up, Tryon Palace was

nonexistent.

MRS. HODGES: Oh, yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: What do you remember about that area?

MRS. HODGES: I do remember what is now the Stable was an apartment complex and it was not very desirable. It was run down. Anyway, yes, I knew families that lived there because George Street of course was open down that direction. That was the 200 block of George Street.

DR. PATTERSON: Right to the bridge.

MRS. HODGES: Right to the bridge.

DR. PATTERSON: Did a lot of traffic go through there?

MRS. HODGES: Oh, yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: I guess they had to, didn't they?

MRS. HODGES: And like I said it was just dilapidated. I remember when Morley, Mr. Morley Williams came here, he and his wife and two boys. He had two boys. One was Libby's age and one was younger. Daddy was so interested. I have pictures of daddy and in fact, John Green has compiled those in his book that he put out of daddy with Mr. Morley Williams looking at the excavations. Oh, he was so vitally interested in it.

DR. PATTERSON: Did you use to play down there?

MRS. HODGES: Oh, I played at Sheila Nelson's. She's one of my good friends and I failed to mention her a minute ago. Sheila Nelson who married Bob Darden.

DR. PATTERSON: First married Albert Bell.

MRS. HODGES: First married Albert Bell and had two boys. We

played mostly in Helen's yard because she had the bigger yard. I remember Mr. Stevenson used to bring these great big packing boxes out there and we would have the best time making that into a house.

(Laughter) That's the trouble with children today. They haven't learned to be creative. That's right. Everything's bought for them, all fixed for them. They don't have time to be creative. But yeah, we had good times.

DR. PATTERSON: Did you all, your crowd, go to Morehead a lot?

MRS. HODGES: Un-huh, when I was in high school. Each one would give a quarter and buy five gallons of gas to go down there. And we'd take a lunch. This was in high school when Jimmy Poinyer had his band at State College and we'd always carry extra in case one of the boys wanted something to eat. (Laughter) We had a good time.

DR. PATTERSON: You'd drive down on the old road?

MRS. HODGES: On the old road.

DR. PATTERSON: What was that like, the old road?

MRS. HODGES: Well, you know at Havelock there was a terrible turn, real sharp turn there at Havelock. Because one of the first times I ever dated Jimmie we went by there and he was just going too fast and I found out later if I said anything that made him go faster so I would keep quiet.

DR. PATTERSON: Was it a slow trip down there? Was the road bad, narrow?

MRS. HODGES: I don't really remember. Like I said, Havelock, I remember that because it stood out because Jimmie and I went around

it so fast one time.

DR. PATTERSON: When you got to Morehead was there a bridge across to the beach then?

MRS. HODGES: When I was in high school, right. But when I was a child now we'd go down there and we'd have to take a boat over to the beach and walk a wooden path to the bathhouse.

DR. PATTERSON: You would still drive down in a car though when you were a child?

MRS. HODGES: That's right. No, I never did go down on a train. Now, mama said she did. She and daddy said they did when they were little.

DR. PATTERSON: Did you all do a lot of dancing when you grew up, go to a lot of dances?

MRS. HODGES: Yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: In town?

MRS. HODGES: Un-huh.

DR. PATTERSON: Where did you dance?

MRS. HODGES: Well, you know we had dances down at the Women's Club that we as the Young Women's Club put on, raised the funds to build that. We had dances out at the country club. Cotillions, don't you remember those, Joe Pat?

DR. PATTERSON: Un-huh.

MRS. HODGES: The Zeus is one that I remember but I can't remember the others. There were several different cotillions here. Yeah, I had a good life.



DR. PATTERSON: Did you dance at Morehead?

MRS. HODGES: Yes, we did.

DR. PATTERSON: Atlantic Hotel?

MRS. HODGES: Yes. In fact, I did, some of us did solo dancing down there.

DR. PATTERSON: When you were in dancing school?

MRS. HODGES: Un-huh. Frances had a - what was that dear little lady, Mrs. Duffy, grey hair, short. What was her name, Joe Pat? Do you remember Mrs. Duffy?

DR. PATTERSON: Lila?

MRS. HODGES: No. I can't remember but she almost reigned supreme down there at the old hotel, the Atlantic Hotel. Do you remember the Atlantic Hotel that burned?

DR. PATTERSON: Yes.

MRS. HODGES: Well, before then she was always down there. It must have been Charlotte's grandmother. I think it had to be. But she was such a dear little lady. I thought she was just wonderful.

DR. PATTERSON: That goes back quite a ways.

MRS. HODGES: Yeah, well I do too. (Laughter)

DR. PATTERSON: You used to go to Virginia Beach some too.

MRS. HODGES: Yes I did.

DR. PATTERSON: I remember one summer we were there together.

MRS. HODGES: Un-huh. Your mother and daddy and the Stevensons had a cottage and Helen invited me up for a week and while I was there I had the grandest time. Mr. Stevenson lost his teeth. Do you remember

that? (Laughter)

DR. PATTERSON: Yes.

MRS. HODGES: One day your mother asked me if I would have applesauce or something else. I said applesauce. She said well you sassy little thing! (Laughter) I always remembered that. She was just playing with me but I always remembered that. Yeah, I had a good time down there. There was a fun place that everything was zigzag.

You felt like you were turning over when you walked in there. I can remember that. Do you remember that?

DR. PATTERSON: Yes. It was a place, an amusement park up at the far end.

MRS. HODGES: You know Helen couldn't stay in the sun long because she came down and stayed with us, we had a cottage down at Morehead, and she came and stayed. Mother said Helen, she was fair and I was brunette, mother said Helen, honey don't stay in that sun long now.

You have to get out and get in the shade. But Helen didn't and I declare she had the worst blisters on her shoulders that afternoon when she came in. They were awful.

DR. PATTERSON: Did your crowd go out on the river very much in New Bern?

MRS. HODGES: No, frankly I really didn't. Mother and daddy always had me in by ten o'clock. I never will forget one time I went with Billy Hand and Jane Gibbs and some others out on his sailboat and I didn't get in at ten o'clock because the wind died down. (Laughter)

So I really didn't go out on the water much.

DR. PATTERSON: The country club was important to you growing up.

MRS. HODGES: Un-huh. I loved the country club. Helen and I would fix a picnic lunch and Dewey Horne used to bring us out here. And we'd have money to get us a drink and we'd play tennis. We did not go in swimming then because we were instructed not to. There were no lifeguards and you could only go in the river and Trent River was deep. But we had a good time. We'd always bring a candy bar and a sandwich and buy a drink out there and play tennis. And then in the afternoon we'd start walking and somebody would pick us up. (Laughter)

DR. PATTERSON: Just start walking home?

MRS. HODGES: Un-huh.

DR. PATTERSON: And your folks didn't worry about that?

MRS. HODGES: Un-uh.

DR. PATTERSON: And if somebody picked you up it was alright?

MRS. HODGES: It was alright. I never will forget one time when I was grown I was walking down George Street where the John Wright Stanley Building is now. At that time it was Kenneth Jones' general area of Kenneth Jones' filling station and this man's voice said may I give you a lift? And I didn't say a word. I just kept walking and didn't even turn around. May I give you a lift? I just kept right on walking. Finally he said Elizabeth, this is Curt Bagg, can I give you a lift? (Laughter) I turned around and said oh, Mr. Bagg, I didn't know who it was. He got a big kick out of that.

DR. PATTERSON: When you played tennis out at the club where were

the tennis courts located?

MRS. HODGES: Where the parking lot is. We had a small parking lot and it was behind the parking lot going toward the road.

DR. PATTERSON: As you stood on the porch of the country club looking out toward the golf course it was dead ahead a little to the right.

MRS. HODGES: That's correct. You know, you've been out there a many a time.

DR. PATTERSON: Two clay courts.

MRS. HODGES: Two clay courts. That was it.

DR. PATTERSON: Everybody used them.

MRS. HODGES: You had to take turns. That's why it was an all day process.

DR. PATTERSON: There was no swimming pool. Swimming was in the river.

MRS. HODGES: One time Jimmie and I went out there and went swimming. This was when I started going with him. I didn't start dating him really until I started college, just before I started college. We went out there and they had a boathouse. Not a boathouse, they had a pavilion sort of over the water with a raft floating out.

We'd swim out and dive - I didn't dive in but I would get in the water and swim out to the raft and then we would swim away from it. This particular time Jimmie and I were swimming down towards what is now the yacht club because Mr. Hodges had a boat out there in a boathouse.

We were swimming down there and all of a sudden Jimmie said Lib, swim

back to the raft. Go back fast. An alligator had flipped his tail and hit Jimmie with his tail and he never went back in the water.

DR. PATTERSON: Did he see the alligator?

MRS. HODGES: Yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: Was it a big one?

MRS. HODGES: He said it was a good size. So we went back.

DR. PATTERSON: You know I've never seen an alligator out there. That's amazing.

MRS. HODGES: Well he did.

DR. PATTERSON: What was the Depression like in New Bern?

MRS. HODGES: Oh, while I was at Virginia Beach my daddy gave me fifty cents a week. Now that to me was a lot of money. And Hugh Mills had come to town and he was working at the bank on Pollock Street.

I can't remember the name of the bank. But oh, he was the best looking man.

DR. PATTERSON: Hugh Mills?

MRS. HODGES: Hugh Mills. And so every week I'd save a quarter out of my spending allowance and as soon as I got a dollar I would take it down and put it in the bank in my savings account. So that summer that I went, that had to be about 1929 or 1930, I went down to the beach to Virginia Beach with Helen. Libby Hanks went and so did Nettie Pinnix Cox go up with Eleanor. We went up there and got a letter from sister and it said the banks failed and got your money. Don't you wish you'd spent it like I did? Ha, ha, ha! (Laughter) Sister always had a bright side to everything. But when I came home

I said to daddy I said well I lost my money. He said no, baby you didn't lose it. I pulled it out. He didn't pull it out but he gave me the equivalent of it. So not to discourage me from saving. And I guess that did because I always have tried to save.

DR. PATTERSON: Was it a tough time in New Bern?

MRS. HODGES: Yes, it was. We learned how to dryclean our own clothes. Sister and I. Sister went to college and she went in 1931 and sister had a big pan and I can't remember the solution. It must have been kerosene or gasoline that she dipped her clothes in. Yes, she did. And got them all clean to go off to school.

DR. PATTERSON: Was your father's business hurt pretty bad by all this?

MRS. HODGES: Well, if it was, like I said Joe Pat, I've never been a spend thrift. I've always been conservative. But I didn't see any great difference. I know one time the people in the neighborhood called daddy and said Johnny, what is this I hear about you haven't got the money to pay your taxes? Daddy said what are you talking about? He said well Jackie's around selling an innertube that he's cut up into rubber bands trying to make money for you to pay your taxes. (Laughter) How many children would do that?

DR. PATTERSON: Lib, were you living in New Bern during World War II?

MRS. HODGES: Yeah. Yes, I was because the first I heard about it was down at the Centenary Methodist Church at candlelight service, the attack on Pearl Harbor. That's when I first heard about it.

DR. PATTERSON: This was late in the afternoon?

MRS. HODGES: Un-huh, about five o'clock in the afternoon.

DR. PATTERSON: I was listening in Boston to a radio at that time too.

MRS. HODGES: Well, somebody came in church and told it and it just kind of spread like wildfire. Robert Conderman, a good friend of mine that went through class with me, he came here from Virginia and he was a Marine and he was killed at Wake Island. He was strafed running to the plane.

DR. PATTERSON: On Pearl Harbor day.

MRS. HODGES: Un-huh.

DR. PATTERSON: Yes, I remember Robert Conderman very well.

MRS. HODGES: He was a good boy.

DR. PATTERSON: During the war was New Bern a changed place?

MRS. HODGES: Oh, yes, yes. There was no place for people to live, all this influx of people in there. Mother rented out some rooms and I remember one day a young man came to the door and he said to my mother, "the Chamber of Commerce sent us up here to see if she had a room that my wife and I could use". His name was Bill Mann and he was one nice boy. And his wife was Barbara and they were from the Boston, Massachusetts area. Mother came to the door and later Bill told me, he said I almost died. Said your mother looks so much like my mother I couldn't believe it. She gave them a room. And that was one nice, dear couple if I ever saw one. We were friends for a long time.

DR. PATTERSON: Were people all over town doing that?

MRS. HODGES: Yeah. They surely did. In fact, daddy had an upstairs apartment built over the garage for people and rented that. Now I was married then and Jimmie was in service and I was living at home with mother and daddy. Jimmie was over in the south Pacific. Libby as a little thing would sit on mother's screened back porch in her high chair and watch Mr. Mack Wayne work on building that house. He could do it all by himself. And she would call out, " Wayne don't fall down!" She was so afraid he was going to fall off the ladder. (Laughter)

DR. PATTERSON: We were talking about World War II in New Bern and how busy this town was.

MRS. HODGES: Oh, yes it was. I remember Tyrone Power came here. Do you remember?

DR. PATTERSON: Yes, I heard something about that.

MRS. HODGES: He came here to dance at the Armory.

DR. PATTERSON: To dance at the Armory?

MRS. HODGES: Not to dance, to a dance. That was a drawing card for people to come, see, to raise funds for the war effort.

DR. PATTERSON: Was he stationed at Cherry Point?

MRS. HODGES: He was at Cherry Point. And he was a very gracious man but he was a small man. I'm short in height and he was too. But he was just as handsome as he looked on screen. Yes I remember that very vividly.

DR. PATTERSON: Was there a lot of train activity to and from



Cherry Point?

MRS. HODGES: Yeah. In fact, sister's husband, Bill Stanley, was in the Merchant Marines. I believe he was in the Merchant Marines and sister carried him to the train station and he said let me have Libby and his boy, Billy and he gave them a train ride from the train station to Riverside. You know we met them up there in the car to get the children off the train.

DR. PATTERSON: Was there much worry then about air attacks in New Bern?

MRS. HODGES: I don't think so. I don't think we worried about that.

DR. PATTERSON: The rivers were under some protection because of possible bridge sabotage. Do you remember anything about that?

MRS. HODGES: No. You know girls lived kind of a protected life and people don't discuss things like that so I don't remember that.

DR. PATTERSON: Jimmy was in the Pacific. Where all did he go?

MRS. HODGES: He went to Saipan, Tinian and his last place was Marcus Island.

DR. PATTERSON: Was he with the Marines or Army?

MRS. HODGES: Jimmy was with the CB's.

DR. PATTERSON: CB's, in the Navy?

MRS. HODGES: Un-huh, construction.

DR. PATTERSON: They were very welcomed people. I was out there too.

MRS. HODGES: That portrait up there over the mantle, Joe Pat,

was done by a friend of his whose father was a famous artist from the Chicago area. That was done on just a piece of canvas the boy found there, just regular paint. Not artist paint but regular paint.

DR. PATTERSON: Libby, you said something earlier and this goes back to your childhood days, I'd like to ask you about that. You said your mother made you all your clothes.

MRS. HODGES: Un-huh, until I got a certain age and then the Lipman's Store would call. The man was down there with his samples which were small sizes and mama would get my clothes there because I was a peculiar size. They had to be taken in here and let out there.

They didn't have petite sizes then. And trying to wear regular when you're not built along that line is not easy. So yeah, mama made my clothes.

DR. PATTERSON: Did she make Jack's clothes too?

MRS. HODGES: She made some of his.

DR. PATTERSON: Where was Lipman's store located?

MRS. HODGES: Lipman's store was in the 200 block.

DR. PATTERSON: Is it where those two vacant lots are now?

MRS. HODGES: Part of it. It was really three buildings all thrown together, three different sections thrown together and it was a good department store. You could get most anything you wanted there.

DR. PATTERSON: What were some other stores that were important to you all?

MRS. HODGES: Coplon-Smith was a good store. And of course Belk's has always been a good store. Mr. Ted Kennedy ran a good store.

DR. PATTERSON: Were there restaurants downtown that you all used to go to?

MRS. HODGES: Funny you should ask that. Daddy when he would come home often didn't want what mother had prepared. So he said just put it in the refrigerator, Allie, and let's go out. We ate out a lot. Mrs. Albro, something like that had a little cafe in the 300, no, in the 200 block of Middle Street along about where that shoe store is right now. I can't think of the name of it.

DR. PATTERSON: Bailey's?

MRS. HODGES: Un-huh. Along about there. Albro, Mrs. Albro, and she had a good restaurant. And I remember we went there a lot. And then, of course, Dennis Paaffe had a cafe on Pollock Street. We ate there a lot. And I remember one night we were sitting in there having supper...

DR. PATTERSON: That's the Central Cafe.

MRS. HODGES: Yeah. I remember sitting there. Mr. Stevenson was in there that night and the lights went out. Mr. Stevenson struck a match and stood up and said everybody take a light. (Laughter) Just real, you know, neighborly, friendly people. Had a good time. And then Billy Arthur ate there most every night and Burke Taylor and his wife and their little daughter, Frances, who is today a large lady ate there. I remember one night Billy Arthur was sitting there eating and when the Taylors left I could hear Frances to this day saying Billy, why don't you come play with me sometime?

(Laughter) I worked one summer as a society reporter at the Tribune

Sun Journal, at the Tribune newspaper and Billy was an editor down there or reporter. I can't remember what his official capacity was.

I can see him right now. He had his typewriter up there on the table and he had a box. He'd jump up on that box and then put his hand on the chair and swing himself up on that chair and his hands absolutely flew over keyboard.

DR. PATTERSON: I can see Billy Arthur doing that.

MRS. HODGES: Yessir.

DR. PATTERSON: Where was the Tribune office?

MRS. HODGES: It was on Pollock Street. Un-uh, it was on Craven Street. Do you remember where Mr. Shapou used to have that hamburger stand?

DR. PATTERSON: Un-huh.

MRS. HODGES: It was somewhere down near there.

DR. PATTERSON: That's where Claire's restaurant, Fred and Claire's.

MRS. HODGES: Fred and Claire's, un-huh. I believe that's probably where it was. No, Fred and Claire's was where Mr. Shapou had his hamburger place. Well, it was in that general area. Right now I can't think because I remember that Federal Alley used to be which is now El Mex, there were some girls that lived down there upstairs. One of them was about your age. I said something to Genevieve the other day about those girls. I said I can't remember them but I remember - she said Lib, you're right. The name is gone right now.

It'll come back to me because I could remember the last name. (Stingers

was the family name.)

DR. PATTERSON: Now when the Tribune was in operation the Sun Journal was also in operation.

MRS. HODGES: We had two papers a day. The Tribune was a morning paper. And Teresa Shipp was the society reporter but she was invited to go down to Atlanta, Georgia with Parkhill Jarvis and his wife for a visit and she asked me if I would work for her. In fact, I was the society reporter when Frances Perry and Fred Hussey got married. I enjoyed that.

DR. PATTERSON: Did the Tribune stay in operation a number of years?

MRS. HODGES: Yeah, they stayed, I don't know the exact the length. But yeah, it was here for a good little while.

DR. PATTERSON: Wasn't Nathan Gooding involved in that too?

MRS. HODGES: Yeah, he was. I guess he was the editor.

DR. PATTERSON: Billy might have been editor one time too.

MRS. HODGES: No, I guess Billy - but Billy Arthur when Frances Perry used to put on her dance pageants, dance reviews, Billy Arthur always sang and he could really sing.

DR. PATTERSON: Did Frances put on a show every year?

MRS. HODGES: Yeah, at the Masonic Theater. And do you remember, Joe Pat, when they used to have these traveling theatrical groups that would come to New Bern and put on shows in the Kehoe? Well it is now the Kehoe, before that it was the Show Shop. We got in for ten cents. I don't know about you. Daddy had stock in it.

DR. PATTERSON: Were these musical shows?

MRS. HODGES: Un-huh. Really good programs.

DR. PATTERSON: The theater had box seats then didn't it?

MRS. HODGES: That's right. And I remember, you used to go to the show with Helen and me and if it was a mystery or a cowboy you'd take your little gun (Laughter) and protect Helen and me.

DR. PATTERSON: I'd still do it.

MRS. HODGES: Oh, Lord that was a long time ago. I can't believe it. I can't believe I'm this old. I don't feel it, do you?

DR. PATTERSON: No, no, no. I certainly don't feel very old. Well, it looks like we've covered a lot of things, Libby. Are there other things on that list that we haven't talked about?

MRS. HODGES: Well, I guess you've talked with people about Babe Ruth. I never will forget when he came here.

DR. PATTERSON: What do you remember about that?

MRS. HODGES: The big crowd on the school green and how gracious and nice he was signing things. Now, I want to say one thing about the John Wright Stanly House. When it was moved from where it was originally, moved back onto New Street, it was converted into two apartments upstairs and the downstairs was the library. I used to take my seventh grade children over there to the library and there was the most gorgeous grand piano in the back hall. The wood was rosewood and the keys were made out of mother of pearl. Perfectly gorgeous. Where it has gone to, I have no earthly idea.

DR. PATTERSON: It came with the house?

MRS. HODGES: Yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: I have no idea either.

MRS. HODGES: Somebody said it was probably stored at the Palace or somewhere. But it's such a beautiful piece I don't know why they don't have it on display. Just gorgeous.

Let me see, Joe Pat, oh you've got down there about Mr. Gib Waters' automobile. I remember that well because he used to, he lived one block up from us.

DR. PATTERSON: Did he have a shop there?

MRS. HODGES: Yeah. He lived in the corner house and he had a little shop next door to it right across from the Broad Street Christian Church.

DR. PATTERSON: Did he spend all his time building automobiles? What all did he do?

MRS. HODGES: I don't know what he did. All I knew was he was in that shop so I guess he was in there working on that...(Laughter)

DR. PATTERSON: Making cars.

MRS. HODGES: Making cars. But he sure rode around town in it. And somewhere I read about the gypsies here in New Bern. I remember those well because they camped sometimes out here on the country club road, Pembroke Road. And I remember that well. I was really afraid of them.

DR. PATTERSON: They would sleep out there and put up tents or did they sleep in the open?

MRS. HODGES: They slept out there. And there was something I

wanted to tell you about, Joe Pat, and I just thought of it. When the first planes came here to New Bern, sister went up in one of those first planes. Like sister said, don't you wish you'd have spent your money like I did? Sister has a good sense of humor and she enjoys life. Yeah, she went in one of those planes and took a plane ride.

And that was when they were landing out here off of country club road along about where the apartment complex is.

DR. PATTERSON: Now I'm not quite sure where that is, Lib.

MRS. HODGES: When you're going into town that would be on your left. One time it was a filling station there, past Sloan Springs and down past the entrance to the country club hills. There was all that vast field there and that's where the planes came in.

DR. PATTERSON: As you were going out to the country club it would be on your left or on your right?

MRS. HODGES: As you were coming out it would be on your right.

DR. PATTERSON: As you came out from New Bern to the country club it would be on the right, is that what you're saying?

MRS. HODGES: As you came from New Bern it would be on the right, correct. One time Jimmie said his daddy went out there with Mr. Eagle and they put on a show. Somebody jumped out of a plane and parachuted down. And Mr. Hodges said what in the world would a person do such a thing as that? It turned out that was his son, Jimmie. (Laughter)

Jimmie was paid to jump out of the plane and did it. Yeah, he liked life too. He liked to do things and was a dare devil.

DR. PATTERSON: I don't remember that at all, those planes out



there.

MRS. HODGES: They came. They sure did. I remember it.

DR. PATTERSON: Was there a hanger out there or just an empty field?

MRS. HODGES: No, just an empty field. I think that sister and Sarah Meadows both took a plane ride. I hadn't seen that in there anywhere about that, the planes there.

DR. PATTERSON: Well, this is the first I've heard about that.

MRS. HODGES: It was interesting.

DR. PATTERSON: Un-huh.

MRS. HODGES: I've never been the dare devil. Sister was that for the rest of the family.

DR. PATTERSON: In this list of things are there other items that make you remember or in the topic list?

MRS. HODGES: Oh, yeah I remember basketball out at the old casino.

DR. PATTERSON: The Ghent Casino?

MRS. HODGES: Un-huh, basketball. Miss Ruth Owens was a basketball coach. She wouldn't let me play. She said Honey, you run with your tongue hanging out. I'm so afraid you're going to bite it off. (Laughter) So she wouldn't let me play anymore.

DR. PATTERSON: The girls played a lot of basketball out there, didn't they?

MRS. HODGES: Yeah. Annabel Laughinghouse Mason and Kathleen Stallings Orringer, they were great players.

DR. PATTERSON: Eleanor Stevenson.

MRS. HODGES: Yeah but Eleanor was ahead of me. I liked to play but I was not a good player. I was a guard. I was short. I think we've pretty well covered it.

DR. PATTERSON: Let me ask you one other thing and then maybe that would be a good time to stop. I'm going to ask you a couple of things. First, let me ask you about hurricanes in New Bern.

MRS. HODGES: Oh, I'm glad you did. Back in I believe it was 1933 when they had that real bad hurricane. I never will forget, Harry Faulkner and Callie Newman and Elmer Lansche came up home. I was living on Broad Street. I was in high school. And they wanted me to go out with them and go down to the river and see how the water was down there.

And daddy said no. And Callie or Elmer said well you know, there are tin roofs blowing all around. (Laughter) Daddy said no, she's not going. But yes, I can tell you something about the hurricanes.

At one time I think it was, we moved over at Sandy Point in 1949 and it was when Ione, there were three hurricanes in a row that hit New Bern.

DR. PATTERSON: In the fifties?

MRS. HODGES: In the fifties. It came in our house and lapped the ceiling in my daughter's room and broke up our furniture.

DR. PATTERSON: So your house was almost completely under water then?

MRS. HODGES: Un-huh. We had dead fish in our house. It broke out the window panes. Dead fish came in.

DR. PATTERSON: Were you trapped there or did you get out?

MRS. HODGES: I wasn't there. I was at mother's and daddy's. I took the children and went there. Jimmie was out of town and I thought I had packed everything with the first one in our garage and closed the garage door. I think that's where I got that bursitis, pulling on that door to get it down. Jimmie came in the next day. No he didn't, he came in that night and I could not sleep because of this pain in my arm and Simmons looked after me and he said, he tried to give me shots and I would faint. And so he put me in the hospital and packed it with ice. Then he X-rayed it and he said it was completely calcified so he had to operate. But I couldn't do any work is what I'm trying to say. Libby said mother, you just went in there to try to get out of doing the work. (Laughter) I said I reckon so.

DR. PATTERSON: She didn't know, did she?

MRS. HODGES: But yes, it was three times that year and it did a lot of damage to a lot of people. The Red Cross came in and tried to help people.

DR. PATTERSON: Sandy Point was in a...

MRS. HODGES: Well, that was a dredged-in situation. Mr. Hodges and Mr. Eagle, Raymond Eagle, and I believe Libby Ward was in on that and somebody else. Who is the head of, I can't think, of First Citizen's? Who is the head of that? I think they were all in on that, pumping that work in. And Mr. J.T. Harris sold the lots and I know Mr. Hodges asked us at that time if we would like to have a lot there or where would we like to have a lot. You know I hated to ask for

a lot somewhere else when he had those lots. So we went over there and built our house. After it was really, I won't say destroyed because it was a concrete block house, but after it was messed up so I felt like well, if I don't go back in people will think that I'm afraid to live over there. So as soon as we could get the house aired out and buy some more furniture I went back and I lived there. And it was delightful in the summer. I opened the windows and you'd have to put pictures down flat on the table and put the lamps down on the floor so they wouldn't get blown over the wind was so strong. But in the winter it was kind of lonely, especially with Jimmie away. He was away all our married life except on weekends.

DR. PATTERSON: You lived there quite awhile?

MRS. HODGES: Un-huh. I lived there from, let's see, we moved in 1949 and we moved into this house in 1959. And we didn't sell the house. Daddy bought it from us so we could get this house started, helping us out.

DR. PATTERSON: All that land had been pumped in from the dredges?

MRS. HODGES: That's correct. Mr. Hodges had the dredges.

DR. PATTERSON: Libby, the final thing I wanted to ask you about is about churches. Churches have meant a great deal to you in your lifetime in New Bern.

MRS. HODGES: Yeah, when I was a little girl, as I said, I adored Mrs. Verona Ziegler. I was thirteen years old and she asked me if I would teach a class and I taught children nine years old. And I was active in the, I sang in the adult choir from that time with daddy.

We did a lot of duets.

DR. PATTERSON: This was which church?

MRS. HODGES: Broad Street Christian. And then after I got married Jimmie was Presbyterian so we had to be unified so we went to the Methodist. Mama was a member of Centenary Methodist Church so we went to Centenary Methodist Church. And I sang in the choir then.

DR. PATTERSON: Have the churches responded in New Bern pretty well to times of trial like hurricanes and disasters?

MRS. HODGES: Oh, yes, very much so. And I think, you know all, I guess, I say all churches, I assume all churches but most churches have on the first of the month what is put down at the altar at communion service goes to the RCS and I think that's wonderful. Besides they have boxes for receiving food and whatever. And I noticed in our church the other night they have a box for you to bring medical supplies, not medical supplies, bath towels and toothbrushes and things like that for the people of these distressed countries.

DR. PATTERSON: Are you glad that you've been a part of this town?

MRS. HODGES: I love this town. I've lived here all my life except for a year I was down at New River. Jimmie was building the roads into the New River before it became the base and I lived down there then.

DR. PATTERSON: That must have been quite a time.

MRS. HODGES: Yes, it was.

DR. PATTERSON: Pretty rugged?

MRS. HODGES: Yeah because we only had one car and I was home

with the baby.

DR. PATTERSON: And there was no base there at all.

MRS. HODGES: No base.

DR. PATTERSON: Just the early beginning.

MRS. HODGES: Once a week, several of us we'd go to New Bern to buy groceries. I would drive once, took turns driving. We'd come up to New Bern to buy our groceries.

DR. PATTERSON: There was no place down there to?

MRS. HODGES: Yes, but it was highway robbery. I wasn't allowed because Jimmie was not in service. He was construction and I wasn't allowed to buy from the base.

DR. PATTERSON: So you saw that New River Camp Lejune situation in the very beginning?

MRS. HODGES: Yeah, sure did.

DR. PATTERSON: You were there a year?

MRS. HODGES: Little over a year.

DR. PATTERSON: Well Libby, this has been a fun...

MRS. HODGES: Well, I hope I haven't bored you.

DR. PATTERSON: You certainly have not.

MRS. HODGES: All I need is an audience.

DR. PATTERSON: You've told me a lot of things that are going to be important to us and I thank you for letting us come out here.

MRS. HODGES: Well, I appreciate you coming out because I did want it on record about my daddy, his work.

DR. PATTERSON: Well, that's important but what you have told

me about yourself and what you've done, that's important too. So I thank you and the program thanks you.

MRS. HODGES: Oh well, I'm glad to do it.

DR. PATTERSON: And I'll cut this off now Lib.

END OF INTERVIEW