

MEMORIES OF NEW BERN

A. FRANKLIN HAMMOND, M. D.

INTERVIEW 1007

This is Dr. Joseph Patterson representing the Memories of New Bern Committee. My number is 1000. I am interviewing Dr. A. Franklin Hammond, Jr. at his home at 1514 Trent Boulevard in New Bern. The number of the interview is 1007. The date is August 25, 1992.

DR. PATTERSON: Well, Frank, we're recording now and we'll start out by my just talking to you, or you talking to me, about your life story. I wonder if you will first tell me the date of your birth and where you were born?

DR. HAMMOND: Yes, the 11th of August 1908, Pollocksville, North Carolina.

DR. PATTERSON: Your family had lived in Pollocksville for some time?

DR. HAMMOND: My mother is a native of Pollocksville.

DR. PATTERSON: Where was your father from?

DR. HAMMOND: He was from the Cypress Creek section over in Jones County in Comfort.

DR. PATTERSON: He was a physician?

DR. HAMMOND: Yes.

DR. PATTERSON: And he practiced in Pollocksville?

DR. HAMMOND: Yes.

DR. PATTERSON: About how long did he practice in Pollocksville?

DR. HAMMOND: Oh, 53 or 54 years.

DR. PATTERSON: When did you come to New Bern?

DR. HAMMOND: In 1946.

DR. PATTERSON: What had you been doing up until that time?

DR. HAMMOND: You mean...

DR. PATTERSON: Your life. You were living in Pollocksville.  
You grew up in Pollocksville.

DR. HAMMOND: That's right.

DR. PATTERSON: And went to school there?

DR. HAMMOND: I graduated Pollocksville High School. Then I graduated Duke University 1928.

DR. PATTERSON: Was that a fun time for you?

DR. HAMMOND: Well, more of a working time.

DR. PATTERSON: Was it hard to make the transition from Pollocksville High School to Duke?

DR. HAMMOND: No.

DR. PATTERSON: You handled the academics all right then. And then you went to medical school.

DR. HAMMOND: I wound up Phi Beta Kappa.

DR. PATTERSON: Nice going.

DR. HAMMOND: You have to put that in there.

DR. PATTERSON: Yeah.

DR. HAMMOND: Were you AOA?

DR. PATTERSON: No, I didn't make AOA. I was a Phi Beta Kappa member too. My father was AOA, but not I.

DR. HAMMOND: I didn't make AOA.

DR. PATTERSON: Did you go to Duke Medical School?

DR. HAMMOND: No.

DR. PATTERSON: Where did you go?

DR. HAMMOND: University of North Carolina Chapel Hill the first two years; 1930-32. Then I graduated Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia 1934.

DR. PATTERSON: How did you find the two years at Chapel Hill? Were they good years?

DR. HAMMOND: You mean academically?

DR. PATTERSON: Well, was it a good school?

DR. HAMMOND: Well, I would think so. I mean, I didn't know any better.

DR. PATTERSON: How did you happen to pick Jefferson?

DR. HAMMOND: My grandfather graduated Jefferson. That might have been the reason.

DR. PATTERSON: Where did your father go to medical school?

DR. HAMMOND: University College of Medicine Richmond, Virginia.

DR. PATTERSON: My father went to Jefferson, the class of 1908. And course, Ernest Richardson went there too.

DR. HAMMOND: You know Charlie Duffy went there.

DR. PATTERSON: I wasn't aware of that. After medical school, you had an internship?

DR. HAMMOND: One year at Atlantic City Hospital, Atlantic City, New Jersey.

DR. PATTERSON: And then what happened?

DR. HAMMOND: Then I practiced five years in Grifton, North Carolina.

DR. PATTERSON: You practiced in Grifton for five years. Was

this general practice?

DR. HAMMOND: General practice, yes. I guess it was in 1930-1935. Uncle Sam called me in December 1935.

DR. PATTERSON: What did he tell you?

DR. HAMMOND: Report. (laughter) Louisville, Kentucky I believe it was.

DR. PATTERSON: In the Army?

DR. HAMMOND: Army.

DR. PATTERSON: In the Army of the United States.

DR. HAMMOND: Right. (laughter)

DR. PATTERSON: This was when?

DR. HAMMOND: I was in the Army from 1940-1944.

DR. PATTERSON: Tell me a little bit about your Army career. Where did you go and what did you do?

DR. HAMMOND: You mean like...

DR. PATTERSON: Places you were stationed.

DR. HAMMOND: Well, I was stationed first at, I entered at Louisville, Kentucky. Then I was in the 5th Medical Battalion of the 5th Army I suppose. I was in Michigan, Fort Custer, for a while. Then I was in Tennessee. By George, I forgot the names. Some place in Tennessee, then Kentucky, and I think from Kentucky I travelled to New Jersey on my way to the ETO.

DR. PATTERSON: The European Theater.

DR. HAMMOND: Yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: Where were you in Europe?

DR. HAMMOND: Landed in Cherbourg, France. Then we went north through France and Belgium, I think, and then Holland and to Germany.

I should remember those names, but I can't remember those names. Anyway, we sat out "The Bulge", the Battle of the Bulge in Germany.

I can't think of the name of the place. Then from there we went to Cologne, Germany. Then we went south and wound up at a place called the Chim Sea. It's a lake. I forget the name of the little town nearby there. The war was over.

DR. PATTERSON: In Europe. What sort of outfit were you with during this time?

DR. HAMMOND: I was in a medical battalion.

DR. PATTERSON: Still with the medical battalion.

DR. HAMMOND: Attached to a division, you know. Each division I believe had three regiments and we were spread out among the infantry.

But my position personally was in the neighborhood of the artillery headquarters.

DR. PATTERSON: Were you a battalion surgeon?

DR. HAMMOND: But my men, excuse me, but my men were spread out on the front. But I didn't get to the front really. I was called a... what was the question?

DR. PATTERSON: Were you a battalion surgeon? Is that your title?

DR. HAMMOND: No, I didn't do any surgery. I don't know whether I was called a surgeon or not.

DR. PATTERSON: Was this a hospital?

DR. HAMMOND: No, no. This was a field.

DR. PATTERSON: This was a field unit. But you had a first aid station.

DR. HAMMOND: That's right, yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: Well, I think that's similar to a battalion surgeon's life. That's what I was for a long time. But all during this time, combat was going on, you were part of the war effort that was going on.

DR. HAMMOND: Yes.

DR. PATTERSON: You got out of the Army in '44.

DR. HAMMOND: Yes.

DR. PATTERSON: Which is pretty good, because the war in the Pacific was still going on.

DR. HAMMOND: When we left Europe, we were under the impression that we would go to the East. But while on our voyage over to New York, the Japanese surrendered, as I remember, and that was it.

DR. PATTERSON: And you were very happy!

DR. HAMMOND: Yes, we were very elated!

DR. PATTERSON: After you got back to the States, what happened next?

DR. HAMMOND: For a very short time I was a medical officer with the CCC Camps.

DR. PATTERSON: Where was that, Frank?

DR. HAMMOND: Between Maysville and Jacksonville, North Carolina.

DR. PATTERSON: You were the only medical officer there?

DR. HAMMOND: Yeah. I more or less took the sick call, you know.

DR. PATTERSON: What was the CCC Camp like?

DR. HAMMOND: Well, I don't remember really. I mean, it's just a working unit doing this and that. I don't know what they did.

DR. PATTERSON: Did you live at the camp or did you just go out for sick call?

DR. HAMMOND: I think I lived at the camp, yeah. I'm pretty sure I did.

DR. PATTERSON: This was, as I recall, there would be several hundred men working there.

DR. HAMMOND: Yes, civilians.

DR. PATTERSON: Mostly young people, is that right?

DR. HAMMOND: That's right.

DR. PATTERSON: And they were under, was it under Army jurisdiction?

DR. HAMMOND: Yes.

DR. PATTERSON: They were pretty carefully controlled. What did you do next?

DR. HAMMOND: I went to Grifton, North Carolina.

DR. PATTERSON: Back to Grifton?

DR. HAMMOND: Yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: Set up practice again?

DR. HAMMOND: No, excuse me, that's wrong. I went to LaGrange, North Carolina to practice there for, oh, three or four months. From there, I came to New Bern in 1946.

DR. PATTERSON: When were you married, Frank?

DR. HAMMOND: That's a good question. (laughter) The 12th of March 1941.

DR. PATTERSON: So you were married then during the early days of the war?

DR. HAMMOND: Yes.

DR. PATTERSON: When was your first child born?

DR. HAMMOND: Oh, about ten months later. (laughter)

DR. PATTERSON: I understand. The same thing happened to us.

DR. HAMMOND: I ought to know the date, but I can't remember. We were married in March...that's close enough, yeah. It did extend beyond nine months, yeah. (laughter)

DR. PATTERSON: Okay. Where was Lucy from?

DR. HAMMOND: She was from Greene County in North Carolina back on a farm about halfway between Farmville, North Carolina and Snow Hill, North Carolina.

DR. PATTERSON: Had you known her a long time before you were married?

DR. HAMMOND: Oh, about four or five years.

DR. PATTERSON: How many children do you have?

DR. HAMMOND: Two.

DR. PATTERSON: How old are they?

DR. HAMMOND: Well, one is fifty, the oldest one, and the youngest one is forty-six.

DR. PATTERSON: Frank, when you came to New Bern, what prompted you to make the move to New Bern?

DR. HAMMOND: Well, I wasn't satisfied. LaGrange is a nice town but I wasn't satisfied with the set-up. Of course I grew up in Pollocksville, and I guess one reason I wanted to be near my folks who still lived in Pollocksville. I guess that was the reason.

DR. PATTERSON: Did anybody ask you to come to New Bern or did you just decide it was a good place?

DR. HAMMOND: I just decided on my own.

DR. PATTERSON: So you moved your family here and set up shop.

DR. HAMMOND: Yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: Where was your first office?

DR. HAMMOND: On Broad Street, Dr. Rhem's old office in the Dr. Rhem house.

DR. PATTERSON: Where was that, Frank?

DR. HAMMOND: On Broad Street. I forget the number, but it's downtown near the telegram office.

DR. PATTERSON: It was on the block of Broad Street between Middle Street and Hancock Street close to the fire station?

DR. HAMMOND: Yes, yes.

DR. PATTERSON: Dr. Rhem had a home there, is that correct?

DR. HAMMOND: That's right.

DR. PATTERSON: As I recall, cause we were right next to you for a while, you were in a fairly small wooden house.

DR. HAMMOND: It was part of the Rhem house.

DR. PATTERSON: Your office was.

DR. HAMMOND: Yes. A side door entrance from Broad Street.

DR. PATTERSON: What happened to the Rhem house itself?

DR. HAMMOND: Not too many years ago it was torn down.

DR. PATTERSON: But your office was left there, is that right?

DR. HAMMOND: No, no. That was long after I left when the building was torn down. See, I stayed in that office from '46 until '56. After that, the house and building was destroyed.

DR. PATTERSON: When we were next to you, I can't remember the house very well but I remember your office quite well. But the house was still there in '52 and '53 and those years, is that correct?

DR. HAMMOND: The office was not a separate building. It was part of the...

DR. PATTERSON: Part of the house.

DR. HAMMOND: Sort of on the side and a side door.

DR. PATTERSON: Yes. Who was on the other side of you at that time on the west side of your building?

DR. HAMMOND: Western Union.

DR. PATTERSON: Had that been there a long time?

DR. HAMMOND: I don't know. It was there when I arrived.

DR. PATTERSON: Do you remember what was next to that?

DR. HAMMOND: Coming away from the river?

DR. PATTERSON: Yes.

DR. HAMMOND: The fire station I think.

DR. PATTERSON: The fire station was there then. Frank, when you came to New Bern, do you remember what doctors were here at the time?

DR. HAMMOND: Yes, I think I can remember most of them.

DR. PATTERSON: Can you name the ones you remember?

DR. HAMMOND: Harvey Wadsworth, Charlie Ashford, Charlie Duffy, Frank Grady (his brother was a lawyer), Ernest Bender.

DR. PATTERSON: Dr. Hollister?

DR. HAMMOND: He was here. He might have come in after from his overseas work.

DR. PATTERSON: And Ernest Richardson hadn't come yet.

DR. HAMMOND: No. Dr. Chris Barker.

DR. PATTERSON: You mentioned Dr. Duffy.

DR. HAMMOND: Dr. Charles Duffy. Dr. Richard Duffy was here too. I don't think your daddy was here at the time when I came.

DR. PATTERSON: He had stopped practice by then. Yes, he had stopped.

DR. HAMMOND: I knew of him. And I knew of Dr. Jones, but Dr. Jones...

DR. PATTERSON: He had died.

DR. HAMMOND: He had died.

DR. PATTERSON: Do you remember any of the black physicians?

DR. HAMMOND: Yes, I can't think of their names though. I think there were one or two.

DR. PATTERSON: Was there Dr. Littman?

DR. HAMMOND: No, he came later.

DR. PATTERSON: Dr. Holt?

DR. HAMMOND: Who?

DR. PATTERSON: Holt. Dr. Mann?

DR. HAMMOND: No, Dr. Mann was gone I think.

DR. PATTERSON: Frank, what was your office like when you finally got it set up? You were gonna do general practice, is that correct?

DR. HAMMOND: Yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: What did your office look like?

DR. HAMMOND: Well, it had a waiting room.

DR. PATTERSON: One waiting room, or one for blacks and one for whites?

DR. HAMMOND: One waiting room.

DR. PATTERSON: For everybody?

DR. HAMMOND: Yeah. I didn't have very many black patients. That was the front room. Then the second room, intermediate room, was the treatment room. Then behind, adjacent to that that went back, was a toilet and a sort of a catch-all.

DR. PATTERSON: Did you have an x-ray machine?

DR. HAMMOND: No.

DR. PATTERSON: Laboratory facilities?

DR. HAMMOND: Only urinalysis and I had a microscope, yes.

DR. PATTERSON: Did you do the urine examinations yourself?

DR. HAMMOND: Well, the office examinations, yes, urine.

DR. PATTERSON: Did you do blood counts?

DR. HAMMOND: Not many. In the beginning I did it, but after that I relied on the hospital laboratory.

DR. PATTERSON: What sort of treatments did you do in your office?

Examinations, of course.

DR. HAMMOND: Just your general physical exams and the urinalysis. That was about it.

DR. PATTERSON: Did you do any minor surgery?

DR. HAMMOND: A small amount like sewing up cuts, you know, lacerations, opening of boils, and things like that. But minor, very minor.

DR. PATTERSON: How much did you charge for an office visit?

DR. HAMMOND: As I remember, I think it was two dollars for a straight office visit. It wasn't very much added to that, you know, as a rule.

DR. PATTERSON: Did you make house calls?

DR. HAMMOND: Yes.

DR. PATTERSON: A lot of them?

DR. HAMMOND: Not very many, no. A few.

DR. PATTERSON: What kind of things would prompt a house call in those days? When did you decide you'd make a house call, under what circumstances?

DR. HAMMOND: Well, that's difficult to answer. As I remember, if anybody asked me to make a house call, I did.

DR. PATTERSON: You didn't say they had to be seriously ill or anything. If they wanted you to come, you came.

DR. HAMMOND: As I remember, yes.

DR. PATTERSON: What did you charge for that?

DR. HAMMOND: I think it was five dollars. I think it was five

dollars.

DR. PATTERSON: So that made it worthwhile. (laughter) Where was Dr. Barker's office in those days? Was it in his house?

DR. HAMMOND: It was up on Broad Street away from the river on the left in his house.

DR. PATTERSON: I think it was in his house. And Dr. Wadsworth's office was in his house too.

DR. HAMMOND: That's right.

DR. PATTERSON: And Dr. Duffy's office was in his house.

DR. HAMMOND: Right.

DR. PATTERSON: Dr. Latham was still here when you came?

DR. HAMMOND: That's right, Dr. Latham was here.

DR. PATTERSON: And his office was above Nina Basnight's living quarters on Pollock Street across from the Athen's Theater.

DR. HAMMOND: That's correct.

DR. PATTERSON: And Charles Duffy, where was his office?

DR. HAMMOND: It was in his home on Pollock Street.

DR. PATTERSON: In those days there just weren't many office buildings I gather.

DR. HAMMOND: No.

DR. PATTERSON: Who were some of the physicians who came in after that?

DR. HAMMOND: Ernest Richardson, of course.

DR. PATTERSON: He took over Dr. Latham's practice.

DR. HAMMOND: Yeah. Of course you and Simmons.

DR. PATTERSON: We located right next to you upstairs in Sam Clark's little building.

DR. HAMMOND: Yeah. And Dr. Davidson, he was in the Clark building.

DR. PATTERSON: Um huh. He did eye, ear, nose, and throat at that time.

DR. HAMMOND: I think so.

DR. PATTERSON: Yes.

DR. HAMMOND: Maybe just eye. Well, from then, I don't know. Of course, gradually doctors came in. Off-hand I don't remember their names.

DR. PATTERSON: Yes. Dr. Ashford's office was in his home too, was it not?

DR. HAMMOND: It was a separate office that connected to his house.

DR. PATTERSON: Connected to his house, but part of his house.

In those days, what hospitals were in town?

DR. HAMMOND: St. Luke's, and Good Shepherd - black only. Kafer Hospital came along some years later.

DR. PATTERSON: Kafer was not operational when you came to New Bern?

DR. HAMMOND: No, I don't think so.

DR. PATTERSON: Do you remember when that started?

DR. HAMMOND: No, not really.

DR. PATTERSON: The hospital was in a very fine old home on Broad Street.

DR. HAMMOND: John H. Jones house, yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: What was that like? What was the home like before the hospital took it over?

DR. HAMMOND: Well, I don't think I was ever in the house, but it was an elaborate house I'm sure.

DR. PATTERSON: From the outside, do you remember it?

DR. HAMMOND: Yes.

DR. PATTERSON: As I recall, it had the columns on the front and it was a very majestic looking Southern mansion.

DR. HAMMOND: That's right.

DR. PATTERSON: Did you practice in Kafer Hospital later on?

DR. HAMMOND: Yes.

DR. PATTERSON: Of course, we forgot to mention Oscar Kafer when you came back. Oscar was practicing and he practiced in his home.

DR. HAMMOND: That's right, yes, yes.

DR. PATTERSON: When Oscar started the hospital, you joined the staff. Did you do a lot of work there?

DR. HAMMOND: I don't recall. I think most of the work was at St. Luke's and Good Shepherd. I had very little work at Good Shepherd. Some.

DR. PATTERSON: Do you recall what the Kafer Hospital looked like inside when it became a hospital as you walked in the front door, what was on the left and what was on the right?

DR. HAMMOND: Not really, no.

DR. PATTERSON: As I recall there were two wards, one for men and one for women.

DR. HAMMOND: I might put this in. When I first came to New Bern I took a salary job with the Health Department. I saw the charity cases for a monthly salary, which I don't remember. Very little, but I forget what it was.

DR. PATTERSON: Did you see the patients at the county home?

DR. HAMMOND: Yes, I did. That was part of it.

DR. PATTERSON: Where was that located?

DR. HAMMOND: On the Kinston highway where the Health Department is now.

DR. PATTERSON: Close to the new county hospital. Were there a lot of people in the home in those days?

DR. HAMMOND: Well, I would have to guess. I would guess maybe around thirty.

DR. PATTERSON: Men and women?

DR. HAMMOND: Yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: Black and white?

DR. HAMMOND: Yes.

DR. PATTERSON: Who were these people, Frank? Were they just people who had no money or was this a retirement place, or what was it?

DR. HAMMOND: I think they were people who were more or less destitute that didn't have any other place to go as I recall.

DR. PATTERSON: Was it a pretty nice place?

DR. HAMMOND: Yes. It was clean, very nice.

DR. PATTERSON: Did you ever do any work in the jail?

DR. HAMMOND: That was part of my work, that salary job.

DR. PATTERSON: What did that entail?

DR. HAMMOND: It entailed, if I was called to see a jailmate, I would go see them at the jail.

DR. PATTERSON: Got to be a little bit risky at times I would think.

DR. HAMMOND: Well, I guess it could be. I never thought about it being risky at the time, you know.

DR. PATTERSON: If somebody were drunk and belligerent, I would think that could endanger you a little.

DR. HAMMOND: That's true, yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: But that could happen in any emergency room too, couldn't it? (laughter) Who took that job on when you stopped?

DR. HAMMOND: So far as I know, the job was terminated. I don't know.

DR. PATTERSON: At one time doctors took turns doing that.

DR. HAMMOND: They took turns at the emergency room at the hospital. I don't recall whether they took turns at the jailhouse or not, but I think it was on a call basis.

DR. PATTERSON: What was St. Luke's Hospital like in those days?

DR. HAMMOND: Well, that may be a hard question to answer.

DR. PATTERSON: The Sisters were running it then.

DR. HAMMOND: It was run by the Catholic Sisters, that's correct.

DR. PATTERSON: Did they run a pretty good hospital as far as you were concerned?

DR. HAMMOND: I thought so. It was clean, and I thought so.

DR. PATTERSON: You did most of your work at St. Luke's?

DR. HAMMOND: Yes, as I recall.

DR. PATTERSON: Did you have a lot of hospital patients or was it mostly office work?

DR. HAMMOND: My work was mostly obstetrics and pediatrics in addition to some general work. So far as the hospital patients were concerned, I guess mostly it was obstetrics and pediatrics as I said, plus some general admitting patients.

DR. PATTERSON: Did you do any home deliveries then?

DR. HAMMOND: I don't recall doing any home deliveries in New Bern.

DR. PATTERSON: When you did your obstetrics at the hospital, did you use anesthesia of any type?

DR. HAMMOND: I think there was a nurse anesthesiologist that did that, yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: Was that Miss Lou Justice at St. Luke's?

DR. HAMMOND: Probably.

DR. PATTERSON: Do you remember what she used? Was it ether or what?

DR. HAMMOND: As I recall, mostly ether.

DR. PATTERSON: Probably all ether.

DR. HAMMOND: Yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: Did you do any deliveries under spinal anesthesia or saddle block?

DR. HAMMOND: I did not, no.

DR. PATTERSON: Were there many caesarian sections done in those days?

DR. HAMMOND: It seems to me there weren't many that I recall. Not a big percentage.

DR. PATTERSON: Did you do them yourself or did someone else do them for you?

DR. HAMMOND: I never did a section, no.

DR. PATTERSON: Do you remember some of the nurses who worked in St. Luke's then?

DR. HAMMOND: What was Jessie?

DR. PATTERSON: Jessie Coats?

DR. HAMMOND: Jessie Coats.

DR. PATTERSON: She was an anesthetist.

DR. HAMMOND: And what's the lady that was there for so long? She did private practice nursing, red-headed?

DR. PATTERSON: Annie Humphrey?

DR. HAMMOND: Miss Annie Humphrey, yeah. Of course, she's still living.

DR. PATTERSON: Yes.

DR. HAMMOND: I see her occasionally. I don't recall.

DR. PATTERSON: Yeah, it's hard to remember. You mentioned Good Shepherd Hospital and the fact that you didn't do a lot of work there but you did some work there.

DR. HAMMOND: That's right, yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: What did yo think of Good Shepherd Hospital?

DR. HAMMOND: Well, that's a hard question to answer. It had its place and I think it served its purpose.

DR. PATTERSON: That was the only place in town where blacks were hospitalized.

DR. HAMMOND: As I remember, that's correct.

DR. PATTERSON: I think that's true. Well, as time went by, Frank, you continued this type practice and then you mentioned a while ago that you moved your office about '56.

DR. HAMMOND: Yes.

DR. PATTERSON: Where did you go then?

DR. HAMMOND: To the doctor's building. It was built by Ernest Richardson I think with offices for rent.

DR. PATTERSON: How long did you stay there?

DR. HAMMOND: I stayed there until I retired. That was '56 til I guess 1976.

DR. PATTERSON: Who all was in that office beside you and Ernest?

DR. HAMMOND: Dr. King was there at one time. I'm not sure whether Sonny Davis was there or not. I'm not sure of that.

DR. PATTERSON: Now, Dr. Davis was a pediatrician.

DR. HAMMOND: Yes.

DR. PATTERSON: And Dr. Barden came in as a pediatrician.

DR. HAMMOND: Yes.

DR. PATTERSON: You mentioned Dr. Bender earlier. When you came to New Bern, he was in practice here?

DR. HAMMOND: As I recall he was, yes.

DR. PATTERSON: And I think his office was in the Elks Temple building.

DR. HAMMOND: I think so.

DR. PATTERSON: Now, did he stay here long after you came back? Do you remember anything about that?

DR. HAMMOND: I don't think he did. How long I don't know, but he went to Pollocksville, his hometown, and did more or less general practice. Maybe on a small scale.

DR. PATTERSON: Frank, do you think when you stopped practice in '76 that there was much difference in the way medicine was being practice from the way it was when you started here in '46?

DR. HAMMOND: I would think so, yes.

DR. PATTERSON: Was it better?

DR. HAMMOND: I would think so.

DR. PATTERSON: Were you happier in '76 than you were in '46 with your practice?

DR. HAMMOND: You mean before I retired?

DR. PATTERSON: Yes.

DR. HAMMOND: Probably not. There was too much, I say too much, it was quite a bit of interference, you know, from the powers that be and the government and what-not.

DR. PATTERSON: Did this involve papers to fill out or rules to follow or both?

DR. HAMMOND: Well, I don't know. It may be just, you know, as

one gets older there comes a time when you think of quitting.

DR. PATTERSON: Yeah, I know. When you started practice I imagine there was very little interference from the outside.

DR. HAMMOND: That's correct, yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: Do you recall whether when you came to New Bern and started work in the hospitals, the hospitals were reviewing their work with the doctors checking themselves to see that things were done right?

DR. HAMMOND: I don't think so. I don't recall.

DR. PATTERSON: Do you remember the hospitals ever being surveyed for accreditation by the Joint Commission?

DR. HAMMOND: Years later, yes.

DR. PATTERSON: Looking back on it, are you glad you went into medicine?

DR. HAMMOND: I would say yes. It's all I ever thought about doing really. My father being a doctor I guess might have influenced me. But I was reasonably happy, yes.

DR. PATTERSON: Were there any particular times during the time you practiced medicine that were extra good times for you, incidences that you remember that were really happy times, cases that you were happy about?

DR. HAMMOND: No, not off hand. I always thought of medicine, as a, well, you might say a trade in a way. There comes a time I think in ones life when he decides what he's gonna do and I decided on medicine. And when the decision is made, why, of course, you go and

do the best you can under the circumstances. I don't know if that answers your question.

DR. PATTERSON: Well, yes. If you're gonna go into business, that's pretty cut and dried. If you're gonna go into medicine, is there a feeling of wanting to help people just a little bit different from going into business?

DR. HAMMOND: I think that's inevitable, yes. And naturally when you're involved with people, patients, why, you have a feeling for them and you want to do the best you can and help them best you can.

It's a little different I suppose than being a storekeeper. But on the other hand, it's a way of making a living. I mean, from the hard side, yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: How would you compare the doctors today with the doctors then? Maybe I can rephrase that. How would you compare the doctor/patient relationship when you started out in your early years with the doctor/patient relationship now?

DR. HAMMOND: Well, that's difficult to answer. I don't know.

DR. PATTERSON: You have been a patient yourself some since your retirement, because most of us have. Do you think doctors spend as much time with their patients as they used to?

DR. HAMMOND: I don't know.

DR. PATTERSON: Are they as nice to you as you used to be to your patients?

DR. HAMMOND: Well, they were nice to me, all the doctors were, yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: What do you think about present day doctors aims in life? Is their aim to help people like you have been one to help people as well as making a living? Does that aim with them compare to the way it used to be or is medicine more business these days?

DR. HAMMOND: Well, I don't know.

DR. PATTERSON: Would you advise a young person who came to you for advice to go into medicine these days?

DR. HAMMOND: I don't know.

DR. PATTERSON: If one of your daughters were younger or you had a son who was ready to make a decision, would you hope that they would go into medicine or would you hope they wouldn't?

DR. HAMMOND: Let me put it this way, I wouldn't try to influence them one way or another. I think that decision is an individual decision that one has to make.

DR. PATTERSON: Suppose your child said, "Dad, do you think I should go into medicine?"

DR. HAMMOND: Well, I don't know.

DR. PATTERSON: Well, sometimes that's a hard question to ask. Well, I think that you and folks of your generation can feel good about what you've done in New Bern, the way you've helped people, and I sort of put myself into that category too. I wasn't here long, but I feel good about it. And as I look back, I think we did a good decent job. I have a couple of other things I want to bring up, but before we do, let me just ask you, do you have any other memories associated with the practice of medicine or medicine in New Bern that

you would like to speak to that we haven't covered?

DR. HAMMOND: No, I don't think I would.

DR. PATTERSON: One of the things that we are very interested in in putting this story of New Bern together is race relations; how the blacks and the whites have gotten along, how it was then and how it is now. Do you have any thoughts as to whether the blacks and whites get along better now than they did when you started here or is it worse, what do you think?

DR. HAMMOND: Well, from my angle, I don't know.

DR. PATTERSON: Do you recall, Frank, when the Civil Rights Act came along and schools were integrated in the sixties whether there were any problems in New Bern between races? Any riots, difficulties?

DR. HAMMOND: I don't remember. I don't know.

DR. PATTERSON: And the Martin Luther King episode. I think there was trouble here, but I don't know much about it. You don't recall that? Well, that's all right. What do you think about World War II and its effect on New Bern? Did New Bern change as a result of the war and of the military bases?

DR. HAMMOND: Well, I've been led to believe that more money came in by way of the military, and therefore, that of course I guess would help business you know.

DR. PATTERSON: When you came here to practice right at the end of all this in 1946, do you recall whether people were moving away from New Bern at that time because the war was over, the war effort had calmed down, or was New Bern pretty stable.

DR. HAMMOND: My thought is that it was pretty stable.

DR. PATTERSON: When you came to New Bern in '46, the foot of Middle Street was a different place from the way it is now. Do you recall the piers out there? What was it like down there at the end of Craven Street and Middle Street beyond South Front Street? Was the waterfront different?

DR. HAMMOND: Middle Street, I don't mean, Broad Street, the Neuse River bridge that's there now, was it, I'm not sure...

DR. PATTERSON: The Neuse River bridge came in the early fifties. When you came here, the bridge wasn't there.

DR. HAMMOND: Was not?

DR. PATTERSON: Was not there.

DR. HAMMOND: I remember while I was in medical school, I guess it was, that the old wooden bridge across the Neuse was torn up by a hurricane.

DR. PATTERSON: That was the '33 hurricane, but it was rebuilt.

DR. HAMMOND: Yeah, where it is now.

DR. PATTERSON: When you located on Broad Street in '46, do you recall what Broad Street looked like? Was it a pretty street?

DR. HAMMOND: I would think so as I recall it. Of course they rearranged it, Broad Street. I think they widened it, didn't they?

DR. PATTERSON: Yes.

DR. HAMMOND: And they changed the look I guess.

DR. PATTERSON: (Tape turned over) Frank, you were just beginning to say that on the northern end of the riverfront was some sawmills?

DR. HAMMOND: It seemed to me like there was some sawmills on the riverfront.

DR. PATTERSON: You don't recall down on the Trent River beyond South Front Street what it was like down there?

DR. HAMMOND: I remember Maxwell's Groceries on the waterfront.

DR. PATTERSON: Were there piers and wharves down there?

DR. HAMMOND: I think so. I'm not very clear on that. Hamilton's, I remember when I came, used to enjoy eating at Hamilton's Cafe on the water right by the bridge.

DR. PATTERSON: That was when the bridge was at the end of George Street, wasn't it, before they put this bridge and before Tryon Palace was rebuilt?

DR. HAMMOND: Yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: And Hamilton's Cafe was right there. That was Guy Hamilton?

DR. HAMMOND: Yeah, Senior.

DR. PATTERSON: Had good food?

DR. HAMMOND: Yes.

DR. PATTERSON: Good seafood. (laughter)

DR. HAMMOND: Yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: Do you remember anything about the hurricanes in New Bern?

DR. HAMMOND: Well, I remember, I forget what year it was, but where I live now it was devastating, but the house wasn't injured so to speak, but a lot of the trees and a lot of debris, I mean, I've

got pictures of it, it's quite a lot.

DR. PATTERSON: This was in the fifties I guess.

DR. HAMMOND: Yeah. The others, I think, whatever that was, that was the worst one. I forget now.

DR. PATTERSON: Hazel?

DR. HAMMOND: It might have been Hazel.

DR. PATTERSON: Ione, Connie?

DR. HAMMOND: Yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: They're all mixed up in my mind.

DR. HAMMOND: Yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: Where did you and Lucy live when you first came to New Bern?

DR. HAMMOND: Chattawka Lane.

DR. PATTERSON: That's just a couple of streets up.

DR. HAMMOND: That's right.

DR. PATTERSON: And was it in DeGraffenreid, this area, where your house was?

DR. HAMMOND: No, it was across the highway. What is that highway? The Kinston highway, 70.

DR. PATTERSON: Yeah, Neuse Boulevard, no.

DR. HAMMOND: No.

DR. PATTERSON: Yes, it's Neuse Boulevard, Broad Street.

DR. HAMMOND: Yeah, that's right, but the house we were in was across the street.

DR. PATTERSON: Okay.

DR. HAMMOND: I forget, there was a name for that settlement, but I can't think what it was?

DR. PATTERSON: Was it Green Park?

DR. HAMMOND: Maybe, yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: We lived there too in our early days, a small house. Did you stay there very long?

DR. HAMMOND: We got this house in '56 I believe, so we stayed there about ten years.

DR. PATTERSON: Well, that was pretty good. You came along way in ten years and you've been comfortable here. Frank, can you recall anything about the flu epidemic of 1918?

DR. HAMMOND: Barely. I was living in Pollocksville at the time and I remember that I did not have the flu the first year, 1918, but I did get the disease in 1919, which was a mild disease. I was living with my father then, of course, and he was out as a practicing physician and house calls. I don't recall his ever having the flu.

DR. PATTERSON: It's pretty amazing isn't it, that these general practitioners didn't get ill from this?

DR. HAMMOND: If he did, it was mild. I don't remember him being very sick.

DR. PATTERSON: Was it a bad deal in Pollocksville? Did a lot of people die from it?

DR. HAMMOND: I don't know personally, but the news was that a lot of people did die. I remember, no that wouldn't be. I was thinking about the train of soldiers going though, you know, the coastline to

Wilmington and New Bern and other points. Of course that wouldn't have anything to do with the flu though.

DR. PATTERSON: Was that in World War I?

DR. HAMMOND: In World War I, yes.

DR. PATTERSON: You remember the trains going through in World War I?

DR. HAMMOND: Yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: Where were these people going?

DR. HAMMOND: Unless I was told. Some things you think you remember that you were told, you know. (laughter)

DR. PATTERSON: Sure, well, that's all right.

DR. HAMMOND: I guess they were going to the different camps, you know. They'd been recruited or whatever.

DR. PATTERSON: Frank, you're in medical school during the Depression.

DR. HAMMOND: Right.

DR. PATTERSON: Was that a hard time?

DR. HAMMOND: Well, I didn't realize it was, but later my mother told me that my father considered seriously taking me out of school, of course he paid my way, and she prevailed on him to let me stay.

So some way they managed to let me stay in the college after I had started. I was lucky, they paid all my expenses, you know, all the way.

DR. PATTERSON: So the Depression, personally, didn't hit you too hard?

DR. HAMMOND: No.

DR. PATTERSON: I was the same way, Frank.

DR. HAMMOND: Yeah. I guess at that age you don't realize what's going on.

DR. PATTERSON: Did your dad have a tough time of it, the people couldn't pay him?

DR. HAMMOND: Well, I remember, how much I don't know, but a percentage of his pay was in kind, that is in vegetables and pig, you know, and wood to burn, and things like that. But I suppose he was much better off than the average fellow, yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: I didn't ask you about brothers and sisters.

DR. HAMMOND: One brother, William Lee, who became a dentist.

DR. PATTERSON: Now, was he older than you?

DR. HAMMOND: Four years younger. He practiced in New Bern.

DR. PATTERSON: Now, he is dead.

DR. HAMMOND: Yes.

DR. PATTERSON: When did he die?

DR. HAMMOND: I'd say about eight years ago.

DR. PATTERSON: So your dad had two sons to send through professional school. That was kind of tough in those days.

DR. HAMMOND: Yeah. Of course, at different stages or different times, money is something to be thought about. But I remember tuition at Duke. The first year I was there it was Trinity College in 1924 and it was a semester system. As I remember tuition was \$60 a semester, \$120 a year. It's over \$12,000 now I guess.

DR. PATTERSON: Did your two daughters go to Duke?

DR. HAMMOND: No. My oldest daughter went to East Carolina, ECU, and my youngest daughter didn't attend college.

DR. PATTERSON: Well, Frank, this has been a good talk and a lot of things we didn't cover. Maybe there are some things that I didn't mention that you would like to mention, not necessarily connected with medicine but just with living in New Bern or just living in general.

You have any thoughts for people who will be listening to this tape later on from a wise old man?

DR. HAMMOND: A wise man.

DR. PATTERSON: Excuse me, wise man.

DR. HAMMOND: Maybe. (laughter) Of course, I've enjoyed living in New Bern. I think one makes one's own enjoyment, you know, no matter where they are. I have no regrets.

DR. PATTERSON: What have been some of the most pleasant things about New Bern for you?

DR. HAMMOND: Well, one thing is the location. Regardless of New Bern, it's close to the seashore and also it's close to the Triangle.

Years ago athletic events, you know, college. (Hear the clock in the background chime) The clock is over 150 years old.

DR. PATTERSON: Still talking.

DR. HAMMOND: Well, I suppose home is where you make it. I've enjoyed New Bern. But when it comes down to detail, it's difficult to bring them out.

DR. PATTERSON: I guess you could sum it up saying, "It's just

a plain old nice place to live!"

DR. HAMMOND: Yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: Frank, I just completely forgot to ask you about the new Craven County Hospital. I wasn't here when it open, so it's not a big thing in mind. I've never practiced there. But for you it was a big thing because the other hospitals closed and you practiced for a number of years in the Craven County Hospital, is that correct?

DR. HAMMOND: That's correct, yes.

DR. PATTERSON: How would you describe that hospital compared to the three other hospitals you worked in in New Bern?

DR. HAMMOND: Well, that's difficult to say. I guess everything progresses, you know, with time, and medicine has progressed and I suppose the hospital progressed along with it, yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: Was it difficult for you to make the switch from these smaller hospitals and your type practice into this fairly cosmopolitan new hospital?

DR. HAMMOND: What I did, I would say no. Of course it's true, you see I'm on my sixteenth year of retirement, period! Before that, for ten years, that's twenty-six years ago, I didn't have any hospital practice at all. I stopped the hospital practice.

DR. PATTERSON: So you stopped hospital practice in '66.

DR. HAMMOND: Sixteen and twenty-six years ago.

DR. PATTERSON: Yeah. You didn't work in this hospital too long then did you, the new hospital?

DR. HAMMOND: No, I don't think I did.

DR. PATTERSON: Maybe three years. So you just saw office patients after that.

DR. HAMMOND: Yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: Well, let me ask you this question, this doesn't have anything to do so much with the history of New Bern, it's just with you, what's retirement been like for you?

DR. HAMMOND: Well, one word, "Beautiful."

DR. PATTERSON: What have you been doing?

DR. HAMMOND: Well, that's a good question. Of course, some travelling when we were able. We enjoyed that. I reckon the best trip was while I was practicing. Lucy and I took an automobile trip from here to California and back going the southern route and coming back the northern route. It took a month. Most of my travelling was done while I was working. Very little afterwards. And I've enjoyed photography as an amateur. Of course after I retired I've enjoyed keeping up the yard up until now. I'm having to shed some of those responsibilities. (laughter)

DR. PATTERSON; You like to listen to music.

DR. HAMMOND: Yes, I enjoy music. I have records, old records. I don't like the modern music.

DR. PATTERSON: And you like to read.

DR. HAMMOND: Don't do much reading anymore. Never did enjoy novels and things like that, but mostly scientific stuff. I can read, but I don't read a hell of a lot, no.

DR. PATTERSON: I know you spend a fair amount of time looking

for good places to eat. (laughter)

DR. HAMMOND: Where are you eating now?

DR. PATTERSON: Well, mostly the Western Steer Steak House.  
(laughter)

DR. HAMMOND: Did you get that five dollar certificate?

DR. PATTERSON: Yes. Well, we got a card. Well, Frank, you have anything else you want to add to this story?

DR. HAMMOND: I can't think of anything else.

DR. PATTERSON: Well, I think it's been a good interview and a good conversation, and I'm glad that we talked. The Memories program appreciates your doing this. It's nice to talk to a man who's been happy in his work and happy in his retirement.

DR. HAMMOND: I think you summed it up for the most part, yes.

DR. PATTERSON: Shall we cut it off then?

DR. HAMMOND: Okay.

DR. PATTERSON: All right, here we go.

END OF INTERVIEW