MEMORIES OF NEW BERN

DR. ERNEST C. RICHARDSON JR.

INTERVIEW 1005.2

This is Dr. Joseph Patterson representing the memories of New Bern Committee. The date is August 18, 1992. I am interviewing Dr. Ernest C. Richardson, Jr. at his home at 4001 Trent Pines Drive in New Bern. My number 1000. The number of this interview is 1005.2. It is a continuation of an interview done on Dr. Richardson on August 14, 1992. This latter interview was number 1005.

Dr. Patterson: I'd like for us to back track a little bit from where we were last time. The last topic we were going to talk about before we stopped was Green Springs and swimming and so forth, but let's hold that for a moment, and go back to where you lived on Queen Street, the store. I would like for you to tell me about the railroad depot; what you remember about it; what the train traffic was like; about Pinnix Drug Store; about the buildings or stores south of Pinnix along Middle Street, and just in general more about the area you grew up in.

Dr. Richardson: One thing that I recall about the traffic in the depot, as you know, the trains would come in around 8:30 or 9:00 in the morning. It always amazed me at the number of people that would get off and come to New Bern. I remember now since I saw Callie Newman's write up on the depot, about the street cars and that there was a sight seeing tour. A lot of them would get right straight from the train onto the trolley.

JP: Onto the trolley?

Dr. Richardson: The trolley. Then, of course, there were taxis. I remember they were Model T Fords in my day; 1926, '27, but they

were taxis. The National Guard would come down in the summertime and go to Morehead to what they called Camp Glenn for exercise, in July. My father would go down to the dock at the foot of Middle Street where these freight boats, we called them, came in from South River and Minnesott and Oriental and from the inland waterway, from Morehead, Bogue Sound, loaded with watermelons and cantaloupes. It was not unusual at all to see three or four hundred watermelons at one time stacked in front of that store from the corner up to the big brown house.

JP: This was your store?

Dr. Richardson: Yes, my father's store. Of course the boys coming in on the train to Camp Glenn, my father always would say, "well, they gonna be down there training and it's all for the good," and he would holler, "Get off and get you one," or something like that! What amazed me was the whole train car would empty and everybody would grab them a watermelon. But you couldn't miss them, there was so many. Another thing that amazed me in those days, you never had to worry about someone stealing. It just didn't happen. If a bunch of kids were around there and they didn't have any money and they wanted a watermelon, there were so many of them, he gave it to them. There was no need for them to steal. That always amazed me, the honesty at that time. The only thing that was frowned on, there was an awful lot of drinking. But there really wasn't anything else because the railroad shops were closed. At that time, there was no sewing room, it had not been established. WPA was the only work.

JP: Where was this drinking done?

Dr. Richardson: Up the alley, Jenkins Alley. I remember you could get a drink for a nickel, which was a medicine glass. It was about an ounce, I think. For fifteen cents you got a half a jelly glass.

JP: Was this corn liquor?

Dr. Richardson: Oh yes, because they didn't have anything else to drink, of course, it was prohibition.

JP: Was this right out by your place?

Dr. Richardson: Jenkins Alley connected on to Queen Street. On one corner was the Rhone Hotel and on the other side of the alley was a little store an Italian man had. He couldn't even speak English. He had married and moved there and he ran a small store. Before he came there, the Nixon's ran a store. They were a colored family. They have one relative that makes the papers every now and then, and I forget his real name. The old gentleman that I remember was Caesar Nixon and his wife, Mrs. Hannah Nixon. They owned a large farm with a service station, called Nixon's Service Station, down just before you get to Riverdale near Otter Creek. Across the highway from that, was another lady named Mollie Pellam, who might ring a bell with you. We used to go there fishing and crabbing at times at the Nixon's.

JP: Let me get you back again to the depot. Was the train traffic heavy?

Dr. Richardson: Yes, the train traffic was, I thought, heavy. But remember we're talking about when I was somewhere around 6, 7,

8 years old. There would be four or five passenger cars. Then, they would leave and go onto Morehead, and the train would still be half full for people going to Morehead; especially, in the summer time.

JP: Where were all these passengers coming from?

Dr. Richardson: Up around Durham, Raleigh, Goldsboro, Kinston. I'd say that up until the Marines moved in, that a good number of the people that had cottages down there were from Kinston, Goldsboro, Raleigh, and Durham. Add Greensboro, Winston-Salem, Wilson, New Bern to the owners of dwellings on the beach and this is true today.

JP: Did a lot of New Bern people get on the train there to go to Morehead too?

Dr. Richardson: Yes, but most of them were still from up the middle part of the state. Remember, the only road to Morehead in those days was a narrow road, and most of it was a hard, packed dirt clay. You stopped at a place called Tom Haywood's Store to rewater the radiator in the old Ford car to get down there. It was quite a chore. You left in the morning and came back in the evening. It was an all day trip. But there were a lot of people from New Bern that would get on the station train there.

JP: Do you remember a pullman car being stationed there? It would take my grandfather, Senator Simmons, up to Washington. I rode that car with him a number of times.

Dr. Richardson: I remember the pullman car being there, but I did not realize it was Senator Simmons. In fact, I went on the train. One of my playmates, Wilbur Williamson, lived right around the corner

on Johnson Street, and his dad worked for the railroad. We got to see specialties like the pullman car or the baggage car with the post office section on it, which was unusual.

JP: You, of course, had moved away from there by the time of World War II, but do you know anything about what the railroad traffic was like there during the war or before the war, at Cherry Point?

Dr. Richardson: Yes, only from what my father and my sister and friends would tell me. The traffic was terrific. Just like it was when they were moving the National Guard to Camp Glenn in the summertime, before the war broke out. From what my father said, at that time, the Atlantic Coast Line was hauling them to Jacksonville, Wilmington and there was another place down there called Holly Ridge, Camp Davis.

JP: That's where I had my induction physical examination.

Dr. Richardson: So, the Atlantic Coast Line was very busy, and then the Norfolk and Southern was very busy, from what they tell me. When I say busy, we're talking about 8, 10 car loads and then the freight that they hauled, the tanks and the jeeps. The freight trains would number 50 to 100 cars.

JP: All of those trains would come through New Bern?

Dr. Richardson: Yes, they would come through New Bern. The Wilmington train, of course, would be coming from South Carolina up this way because there was no siding at that time going to Cherry Point.

JP: Across the street from your store where the Terminal Hotel was located, south of that hotel sight is vacant property now and the

Bishop homes are being built on it. Do you recall what used to be there?

Dr. Richardson: Yes. There were two two-story homes there. One was occupied by a Daniels family, who was an engineer on the Norfolk Southern, and next to that was the Hardison family, and he was a policeman. He had one son. The Daniels had two boys our age. Then next to that, was what we called the Merrit boarding house. My familiarity with that was, that the employees were mostly girls when they opened the sewing room around 1929 or 1930; they didn't have a place to stay, and he had a dozen or more rooms that he rented out to these young girls that worked at the sewing room. He also ran a dining place, Mr. Merrit and his wife and her sister. Then next to that, was a two-story house, and the Edwards family lived in it. They had a daughter that ended up as an anesthetist there at Kafer Hospital, Kathleen Edwards. Then next to that, was Rufus Gaskins' father. I do not remember his father's name. His father was a painter, and he also did commercial fishing, but Rufus grew up in the crowd. As you know now, Rufus was quite successful when he came back from the war. He opened up the Country Kitchen, a family dinning room. Before then, he had a hamburger stand across the river. I forget the name of it. It was very popular. When they built the four lane highway, they eliminated his place.

JP: Ernest, how much do you remember about Pinnix Drug Store, which is on the corner across from your store? When was it started? What do you recall about it?

Dr. Richardson: I remember Mr. Pinnix as a child because when we'd get cuts or stick a nail in our foot, rather than run to the doctor, we would go there. We didn't have the money to go to a doctor as often as we would cut ourselves or step on a nail; we went barefooted. I believe in those days it was two dollars to go to an office. Just below Pinnix Drug Store on Queen Street and Griffin Street was Dr. Caton's hospital and office. Around on Middle Street, was Dr. Raymond Pollock, and then just below him on the corner of Johnson and Craven Street, was Dr. Richard Duffy. All three of them had a reputation amongst the children as being pretty rough. "Now, this is going to hurt you more than me" type of thing when they would lance a boil or take and open up an abscess. We would go to Mr. Pinnix and Mr. Pinnix would cleanse the wound, if I remember rightly, with peroxide, which amazed us, and then paint it with iodine, which would burn, and if he was still holding us, he would put on tape. I don't believe we had band aides in those days. He would put a piece of tape and a piece of cotton over it and send us home and tell us to keep it clean, and if it started turning red, call our doctor. He had a pharmacist there that I remember who went by the name of Willis, and those two ran it. Mr. Willis left and Mr. Chadwick took his place. Then, Johnny McDaniel came when I was in high school and worked with them and those three, McDaniel, and Mr. Chadwick, and Mr. Pinnix were there until 1935. In the beginning the drugstore was the downstairs of Mrs. Minnie Bynum Smith's home, which was a typical southern home of those days, with a fairly large front yard loaded with flowers, and a modest porch.

There was a hallway that went upstairs, which was the second floor and Mrs. Smith's home.

JP: Pinnix was down on the first floor.

Dr. Richardson: Pinnix was down on the first floor of the home.

JP: That's a one story building now.

Dr. Richardson: Yes, but it was a beautiful two story with several gables, painted green and white, and beautiful, beautiful flower garden all around.

JP: Was that building torn down and this other one erected?

Dr. Richardson: Yes, that was torn down along about 1934 or 1935. As a small boy, I used to go over there on a Friday evening and play Parcheesi with the two ladies. She had a Mrs. Lane as a companion there with here. Then, there would be one or two more children in the neighborhood, and we would have a Parcheesi night on Friday nights. That was something we all looked forward to with these ladies. Both were very lovely people and very interested in all of us. There was another boy in the neighborhood, Wardie Gaskins.

JP: I remember Wardie.

Dr. Richardson: He would be in it. I don't recall what Wardie's father did, but I remember his mother was named Miss Mabel Gaskins, and there was Wardie and his younger brother. One of my father's hunting dogs bit Wardie on the hand. We were trying to take a squirrel from him, and the dog bit Wardie. Dr. Ford was the health doctor, and since we had to have the dog executed and his head sent to Raleigh to check for rabies, Dr. Ford said it would be foolish to take a chance and

wait for the report, so, he started him on rabies shots, and he had two or three, which were terrible. I'd go down to the health department, which seems to me like it was in a room down where the City Hall is now, and we both came back crying.

JP: How were the treatments given? Where were the injections made?

Dr. Richardson: In the abdominal wall. He got two or three before the report got back.

JP: Was the dog positive or negative?

Dr. Richardson: Negative.

JP: A waste of pain!

Dr. Richardson: Oh it was! It was amazing. I do remember that. We'd go down and we'd both come back crying. I'd tell him, "Oh, it's going to be all right." I felt bad cause it was our dog that bit him. Then, we'd get home and mother would cry and tell us all not to cry and go on out and play, it would turn out to be good news. Sure enough, about the third treatment, the report came back.

JP: Ernest, let me take you down the street to the corner of Johnson Street and Hancock Street, the northwest corner where the Pepsi-Cola factory stood. How about telling me what you remember about the Pepsi-Cola factory.

Dr. Richardson: Oh, that was a fascinating place for us as kids. They had this tremendous space in the back for the trucks and loading. It was the most imposing building in the area.

JP: This was the first Pepsi-Cola factory ever erected.

Dr. Richardson: First Pepsi. It had beautiful bricks, handmade bricks, I guess. They were different from what you see now, I know. Then they had this entrance, which was marble flooring and marble steps to go up. Then, it had an opening that was sort of like a porte-co-chere. It would open up on Hancock Street and it opened up on Johnson Street, because if it was raining and you were coming home from school, you'd always run up there to get out of the rain until it slacked up to get home. Then too, the men were very nice. I do remember being given, every now and then when they were bottling, a Pepsi-Cola, but I don't remember what the bottle looked like. The only bottle I remember was, after they went bankrupt here, it came in a great big bottle, twelve ounces for a nickel. That's not the way it was when it was operating. Another thing that fascinated us, was Mr. Bradham had a lot of stuffed animals in his office; a red fox, and a beaver, I believe. Every now and then, he or one of the managers would say, "You kids want to see what a beaver looks like?" We'd go up there and see this beaver. None of us had ever seen a beaver, except in the movies on a Saturday at the western movies. That was a big thing.

JP: Tell me what you remember about Mr. Bradham.

Dr. Richardson: I don't remember too much about him, except that they were very patient and tolerant of us as children. That's really all I can remember, except his son, Caleb, married a very attractive girl, Morris girl.

JP: Heydee Morris.

Dr. Richardson: She had a lovely sister that was in my class.

JP: Phyllis.

Dr. Richardson: Phyllis, and a wonderful brother. I forget his name. Do you remember his name?

JP: Parker.

Dr. Richardson: Yes, Parker Morris. He was just as nice. And it was such a tragedy, Phyllis got killed in our senior year in high school riding in a coupe, on the beach at Morehead.

JP: In Morehead after a dance.

Dr. Richardson: In Morehead after a dance, yes. That's all that I remember. The pepsi plant closed when I was a kid, and I was told that it was because he had bought, or promised to buy, too much sugar. It was right after World War I and the bottom fell out of the sugar, and the place closed.

JP: What happened to the building?

Dr. Richardson: They kept it closed for about two or three years, because we used to go down there. The backyard of the building was so large that we could play ball there. Then too, they had a bricked-in driveway where it was covered where they could drive the trucks up and load them on a platform. Then in the back of that, was a huge warehouse where they stored the empty crates and those that were loaded to be carried out. All this closed up. Most of the equipment was moved out and just left an empty building. The next thing I remember about that, Sealtest or some ice cream company, went there. A family friend, R. E. Smith, knew the manager there. That was another big

thing for the neighborhood because they were always giving us a thing called squeeze cups, which was a sherbet and an ice cream. The only one I can recall there was Mr. R. E. Smith. His daughter is Evelyn and she married Kenneth Morris, and that's the one that taught me to dance.

JP: What's on that site now?

Dr. Richardson: After the ice cream plant was there, Tom Gay used it as a beer warehouse, then Maola went there. They were there only a short time when they moved out to their present location in Riverside. It was along about then that I left and went to Chapel Hill, and I lost contact with what happened after that.

JP: You don't know when it was torn down?

Dr. Richardson: No. I remember that Tom Gay went there and was a dealer for either Ballentine's beer, or Schlitz beer, or it could have been Pabst Blue Ribbon. The reason I remember that, we liked to duck hunt, and he loved to duck hunt. He went to Mattamuskeet, and he used to love to come in and show us a couple of geese and three or four big ducks he'd killed. My brother always liked to say, "Well, look what I got yesterday. I haven't had a chance to dress them", and would show him a dozen mallards or greater scaup or lesser scaup. We were just kids. He just became somebody who'd always waive his hand at us. We never got any beer from him. That was a No, No.

JP: I wonder what happened to all the brick in that building.

Dr. Richardson: I really don't know. I've often wondered that too. And I don't know who tore it down. The Masonic order finally

acquired the building and land.

JP: The Shriners certainly put up a parking lot there.

Dr. Richardson: Yes. They ended up with the building. I don't know whether it was torn down when they got it or whether they tore it down. The next thing that's real interesting is, the theater that was on the corner of Hancock and Johnson, was the Masonic Theater, one of the oldest in North Carolina.

JP: That's on the southeast corner, caddie cornered across from the Pepsi-Cola factory.

Dr. Richardson: Yes, and across from the old Griffin School building, which was built, I believe, in 1925.

JP: That was the high school building.

Dr. Richardson: Yes, the high school building. The Shriners got the Pespsi property because they hold their ceremonies here. There just wasn't any parking, and they parked over there. During my stay in high school, the Pepsi-Cola building was there.

JP: I remember that too. Let's go over again to the Masonic Theater. When you grew up, what memories do you have of the old Masonic Theater?

Dr. Richardson: As I said, the Kafers were the managers for the theater for the Masons. They had a live orchestra that played on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday nights.

JP: In the pit?

Dr. Richardson: Yes, it was in a pit. Then on Saturdays, they had a piano player and a drummer. I can't think of his name, but he

always fascinated us playing those drums on a Saturday. The other thing about the theater was, on Friday nights they would have special night, family night. They would give away either turkeys or geese or big box of groceries. They would give away ten prizes. They would take and hold the stubs of the tickets and put them in a great big container, and then have someone on the front row, the front row was always occupied by children, come up and draw the winning numbers. My sister or my brother was always bringing home a goose or a turkey. These events would occur during the Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons.

JP: Did they award the prizes before the movie was shown or after?

Dr. Richardson: Between the movies.

JP: The same movie would be shown twice.

Dr. Richardson: Yes. They would start at, I believe, 7:00 and end about 8:30, and then take about half an hour to give out the prizes. and joke and carry on with the winner. Mr. Kafer and Mr. George Misty were very good hosts.

JP: Do you remember the silent movies there?

Dr. Richardson: I sure do. I can't think of the lady's name but I remember a movie called, I believe it was, "Ramona." There was a song "Ramona," and along near the end, this lady would come out and sing and the pianist would accompany her, and we'd all be surprised at that. That was a big talking thing to have her to sing while the movie was going on. It was a very popular song during that period in time.

JP: Do you remember the first talking movies?

Dr. Richardson: Yes. I think my brother and I handed out advertisements to get to it. I believe it was Al Jolson. That's my recollection of the first one I ever saw. He sang the song "Mammy", and that's about all I can remember about that movie, except that it was jammed and packed. The talking process I believe was called video-tone.

JP: Do you have memories about the way announcements would be made of fires breaking out in the Masonic? When you were in the Masonic and there was a fire in New Bern, do you remember how the firemen were alerted in the audience?

Dr. Richardson: Yes. There was a large clock there, and, if there was a fire, a red light came on. Any firemen there would leave. It was amazing that they had such a good fire department because it was mostly volunteer. That's my recollection of how they knew it was a fire.

JP: I think they even flashed a number that would locate the fire in a certain part of town.

Dr. Richardson: I forgot, that's right. The fire boxes in parts of town were numbered; the light would come on and the number behind it.

JP: Did you happen to be in the Masonic Theater when Lindberg was flying across the Atlantic? The reason I ask, I was there, and they would interrupt the movie periodically and give progress reports on his position.

Dr. Richardson: That's one I missed. I don't remember that.

JP: Let me take you further down into town to the Teacherage. The Teacherage was where many of the lady teachers at the school stayed, is that right?

Dr. Richardson: That's right. Mrs. Newberry ran it. Harry Sultan ended up owning the building and I ended up buying it from him.

JP: Where was this located?

Dr. Richardson: Let's start on the corner of Pollock and Hancock Street. In the beginning there was a big double story, gabled house there where the Godley's lived.

JP: Now, is that on the southwest corner where the Blue Gable is now?

Dr. Richardson: That's right, southwest corner. Mrs. Godley and there were several people there. Mrs. Lane lived there; her daughter; and Elizabeth Ammons lived there, and that was her grandmother; and then there was a young boy, I can't think of his name, that lived there and I believe he was related to Mrs. Godley. I can't remember exactly when the place was torn down, but they put up a service station. The building, which is still standing, because of its design, was quite a show place. It was called the Blue Gable service station. A funny thing, we used to refer to the house that was there when Mrs. Godley was there, as the Green Gable house because it had these gables all around the thing on the Pollock Street side. Then, next to it was another house that I think was far more interesting than anything else. I never could get people interested in it. Miss Marks lived

there.

JP: Harriet Marks.

Dr. Richardson: Yes.

JP: And Belle Hyman.

Dr. Richardson: Yes. Mr. Hyman was a friend of my fathers. I think Mr. Hyman was a hide dealer; anyway, my father knew him. My father used to say that it used to be a government building when all these ladies were talking about Tryon Palace, Governor Tryon, but no one ever paid much attention to it. So, when the Teacherage closed, and Harry Sultan got hold of it.

JP: The Teacherage was next to where?

Dr. Richardson: Next to Miss Marks. Miss Marks' home was noted for the wrought iron fence around it and the beautiful flowers in her backyard, which extended half way of the block. The lot was about two to three hundred feet deep. Next to it was a Teacherage.

JP: What was that building like, the Teacherage?

Dr. Richardson: The Teacherage was a big, white building too, with a tremendous porch. It extended the same depth as Miss Marks' building, to about two to three hundred feet. Attached on to the house were these rooms, apartments, where the teachers lived. It was a two-story attachment. I think just about every teacher, that wasn't a native, resided there. I don't know of any other place.

JP: As I recall, that was not connected with the school system. It was a private enterprise.

Dr. Richardson: Yes. Mrs. Newberry had a son.

JP: Alpha Omega.

Dr. Richardson: Yes. I didn't know the Omega, but I remember Alpha.

JP: The first and the last.

Dr. Richardson: I don't know whether it caught on fire or whether the teachers found a better place to room, but it closed. When I came back, it was closed. I finally got it in about 1947, '48 and tore it down and built the office building there. That was in 1959. I don't know what caused the Teacherage to close, but from what I understand, every available space in New Bern during the war was taken up, and then when the war ended, it seemed like New Bern just withered on the vine. Next to the teacherage Miss Mary Ward lived in a large two-story house. This was Aflred Ward's aunt.

JP: Do you have any special memories of the old Gaston Hotel on South Front Street?

Dr. Richardson: Yes. The Gaston Hotel, wasn't it run by Mr. Blades?

JP: I'm not sure.

Dr. Richardson: On the corner from it on Middle and South Front, was first a tremendous dry goods store, department store, Sam Lipman & Sons. It was there, oh I guess, even when I was born. I always remember it being there.

JP: It was right on the corner of South Front and Middle on the southeast corner?

Dr. Richardson: Right. As you recall, it had an entrance and

the flooring was covered over by marble and then there were glass windows. It was a tremendous store that Mr. Lipman had. They stayed there for years. It seems to me like they didn't move until about 1932, '33. The Gaston Hotel was still in business then, but I don't remember who was running it or much about it.

JP: Was Braddy's Cleaning store there?

Dr. Richardson: I know there was a Braddy's laundry, but I don't remember where it was.

JP: I think it ended up right next to where the Lipman's were, between that and the Gaston Hotel.

Dr. Richardson: And then there was the Gaston.

JP: Yes.

Dr. Richardson: The laundry closed shortly after I came back here. It seems like the Gaston took it over and made a dining room out of it. Then, Louis Howard took it and remodeled it, and it was quite a show place for a number of years. The rooms amazed me. The rooms of the hotel extended both ways, all beneath where Braddy's laundry and Sam Lipman's used to be. Upstairs, the rooms extended from Middle Street to half the block in the opposite direction on South Front Street. Mr. Howard came along and made a large dining room out of the place, and remodeled the rooms, and enjoyed quite a success for a few years.

JP: Then it burned down.

Dr. Richardson: Then it burned down.

JP: This was in the sixties.

Dr. Richardson: Yes.

JP: My mother was in there at that time and had to be carried out down a ladder.

Dr. Richardson: I can understand why it went so fast. When they tore the Teacherage down, those sills under those buildings were put together with wooden pegs, and they were rough hewed, and they were tremendous. They weren't 4x8's, they were more like 6x8's, and they hadn't been planed. They were solid. The man that demolished it for me, charged me $1,000, and then when I paid him, he said he felt guilty because he had sold $5,000 worth of material out of it. Let me tell you about the Marks' house. My good friends, Miss Gertrude Carraway, and Charlotte Williams, who was Charlotte Duffy, Dr. Richard Duffy's daughter, and I said, "Charlotte, seems to me like my father used to tell me that the Marks' house was a government building; Charlotte said she had never heard of that, but Miss Gertrude will know." So, I told Miss Gertrude, and then got my wife, who also was a friend of Miss Caraway's, to look into it. She said, "there was talk of it being the custom's building, but we really don't have any interest." Before we tore it down, I had my wife go back to her and say, "Do you think the Kellenbergers would be interested in it?", "No, cause there's really no proof of it." When the demolishing crew got there and started tearing it down, they come running over to my office excited. The first thing they uncovered was a cistern. The kitchen was attached to the house by an enclosed hallway. Under that hallway, was a tremendous cistern that collected rain water. When I say tremendous,

it was as big as an ordinary modern kitchen. today. The cistern was 10, 12 feet deep, circular in shape made of brick and cement.

JP: Was it lined?

Dr. Richardson: It was lined. It was bricked and then it was lined with a smooth cement. The brick was about two bricks thick all around, big round thing. Evidently, it had a hand pump there that pumped water to the house in those days. Nobody believed it. Anyway, that was a surprise. We went on, and the workmen came running back a day or two later, saying, "There's a room there that was evidently used as a large storage closet, and this room is put together with pegs. There are no nails in this part. The back part was an addition. The cistern was evidently covered over so that they could walk to the kitchen, and all that was added on. So, the main part of the house is a box, a square building. In the center of this, is a room, it's a shame to tear it down. It seems as the rest of the house is built around this room." Again, I called the Tryon Palace Commission and nobody believed me. They started dismantling that thing, and someone walked by, I believe Al Ward's father, and they had him come over, and this room was the customs house for Tryon Palace. It was all put together with pegs. The wood was well preserved. Three friends of mine got most of the wood; Kennedy Ward got quite a bit, Jules Warren got quite a bit, and the late Charles Ashford got the wooden floor, which was heart pine and the boards were eight to ten inches wide. Of course, he got the metal fence. Again, the man charged me $2,000 for that, and he said he sure felt bad for charging me because he had

made $10,000 off of the mantels and the fireplaces and the beams and seals.

JP: He didn't have to tell you that, did he?

Dr. Richardson: I think he was rubbing in it. I really felt bad about tearing it down. If they had just removed the back part of the house, because the rest of the house was there. It was just that that's where the customs officer and his family lived. The customs office itself, was in the center. It was a shame that it wasn't recognized before it was demolished.

JP: Are there any other particular places in town that you remember, special places like that?

Dr. Richardson: No. I was just associated with that. When I came to New Bern in 1948, Dr. Latham had bought a house from a music teacher, Miss Nina Basnight.

JP: Where was that house?

Dr. Richardson: That house was on the opposite corner from where we're talking, about midway of the block that was surrounded on the west side by Hancock Street and on the other side by Middle Street and the front was Pollock Street. To bring you up to date on that; there was a large white house, I do not know who lived there then, but it was a World War I house with a long porch all around it, on the corner. This was torn down and a filling station was put there.

JP: Now, this is the corner where the cleaning establishment is located now at the corner of Hancock and Pollock?

Dr. Richardson: No, where the cleaning establishment is located

used to be occupied by a large two-story wooden building owned by Dan Roberts.

JP: Across from the Blue Gables?

Dr. Richardson: No.

JP: On the southeast corner?

Dr. Richardson: Southeast corner, that's right. Then, Harry Sultan, back there after World War II, built his Sultan apartments.

JP: Wasn't that on the corner of Broad Street and Metcalf Street?

Dr. Richardson: No, that was where his sister lived.

JP: Where Freda lived

Dr. Richardson: Harry lived in the apartments on Pollock Street. Then next to that, it seems to me like there was a house there, but I can't remember.

JP: On Pollock Street?

Dr. Richardson: Yes. Then next, was Miss Nina Basnight with this tremendous pecan tree in the front yard. When I say tremendous, I mean the diameter would be something like 4 to 5 feet.

JP: This was across the street from the Athens Theater?

Dr. Richardson: Right directly across from the Athens Theater. Next to that, was the old Ward building. There was not more than twelve inches between the Basnight house and the Ward building. Both those building were before 1900. During the Depression, there was a wooden structure on the corner of Pollock and Middle Street. I was trying to think whether Bill Blades or his sister, Mrs. Robinson, owned the building.

JP: Before McLellan's, when this building was there, it was a hardware store.

Dr. Richardson: Yes, that's right. I was trying to think what hardware store that was. My father knew, I've heard him talk about it. It wasn't Baxters and it wasn't Mitchells.

JP: Mitchells was on South Front Street next to Gaston Hotel.

Dr. Richardson: That's right.

JP: Across the street from this building, caddie cornered across the Elk's Temple corner, was Mr. Bradham's original Pepsi-Cola location.

Dr. Richardson: Then, they had Shaw's Soda Shop there.

JP: Where Mr. Bradham's used to be. Bradham was first, then Shaw.

Dr. Richardson: I remember Dr. Harvey Wadsworth telling me about Bradham being there.

JP: You don't remember that yourself?

Dr. Richardson: No, that was too long ago. But I do remember Shaw's Soda Shop being there.

JP: So do I.

Dr. Richardson: When they tore down the Basnight house, it was sold to the First Baptist Church, which is on Middle Street. That's when they discovered that that house was put together with wooden pegs and it was before 1900. Mr. Ward finally decided to tear his down, and that was another wooden one. Where Dr. Latham had his office upstairs and Miss Nina Basnight had her studio downstairs, and living

quarters, upstairs, Dr. Latham had a door lock latch on the door, which was antique. His son Fred wanted it, and I told him, sure, take it. I don't know how it worked, there was something odd about it. You twisted the thing to lock it. Then of course, he had a real Audubon red bird print there that Mrs. Latham wanted.

JP: Did you buy that building?

Dr. Richardson: I bought it from Mrs. Latham after I'd been here three or four years. She wanted to sell it. In those days, most things were done by word of mouth. Dr. Latham said that I could rent the place, and then as I got on my feet, I could buy it. That was the deal. It was the deal that I would buy the practice if something happened to him. I had no idea, his doctor in Richmond had no idea, that he was so sick. The man died two weeks after we had talked.

JP: Ernest, when we were talking at the last time, you had gotten into the Green Springs story. Green Springs was a place where all of us used to congregate and go swimming. What are your memories of that place and where was it?

Dr. Richardson: It's kind of hard for me, that's been so long ago. It seemed to me like Emma Beasley's father and mother owned a large lot over there. Miss Jane Stewart and her sister, Sarah Stewart, also owned lots in the area known as Green Springs.

JP: Jane Stewart, and her sister, Sarah.

Dr. Richardson: Yes, Stewart. Miss Stewart owned a large lot.

JP: This is on the Neuse river.

Dr. Richardson: Yes, on the Neuse river with a large, sandy beach.

They did not object to us going over there and swimming and picnicking, as I recall. We always cleaned up any debris we might have created. I guess that went along with the privilege. It just was sort of a meeting place. There were several places like that around New Bern. There was a Crabby's place where the Meadows' Shipyard was, but that was more on the mouth of Trent river than it was on the Neuse; whereas, this was really on the Neuse and it had such a nice, pretty beach, and it was so accessible, if you could find a ride, or if you could ride your bicycle over there.

JP: Who went there to swim?

Dr. Richardson: The ones that I remember are: Sonny Foote; and Teeny Guerrant was in my class; Ben Hurst, I remember; and I remember Rosa and Lily Willis; the Gwaltney girls, Amy and Maude Gretchem Jones. It just seemed like a bunch of that age group went there. That's about all I can remember, except it was real nice.

JP: Later, Jane Stewart made this area into a garden with statues all around. Do you remember that?

Dr. Richardson: Yes, and the statues were attractive, that's all I remember about it because there was such a transition in my life, of leaving home and going to school.

JP: Do you have any other memories of growing up in New Bern you'd like to talk about, before we get to Chapel Hill?

Dr. Richardson: We discussed the casino out at Ghent and the one out at the end of Oaks Road. The water and light plant on First Street where Mr. Godfoy, when I was a kid, reigned as the light man.

I remember when I went to college, the first thing I learned in social science, someone was telling me about the light plant in New Bern; the electric plant was such a unique thing, and they made their own electricity and sold it to the citizens. I think that's right. I thought that was amazing that little New Bern, they would mention that up at Chapel Hill, the University. Another thing that was fascinating and I don't think people realize it, the Atlantic Coast Line had these tremendous trains, like you'd see in the movies, locomotives, steam. They had this turntable at the end of Queen Street. They had this roundhouse there where the train would go on a side track to the turntable and they would turn it around and it would come back on the track headed for Wilmington. Well, that was fascinating to see them turn that train around and then let it come back on the track and then backup and get the cars. That was something that I don't think a lot of people in New Bern even knew was there.

JP: There was nothing going out into the river though. There was just the building.

Dr. Richardson: There was just the long warehouse building there, which was an excellent place for swimming as well as for fishing. Minerva, our nurse, would carry us down there as kids to fish with fishing pole and worms. That was quite a treat for the kids. We always had to be good, and had to keep the yard clean before she'd carry us down there fishing. In the summertime, that was really nice. There used to be a lot of fish around New Bern; croakers, trout, spot.

JP: And flounder.

Dr. Richardson: There's one thing I'd like to mention. People don't realize it, but we had quite a bit of polio at times in this area. Of course, I can remember talk that they really didn't know where it came from. They thought it came from the throat, the nose, or this and that. They never closed the theaters down, but the closed down some of the playgrounds that were scattered around town. They advised avoiding big crowds. I remember that they had sewers emptying into the Trent River at the end of Metcalf Street and out at on East Front Street on the Neuse River.

JP: And right down New Street.

Dr. Richardson: Yeah. Then, they had it emptying out at Mamie Sadlers at the end of Avenue A. I remember those places. When we found out what was causing polio, which was not until 1960's, and they had a vaccine, I'm amazed that more of us didn't get it. I guess as Dr. Patterson told my mother, "From all these kids growing up swimming in the river, they were immune to polio by the time they were big enough to catch it." I often thought maybe there was more truth to that than there was just comment.

JP: What about typhoid fever?

Dr. Richardson: I don't remember typhoid fever, but I knew they used to vaccinate us for it, but I do remember the polio being a problem and a worry. Everybody would try and leave and go out of town to the mountains where they didn't seem to have as much of it; but we did and Kinston did, and of course, it was from the sewage. That's one of the medical things that I would like to bring up.

JP: Tell me about going to Carolina, Chapel Hill.

Dr. Richardson: That's another story that's really comical, and yet, a lucky break for me. I had no idea of going to college because I didn't have any money. I worked for a week at a lumber mill, and it liked to of kill me. I was sick for three weeks. I made eleven dollars and paid about eighteen dollars in doctor bills and drug store bills. My hands were so sore they had to stay bandaged for two weeks. I remember Dr. Patterson having me soak them in, I believe, it was carbolic acid solution and warm water, every day. The splinters had festered in my hand and they were swollen, and they stayed that way for about two weeks. That's when they told me that they didn't think I would ever be able to do real heavy physical work, and that I should take and consider teaching or something like that. Dr. Patterson said, "well, he could be a doctor." My mother said, "he could be a preacher." She had been under the influence of Dr. Hamm, before I was even born. He was an evangelist from Charlotte or some place up in the middle of the state who came here, and she had been to hear him and she was carried away with him. She always thought that somebody in the family ought to be a preacher. Anyway, I hadn't even applied for admission to Chapel Hill and so on the Fourth of July after being advised to go and apply, my friend and benefactor, Dr. Patterson, and my mother, I sent a post card to Chapel Hill. About three or four days later, I got an admission form. I filled that out, and then Dr. Patterson had me pen a letter that I needed financial help. I met a man that became a good friend of mine for the next four years at Chapel Hill,

Ed Lanier. He was in charge of the program that Roosevelt had just established, The National Youth Act. They paid you twenty-five cents an hour, but you could not earn more than twenty dollars a month. Board at that time was twenty-five dollars on the outside and at Swain Hall was twenty dollars a month. I got the necessary letters, and I remember Mr. Shields, the principal, saying, "Well, you're sure going to have to study harder." He tried to get me to go to chiropractor school. Of course, that upset my mother. Dr. Patterson insisted that I go on to Chapel Hill, which I did. It was a struggle. After I got up there and talked to Mr. Lanier, I found out that I could get a note signed for my tuition and one for my room. The ones that came to my help there, again, was Dr. Patterson, who signed all my notes for four years and Mr. Pinnix, the druggist, and then, there were one or two more that would sign toward the end. Since there were so many of them we had to sign, we were on the quarter system, you had to get notes signed three times a year. It would be two notes each time, for room and for tuition. But we got through that. I remember Dr. Bost says, you ought to get a B.S. in medicine. Then, I came home and was talking to Dr. Patterson, and he says, "You need an education first." I went then and talked to Dr. Hobbs, who was the Dean of the Arts and Science school. He said, "yes, if you can afford it." He said, "it's going to take a year more, instead of three years." So, I came back and Dr. Patterson said, "Well, you can sweat that out as you go along", which we did. I worked the whole four years and I switched from a B.S. to a B.A. Since I had started out in chemistry, that's something

I love, I had taken chemistry just about the whole four years through physical chemistry, I had a major in that. Then, Dr. Coker, a professor, had taken over as head of the department from Dr. Wilson, who was known as "Froggie" Wilson who retired. Dr. Coker was doing some research at Beaufort, at the marine lab. At that time, it was the Duke marine lab, but he was doing some work there. One summer, I worked there with him, and we raised and hatched diamond backed terrapins, which had just about disappeared in our sounds around here. They were very popular around Baltimore. They had discovered a way to hatch the eggs in the hatchery at Beaufort and would turn them loose, and lo and behold, the terrapin came back and the price fell, and no one was interested anymore in diamond back terrapins. But I learned a lot there and became interested in zoology. I ended up majoring in zoology because of Dr. Coker. Then it came time when I graduated. There are things that I remember about Chapel Hill that are so nice. They had Grail dances for a dollar. I would go to one or two of those a quarter. I ran into a man that influenced me a lot. They called him "Bull" Olson. He was a professor of English and he taught public speaking. I would freeze up in his class. He had me to stay after class one day, and he said, "What in the world is the matter with you?" He said, "I watch you at dances over there at the Tin Can, and it seems to me like you get a beer, I know that's beer you got, you aren't supposed to, but that's beer." I said, "It couldn't be more than one", and he said, "That's all you need." He said, "I don't want you to think I'm picking on you, but from now 'til we finish this

course, you're going to give us a talk on a paper every week in here." I said, "But the rest of them don't." He said, "I'm not interested in the rest", he said, "You!" Sure enough, I had to write a speech and then deliver it before the class for about two thirds of that course. I owe him a great deal because it got me over a lot of bashfulness. It didn't teach me too much about writing because I've never been able to write too well, but I did give some good talks. He gave me an "A" on public speaking, which was English 44 then. In those days, classes were not as large evidently as they are now. They were only 4,000, 4,500 students in the whole University. Another outstanding professor was Dr. English Bagby. On one or two occasions, we'd take an exam and instead of completing it, I'd finish half of it and skip on to the next question. He wanted to know what was wrong with me, so he asked me to stay in, and I did. He had me to read this paragraph, and then I was to write and tell him what I had read and what I made out of it. Again, I pulled the same trick, and he said, "it was fright." He said, "you can get some extra points if you'll come and do some experiments with one of the graduate students," and so I did. One of the experiments was that he would wet my finger with salt water and I'd put it down. I didn't notice the little brass tack at first, and I'd put my fingers down on that, and then he would push a button under the table and a little electric charge would come up and I'd jump. Finally, after three or four days of that, it didn't take me long to realize that there was something in that board, and I discovered the tacks. Dr. Bagby was real pleased, says, my power of observation

had improved tremendously. It did help me because when I went to med school, I was commented on for my observation powers. That was outstanding. Dick Snipes was in class with me and he was a friend of Dr. Davison at Duke. Davison wanted him to carry him fishing. He said, "he wanted to get English," that was Dr. Bagby's first name, and they were good friends. I believe one went to Princeton and one went to Harvard or Yale, Davison did, I believe. Anyway, they were good friends. Dick Snipes asked me to go along. We went to Hamlet, where Dick lived on Saturday and went to this pond and had this bateau, which is a narrow boat about fifteen feet long. I think Dr. Bagby weighed somewhere around 250, 260 pounds, and maybe, Dr. Davison weighed around 200, 230 pounds. Bagby was on one end of the boat and the other end would go up. Dr. Davison was in the middle and Snipes and I were on the other end, and we would push and paddle the boat until we found the fish. I never forgot that. We did end up catching a hundred and some brim in the pond. They were on the bed, according to Dr. Davison. Dr. Davison had to tell Dr. Bagby, "For Gods sake, quit moving around or we're all going to get soaking wet!" It was one of the highlights of my stay, to of been privileged to go for a day with those two famous men.

JP: Ernest, after Chapel Hill and much discussion, I know you weighed a lot of factors about where to go to medical school, but you finally started at Carolina and spent two years at the University in medical school. Then, you went to Jefferson in Philadelphia. Am I correct in that?

Dr. Richardson: Right. When I went to Chapel Hill, money was a tremendous problem, and again, I was fortunate. I was able to get a scholarship. But due to the Depression, the bonds had decreased in their payments. It was worth about $200 when before it was close to $1,000, but that paid for my microscope. Again, Dr. Patterson signed my notes and I was able to sign up for my laboratory fees and my tuition. Then unfortunately at the end of my first year, I had my tonsils out. At the time I was working with the agriculture department measuring tobacco and cotton and corn allotments during summer vacation. The operation was done in the office.

JP: Who did this?

Dr. Richardson: Dr. Kafer did it in his office. I evidently aspirated some blood, and for two or three weeks I went around coughing and running a fever. I went up to Chapel Hill. I had a job doing histories on new students. I was sitting there and Dr. Stone, one of the student physicians, heard me coughing, and he examined me. He thought I had tuberculosis, and he and Dr. Berryhill put me to bed. Then they decided after they x-rayed me, it was not tuberculosis, and they sent me over to Duke, to a Dr. Smith, who was a friend of both Dr. Berryhill and Dr. Stone. It turned out it was a lung abscess, but they put on the record "localized congested area in the hilum of my upper right lung". So, that got me off of the abscess. It took me a month to recover. Sulfanilamide had just come out, and Dr. Stone and Dr. Berryhill gave me sulfanilamide for two weeks until I turned blue, according to Stone, and was urinating blood. Another one came

out about that time, and Duke was allowed to use it as experimental, sulfapyridine. So, I stopped the sulfanilamide and went to sulfapyridine. That knocked my blood count down, but it knocked out the fever, and the cough. Dr. Smith said, "the area was healing well and not to put me on anything and send me home to rest, read, and lots of milk and fruit," which I did. Dr. Berryhill promised to save me a place; said "there was no way," I was out a month, "that I could make up a month in the second year and that I would start over that next fall; he'd save a place in class for me," which he did. In the meantime, I worked at the Hotel Queen. In the summer I landed a job working in Jacksonville. I was a linesman. The team consisted of a surveyor from Duke, myself, a Jacksonville boy and two colored men. We surveyed the right of way for power lines connecting Camp Lejeune and Cherry Point.

JP: We're going to take you through medical school a little fast now, and we get you to Jefferson, and you graduated. There are a lot of interesting things there, but to get you back to New Bern, let's go ahead and see where you went after medical school. Dr. Richardson: I went to Episcopal Hospital in Philadelphia
at the time for a one year rotating internship.

JP: As an intern.

Dr. Richardson: It was a 550 bed hospital. Part of it was run by Penn, the surgical section; the medical section, was run by Temple; the obstetrical section was run by both Penn and Jefferson. Again, things were different. There were not many of us, and I got to know

several of my professors and instructors well there at the hospital. I got interested in obstetrics through the head of the department there, Owen Tolar and Ed Schumann. Ed Schumann was former head of the department at the University of Pennsylvania. At the same time, I had developed the knack for diagnosis. Dr. Kay, who was professor of medicine at Temple, took me in. I met a young man out at University of Pennsylvania, and I was real fortunate. Penicillin had just come out, and I had this young girl, twelve years old, with septicemia and was dying. We had sulfadiazine, and it had absolutely no influence on her. I met, I believe his name was Ferguson, I'm not sure. He was in charge of the use of penicillin at the University Of Pennsylvania. I talked with him, and he said, "if I would keep records on the young girl, and do all the blood studies, and give him permission to use the case, and collect her urine and send it back to them every twenty-four hours so they could reclaim the penicillin, that he would furnish me the penicillin." And I did, and within forty-eight hours, there was a tremendous improvement in the girl. Instead of being moribund, she came to life. Within five days, her fever was gone, and within eight days, she was up. In the meantime, I kept the records. We had to do blood cultures. To be on the safe side, we did three blood cultures a day. The blood cultures became negative after the third day. The young lady got well, went home, and for the whole year I was there, I thought I had a daughter or sister. She'd call and invite me out to her house. It made me feel good. It was the first big thing that I'd ever done in medicine.

JP: Ernest, you were at Episcopal Hospital for a year?

Dr. Richardson: Yeah.

JP: Then where did you go?

Dr. Richardson: My roommates and I on December 7, 1941, were in our apartment at the Gladstone Hotel at six o'clock when they announced that Pearl Harbor had been attacked. We all four went down the next morning and I enlisted in the Navy, and they enlisted in the Army. My roommates were Clark Rodman, Alec Invir and Frank Nyfony. We were in the reserve. I finished my internship December 31, at midnight. At two o'clock in the morning, the telephone operator called me and says, "Doc, you got a telegram." I told her I didn't know anybody rich enough to send me a telegram, and she said, "Well, you got one, read it!" "Greetings", and I was to proceed and report to a U S Naval Operating Base, Norfolk, Virginia by January 10.

JP: Your internship, was it cut short?

Dr. Richardson: Nine months, that was the limit. They cut three months off the course.

JP: Did they take you in after nine months then?

Dr. Richardson: Yes sir! I mean two hours after I finished! Don't ask me how they knew.

JP: The reason I ask, they told me that. But then when the time came they said, "you've got to have three more months," and I had to find a job for three months. Anyhow, did you go into the Navy then?

Dr. Richardson: Yes sir.

JP: Where did you go in the war? What was your career like?

Dr. Richardson: Before then is an interesting thing I'd like to tell you. Before I went in, Dr. Kay had told me that he had me a fellowship at Crile Clinic, and said that they could keep me out for nine months. The advantage of me doing that was that I would be assured a place when I got out of service. In the meantime, my brother had written to me and told me to go to Europe and not to come to the Pacific. He was a communications officer on a B29 out there at Saipan. So, I turned that down, and I was taken in two hours after I finished my training. I did not go home. I went on and went down to the Naval Base in Philadelphia and saw the disbursing officer and got what they call a dead horse; they paid me a month in advance, and I got my uniforms, coat and hat, from Wannamaker's in Philadelphia. By doing that, I reported on the eighth of January, instead of the tenth, and that made me the senior officer later, of forty-eight doctors. We were divided into groups of two, a squadron of twenty-four LST's. Under each two doctors, there were thirty-eight corpsman. The medical complement was forty aboard a ship. Again, I was very fortunate. I got in with a urologist, Dr. Upchurch, who was in charge of the urology ward, and the STD section, with syphilis and gonorrhea, at the Naval Operating Base. Other than the basic training, which only lasted one week, and that was learning the protocol of the Navy, the rest of the time was spent in the clinic, urology clinic in my case. About the 21st, or 25th of January, we were ordered to Boston where we reported to the Navy Yard and reported aboard the LST 284. Since the Captain of the ship was senior officer of the group, we were in for another fortunate

surprise. Dr. Charles Best, who was a Captain in the Canadian Navy Medical Corps, was on board. Our group was testing a seasick pill, which later turned out to be Dramamine. We had to keep the records of everyone that was even a little dizzy. We had two kinds of pills. One that was the real thing, and one that looked just like it but was nothing put powdered sugar, he said. And sure enough, it worked! It was rough as the devil. We had a good background for training for observation. It was freezing. We went from Boston to Nova Scotia. It took us five days. That's when Dr. Best left us there and went back to bring up another group to get information.

JP: How long were you in the Navy?

Dr. Richardson: From January 8, 1942 to June 15, 1946.

JP: Did you stay in the European area the whole time?

Dr. Richardson: The whole time. Having a brother telling me about the Pacific, I was a little leery of the Pacific. I had a chance to go to the Naval Operating Base in Palermo, Sicily, or coming back to the states. Well, I had learn from some of the men when we shut down from Normandy, some of our crew was sent back to states, and I had heard from one of them and he was already in the Pacific. So, I had a chance to go to Palermo or go back home. They gave you fifteen days and you went on to the West coast, to the Pacific. So, I stayed in the European Mediterranean Theater.

JP: Were you involved in the Normandy Invasion?

Dr. Richardson? Oh yes! While we were reported missing in action, we were on "Exercise Tiger", which if you read some of the accounts,

it was a poorly planed exercise. We, twelve LST's, and we had for an escort, all that we could see was one Canadian frigate. When we were out two days, German E boats came over from, never knew where they came from, Calais or over from St. Lo peninsula, Caen. I'm not sure. I am sure that they came in there like hornets, and they sunk the boat behind me. There was a Richardson aboard that one, and he was missing in action. They got our initials wrong, since we were in the same group, and notified my father that I was missing in action. Of course, he was sick, and he didn't realize what it meant. It was the very next day that they sent a correction that I was well and my ship was safe. The ship in front of us was badly damaged and had to drop behind. The frigate came up and escorted us all back to, I believe, we were in Dartmouth when that fiasco happened.

JP: When you got out of the Navy, where did you go?

Dr. Richardson: When they brought me back home in November of 1945, I was at Norfolk, in charge, after being with men all that time, they had me as physician to 240 WAVES or WRENS. I believe WRENS worked for the British and WAVES were ours. I'd never seen any before. There I was on the second floor with the Chesapeake Bay Fleet Command with Admiral Jupp. Our job was to go out on a shakedown cruise to see which ships that we wanted to moth ball and which we were going to return to the line. My duty was to check the medical facilities and the experience of the crew. We checked everything under the sun from mine sweepers, the destroyer escorts. I believe a destroyer was about as large as we checked. The WAVES were the secretaries in this group.

They had two feathers on the arm. When I'd come back in, I had to hold sick call. I was really proud of myself, or rather, the admiral was. I picked up three cases of tuberculosis in there, and unfortunately, one pregnancy case, and two or three more illnesses; which went on his manifold of what type of work we were doing for our crew work manifest. It made us look like we were busy, which we were.

That was when I first got interested in obstetrics. At the time, I wrote around. I think I wrote to every hospital that had obstetrics and gynecology combination. Most of them in 1946 were separate; obstetrics and gynecology were separate departments. I only got three real good replies. One was from Dr. Telinde at Johns Hopkins, and said he felt so sorry for returning veterans but there was none available. He said he had an obligation to those he was training, but that he was taking a few on if they wanted to come for six months to learn to get the feel of active practice and training, I could come up there. He was taking twelve people on, and offered to take me.

But I would not get any credit for it. I realize now that I would of gotten credit if I'd mention his name and if I'd been in a select group of twelve that he was taking on just to demonstrate to us and assist, but I didn't. I finally heard from Episcopal. Dr. Schumann had said that he had no place. He had two and he named them, and I knew them; Tom Huey went to practice in Charlotte, but that there was a pathology residency open. Well, all I could think of was autopsies.

One more, I was put on standby, a small place. I really don't even remember now where it was. It was one of those I didn't expect to

take me, but just hoping, and they put me on standby. So, the only one I really got was Episcopal. I went to Episcopal in pathology. Dr. William Belk was in charge. He was from Charlotte, but he had his office and had lived in Ardmore all these years. He was a prince of a fellow. The first thing he told me was that I would have to do the autopsies. He said he had sworn he would never do any more. I had no instruction. Willie was my orderly. I never got so lonely, so discouraged in my life as the first two or three months of working down there and doing autopsies at midnight.

JP: You stayed at Episcopal for how long?

Dr. Richardson: One year.

JP: And then where did you go?

Dr. Richardson: Then, I made a terrible mistake. I wrote to Presbyterian in Chicago and Chicago Lying In, Philadelphia Lying In, and New York Lying In. Believe it or not, I was accepted at Chicago Lying In, Dr. Dietman, a very famous man. Especially because of the work I had done for Dr. Schumann while I was on pathology, the placenta. Dr. Barnes Allen, or Allen Barnes, he left Presbyterian and came to Johns Hopkins when Nicholson and Telinde combined obstetrics and gynecology, and Geissinger. I talked to Milt McCall, and he was on his way up to Pittsburgh to assume the duties of head of the department at the University of Pittsburgh. I helped him with his boards. I'd get slides out for him. My job there at Episcopal was to collect all the surgical specimens for Dr. Schumann's staff and put on a review of the past weeks work. I went to Geissinger on McCall's advice.

It was only obstetrics, and I was there a year at Geissinger.

JP: Where is Geissinger?

Dr. Richardson: Geissinger was under the leadership of Dr. Hal Foss in Danville, Pennsylvania. It was considered a second Mayo Clinic because Dr. Foss was Charlie and Will Mayo's first assistant, and he left them. The Geissingers were in the coal business, and left all their money and their coal mines to establish this medical clinic.

JP: You were with Geissinger for a year in obstetrics?

Dr. Richardson: For a year. I had a year in pathology, which the last six months was spent on surgical specimens.

JP: This was Geissinger?

Dr. Richardson: No, this was at Episcopal. The whole year, I learned at Geissinger, bone marrow transfusions in baby's from talking teams at Jefferson who came up there. You gave transfusions through injections through the tibia. Also I was trained in the use of caudal anesthesia.

JP: You worked with some very famous people in your training time. Now, while you were at Geissinger, Dr. Latham was sick in Richmond and he called you down to talk to him.

Dr. Richardson: Yes, I got this call a week before Christmas and he asked me if I would come down and see him. Him having befriended me and knowing him when I was in high school and going to Chapel Hill, I went to see him, no idea other than I knew he was critically ill. When I got there, he approached me right away; he was not one to beat around the bush, wouldn't I consider going down and taking over his

practice? I told him I had never treated a man in my life except for three months on medicine, and that was only six weeks because six weeks of that was for women. He said, "That's all right, there's not that much difference in them", which I found out was erroneous. I, at the time, was having a lot of financial problems facing me; my youngster and my wife had been very good and considerate subsisting on $125.00 a month pay for residents in those days. She had been deprived of a lot of things. I always thought, well, I can always stop out and go back. Now I realize this was a bad mistake because your obligations become greater. I told him I would come down, and lo and behold, two weeks after that, I heard from Mrs. Latham that Dr. Latham had died. She wanted to talk to me. I couldn't get off then because I had gotten off for three days to go see him in Richmond when I was in Danville, Pennsylvania. I told her that during the holiday, I would come down. The holiday was Easter. So, I took off and came down to New Bern. She told me that the office and everything was right there, and all I had to do was to move in and go to work.

JP: This was on Pollock Street?

Dr. Richardson: On Pollock Street. He had a large female practice. He did not do any deliveries at that time. With some feeling that it wasn't quite the thing I should have done because Dr. Foss, when we finished at Geissinger, sent us to the Mayo Clinic for one year gynecology. That is all of the residents that wanted to go to the fellowship at Mayo. That was the center. So again, I turned down the chance to be something, and came on down. I inherited his nurse,

which was worth more than the records.

JP: Who was his nurse?

Dr. Richardson: Mrs. Georgia Laughinghouse. She was a very attractive young woman. The whole town thought the world of her, downtown.

JP: When did you come back?

Dr. Richardson: That was in 1948.

JP: Was it in the middle of the year?

Dr. Richardson: In the middle of the year.

JP: After you finished at Geissinger?

Dr. Richardson: Right. I came down and started right in, and I was busy from the day I walked in until I quit five years ago.

JP: Ernest, this is a good point to stop. Let me come back one more time and devote it entirely to your career in medicine in New Bern, and your memories of medicine.

END OF INTERVIEW