

MEMORIES OF NEW BERN

HELEN RUTH WETHERINGTON SCOTT  
(MRS. LEON C. SCOTT, JR.)

INTERVIEW 1027

This is Dr. Joseph Paterson representing the Memories of New Bern Committee. My number is 1000. I am interviewing Helen Ruth Scott (Mrs. Leon C. Scott, Jr.) at her home at 1504 Trent Boulevard in New Bern. The number of the interview is 1027. The date is January 4, 1993.

DR. PATTERSON: Now, Helen Ruth, the tape is on and I want to tell you for myself and for the Memories committee that I'm really very pleased to be here talking to you and I appreciate you meeting with me. Suppose we start this with my just asking you to tell me something about yourself; when you were born, where you born, where you went to school, where you grew up, and things like that. Then we'll come back to some of these things later.

MRS. SCOTT: Well, I was born October 2, 1920 in St. Luke's Hospital. I was the only one in my family born in a hospital, which is interesting. Then we moved several times, and I have no idea where we lived. But when I was six years old, in 1926, while we were living on Rhem Ave., my sister, Alyce Joyce, was born at home.

DR. PATTERSON: Now who were your parents?

MRS. SCOTT: My parents were Alice Bonner Jackson and Linwood Franklin Wetherington, and they were born in 1900 and 1901. Both original families came over from England. In fact, my mother's mother was a Wingate, and that is one of the oldest English names according to a cousin who looked this up during World War II when he was in England. The Wetherington's, we have back to 1761. However, there was a Wetherington in 1680; Anna and Henry Wetherington in Massachusetts. Whether there was a tie-in or not, we don't know. The two Wetherington

brothers were given quite a bit of land. They were not married. And that's where the name Batchelor Creek came from, the little community Batchelor Creek.

DR. PATTERSON: That's B A T C H E L O R.

MRS. SCOTT: I don't know how that's spelled.

DR. PATTERSON: Yes.

MRS. SCOTT: But they were bachelors and so they named it. Later, after he, Solomon Wetherington, was married, he had seventeen grandchildren, and he was just always referred to as the grandfather of Batchelor Creek. So he went from the bachelor to the grandfather.

He had ten children. He gave a lot of property away. My grandmother was also a Wetherington, but she was from the fifth child. There's absolutely no connection. The names are entirely different back to 1761. My mother's family was from Pitt County, and I have the same with them. I have them back to the 1760's. Before that, I have no idea.

DR. PATTERSON: Were there just the two children, you and your sister?

MRS. SCOTT: Later, my Daddy remarried. I had a half-sister, born in 1941, whose name is Patricia Ann. She was delivered at home, 146 Pollock Street, which is where I grew up, where I lived. It later became 808 Pollock Street, but at the time I moved there it was 146.

DR. PATTERSON: Now, what is your full name?

MRS. SCOTT: Helen Ruth Wetherington Scott.

DR. PATTERSON: What did your father do?

MRS. SCOTT: He was a mechanic with Blades Motor Company, and a very good mechanic. Mr. Blades was somewhere in the midwest and some man stood up and said, "All he knew was he had a car nobody could fix and he stopped in a little town in North Carolina named New Bern and a red-headed mechanic fixed his car." Also, Mrs. Diggs in New Bern told me that she remembered my daddy. She knew he was a policeman and his name was "Red." But, she took her car to him at Blades Motor Co. and he fixed it and he charged her and she wasn't gonna pay him.

She went home and when her husband came home she started crying because she said, "He just made me mad charging to do it." She said, "Now, isn't that a terrible thing for an old lady to have to admit?" She was real cute, but she remembered that. A lot of people remember my daddy because he gave them their first drivers license. He was a policeman during the 1933 hurricane. I lay awake worrying about my daddy because he was out all night. I had just been in Norfolk, Virginia where we had had a terrible hurricane. The man across the street, who was a policeman, had been pretty severely injured. So I was scared to death that my daddy was going to be hurt. He was not hurt. He later ran an automobile repair shop where Craven Foundry is. He rented to the Pure Oil Company. They had their offices there. That was really the first work that I did. I worked for daddy and kept the service station office during the summer. The next summer, my second job was walking all over this town collecting fish bills for Nina Hamilton's Fish Market, located on South Front Street. I might walk to Riverside to collect fifty cents. My most memorable person was Mrs. Bray, I

believe is the mother of Mrs. Mullineaux. I think I'm correct. She told me one day to never be a martyr. She was the cutest lady. Everyone, really, was very nice about paying their bills. They knew I had walked to collect, they knew they owed the bill and most of them paid them. For that, I got a dollar a day. Then my next job was during Christmas. I worked at Montgomery Ward. Worked all day, and for that I received a dollar. So that seemed to be what you sort of made in those days anyway.

DR. PATTERSON: Now your first memory is living on Rhem Avenue, is that correct?

MRS. SCOTT: No, that's where my sister was born. We lived on King Street. Mrs. Pugh and my mother, Mrs. Bob Pugh, no, that's not right, her name was Lizzie, Jane Constantine's mother, I can't remember which Pugh...

DR. PATTERSON: Ed Pugh.

MRS. SCOTT: Ed Pugh, that's right. Okay, Mrs. Pugh and my mother were good friends, but I'm several years older than Jane. So mother had me, she had to stay home, and Mrs. Pugh hadn't had children, so she'd go to mother's and they would make chocolate fudge. I learned that later. But see, mother died when I was seven years old, and I only remember what I remember because it isn't like she had lived to remind me of things. I remember being downtown. We lived as I say at 146 which was the 800 block of Pollock Street, very close to downtown.

One day my mother and I walked downtown. We passed the Athens Theater and I saw a little sign out front that Felix the Cat was on and I wanted

to go to the show. Mother insisted that he was not on, that was just announcing he would be, that I would not like the movie, and I fussed and cried all the way to the corner. She said, all right, maybe this is a good lesson. So she gave me the dime, I went back to the show, absolutely scared to death during the whole show. The Indians were chasing everybody and scalping them. By the time I got out it was dark and I ran every step of the way home.

DR. PATTERSON: Now, Helen Ruth, where did you go to school?

MRS. SCOTT: I went to Eleanor Marshall School. Of course, it was Ghent School at the time. Mrs. Fulcher was my first grade teacher; Mrs. Lafrage my second; Mrs. Purser my third. And Mrs. Blackwell Waters who was, I can't think of her name right now, Lockerman I think, I had her before she was married. And then of course, Miss Eleanor in the sixth grade. She gave each of us three pencils with our names on it for Christmas and I still have two of those pencils.

DR. PATTERSON: Now, let me just ask you about Mrs. Lafrage, was she the mother of Brigham and Latrile?

MRS. SCOTT: Yes. And she is still living. She wrote to me through a friend, Carolyn Cunningham in Raleigh, and sent me a picture of Miss Eleanor that she wanted me to be sure Miss Eleanor's picture was hanging in the new Board of Education room, because Miss Eleanor was New Bern's first woman principal. There was no picture of Miss Eleanor. I looked everywhere and that picture could not be found. One had hung in the hall of Eleanor Marshall School. They assumed that it had just been misplaced. I talked to everybody; Principal, the last principal, and

everything else. So I took the picture that Mrs. Lafrage had sent me to Janet Furman, who is PR person with Board of Education, and she assured me that she would see that that picture was copied and hung, and it is. She took me out and showed it to me. So Miss Eleanor is hanging in with the other Principals, and Mrs. Lafrage feels much better.

DR. PATTERSON: You stayed through high school. You went through the New Bern High School system, did you?

MRS. SCOTT: Right. When mother died in 1928 Daddy, Sister and I moved in with my grandparents. My grandfather, O. L. Wetherington, had had a wholesale grocery business on South Front Street. It was destroyed, along with other companies, by the 1917 hurricane.

DR. PATTERSON: What was it called?

MRS. SCOTT: I don't know. I just know he had a business that was destroyed by the hurricane. We moved to Raleigh in 1925 and he went in business with a Mr. Eubanks. I met the grandson later when we built the house at Trent Shores. The insurance man that we talked with to finance the house, when he found out my name had been Wetherington, he said, "Could you possibly know Granddaddy Wetherington?" That's what they had called my grandfather. The business dissolved because they didn't make any money. I mean they just went broke. Our family came back home. My grandfather had a stroke at a very early age. He could hardly talk, he couldn't walk too well, and he operated a small grocery store in the next block from our home at 146 Pollock Street. The little store's been torn down.

There was just the downstairs. That's where the store was. And upstairs there were only two bedrooms and a bath, and that was it.

DR. PATTERSON: Now what part of Pollock Street was this?

MRS. SCOTT: It would've been I guess the second hundred block. I don't know how they were numbered in those days. It's the very next block from where I grew up at 146 Pollock.

DR. PATTERSON: Now, is that east of Craven Street or east of Middle Street?

MRS. SCOTT: It's toward Ghent way. The next block leaving downtown New Bern. Okay. And that little store was later in operation by Mr. Moore until not too many years ago.

DR. PATTERSON: Now you and Leon were married when?

MRS. SCOTT: 1942. Leon and I dated for about five years. But he had to leave because he didn't have a job, you know, that paid enough to get married. We lived in Baltimore first. He liked flying. He could not get in any Air Force. He wasn't old enough. In fact, he didn't register for the draft until after we were married because he was only twenty when we got married. In 1943 we had our first child, Scotty. Leon just could not get in the Air Force in any way. Interestingly enough, I even offered to get a divorce so he could get in the Air Force and then we'd remarry, but he said no way, so we didn't.  
(laughter)

DR. PATTERSON: He wasn't gonna let you loose.

MRS. SCOTT: Well, we just didn't do that. But anyway, he was drafted and sent to Macon, Georgia.

DR. PATTERSON: Did you come back to New Bern then?

MRS. SCOTT: I only stayed here a few weeks and I stayed over on Neuse Boulevard. Leon's mother and father had moved over there and I lived there with just Mr. Scott. We went to Macon, Georgia, with a friend of mine. She drove down with me to help me with Scotty. He was only nineteen months old. We found a place to live with a lady, a saint. Mrs. Marion Bentley (Margaret).

DR. PATTERSON: Where was this?

MRS. SCOTT: In Macon, Georgia. She took us in to keep her children, so that she could go to Savannah to be with her husband who was on an LSD. What they call landing something craft, LSC, or something. Anyway, she wanted to be with him. He had a week before he was shipping out. She had a six year old son, four year old daughter. She just took us in. The amazing thing about this is, she shared a bed with her six year old so that I could have a crib for my Scotty and we could have a room, so that in the weekends if Leon could come in town we could have a room.

DR. PATTERSON: Now, he was in the Army.

MRS. SCOTT: He was in the Army. Most of those boys in training shipped out very shortly. But Leon had attended a military school and he was kept on as a cadreman so that he could instruct. So they needed him, you know, there. I had rheumatic fever while I was there and this lady nursed me and took care of Scotty. And, really, for six months I wouldn't know when I got up in the morning what would bend. You know, my legs didn't bend for a long time. The infection

just took a long time to work out of my system, because they did not have penicillin. There was nothing to take for it. I took aspirin.

DR. PATTERSON: You came back to New Bern after the war was over.

MRS. SCOTT: I came home and Leon went to Japan. I came back to New Bern. I moved into, by now it's 808 Pollock Street, they've all been renumbered, back into my house, downstairs. Daddy had made a small apartment part of that apartment. We rented. Sister and I moved in. Her husband had gone to Hawaii. We moved in with our children. Leon was gone for a year. He came back in '46.

DR. PATTERSON: When was Dana born?

MRS. SCOTT: She was born in 1950. By then we had moved. Leon and I bought Grandmother Scott's house on 308 New Street and he started his business.

DR. PATTERSON: That's where the little court building is now.

MRS. SCOTT: Right, right. We sold it to Roy Poole. (Where was I?)

DR. PATTERSON: You had moved from Pollock Street.

MRS. SCOTT: We were there.

DR. PATTERSON: You had moved on New Street.

MRS. SCOTT: We moved to New Street. Leon came home and temporarily took a job down at the base. Went back to where he had worked before he left New Bern. We bought Grandmother Scott's house from Aunt Laura Haywood, Leon's aunt.

DR. PATTERSON: That's on New Street.

MRS. SCOTT: She had inherited the house from grandmother. He

bought it from Aunt Laura and we just went to work, both of us. We pulled up old linoleum and, you know, we just did a lot of things that a lot of people are doing today with old houses. We made it into three apartments, because we had to do this to make a living. Leon gave up his job at Cherry Point. In the garage in the backyard, that's where we started Scott Tile Company. There was a building back there that had three little sections; one was a smokehouse, one was the wash house, and the other was the woodshed, and we made a little apartment of it, three rooms, and rented to people with children. We rented that apartment to a couple with three children, and they were wonderful. They were the nicest people you've ever seen.

DR. PATTERSON: Now, one of the ladies I remember is Mrs. Hudnell. Did she rent or position a small trailer in your backyard and live back there in a trailer?

MRS. SCOTT: I can't remember. I really don't. I do not remember the names of the people who lived in there. Leon probably will because of making out the receipts for rent. Margaret Lansche lived back there for a short while.

DR. PATTERSON: Then that was torn down to make way for the district courthouse.

MRS. SCOTT: No. We sold it to Roy Poole. It was strictly to be a social security building. That's where the social security building was. I'm sorry, but that's the way it turned out. They had zoned it business, there was no question of it. We had no problem. We just went down and applied for license to start Scott Tile Company

in the backyard. We operated from there for a right good while. However, after we sold the house to Mr. Poole, he just tore the house down. The house was in very, very bad shape and we could not afford to fix it.

DR. PATTERSON: Was the social security business put in that house after you left or was it before?

MRS. SCOTT: No. The house was torn down when we left. We moved out on Trent Boulevard, which is where we now live, in 1951. In 1950 our second child, Dana, was born. She was born in St. Luke's Hospital and delivered by Dr. Wadsworth, who had also delivered me. I liked Dr. Wadsworth.

DR. PATTERSON: While you all were in this house in 1951, you started thinking of building at Trent Shores.

MRS. SCOTT: No, it was not that early. We were where we are living now several years before that came up. We had lived here since 1951. We bought the house from Pete Chagaris who had built this house and bought the corner lot earlier. He moved next door and built another house. This house did not accommodate five children.

DR. PATTERSON: Well, the Scott Tile Company moved from that backyard building to a fine place now and it's been a good business.

Let me get you back to something that I think is pretty fascinating, and that's one of the jobs you had as you grew up and lived in New Bern. You were a telephone operator.

MRS. SCOTT: I was, and I was given the job by Mr. H. B. Smith.

DR. PATTERSON: What company was this?

MRS. SCOTT: Carolina Telephone and Telegraph.

DR. PATTERSON: Now where was the business located?

MRS. SCOTT: Right where it is today, same building.

DR. PATTERSON: On the corner...

MRS. SCOTT: On the corner of Broad and Hancock.

DR. PATTERSON: Broad and Hancock Streets.

MRS. SCOTT: Much smaller building, but that's where it was.

I was very lucky, because Mr. Smith, I had worked for him at this office at school and also worked at the school library. At one point in time the librarian didn't get here. We didn't have one. So Mr. Shields asked me if I would keep the high school library. I knew how to do circulation and all those things because I had done it so many years.

I was glad to do it. I was delighted. And I had a little trouble with the big boys because I also had to keep study hall. Carolyn Willis and I sold candy during recess. During recess we had a little stand between the high school and the Bell building and we just sold penny candy during recess. So when the time came to graduate, he said, "Are you sure you can't go to school? You'd make a good teacher." I said, "No, I really need to help at home." So he said, "Would you like to work at the, no, this company has approached me and they would like for me to recommend someone to work. What do you think of the telephone company?" I was delighted to get a job. I knew nothing about the telephone company. However, I graduated on Friday night, went to the graduation dance, had a ball, but Monday morning I went to work.

DR. PATTERSON: For the telephone company.

MRS. SCOTT: The telephone company. Scared to death. It was a very exacting job. If you were one minute late, you worked two minutes overtime. You had a fifteen minute break during each four hour work period. And you really worked those eight hours. You sat at the switchboard, you were plugged in, you had headphones on, and you didn't turn your head one way or the other or the supervisor was there. The supervisor would come and plug in with you to check to be sure you were ringing the numbers correctly. You answered with one chord and said, "Number please", and then you rang and said "Thank you" and rang the number. We had a position called special operator. The local numbers had to be rung through the special operator. The special operator answered all pay telephones, she was information. You tried to learn as many numbers as you could because you didn't have much time to look them up. Long distance operator would come in on your headphones and say LD136. That meant she had precedence over anything. She wanted you to ring telephone number 136 and you rang it and you connected her which in turn connected the incoming call. So that was a pretty busy position.

DR. PATTERSON: As I remember it in those days the telephone numbers in town were very limited in numerals. I think our house was 58, and I believe St. Luke's Hospital might have been number 8.

MRS. SCOTT: Albert Willis has a book with all these old telephone numbers in it. I know ours was 381J. That's the only thing I remember.

As soon as I started to work I had to immediately start paying my own insurance. It seemed like it would be forever. I got a policy

with Casualty Life for twenty years. Well, you can imagine how many years that's been paid for, twenty years from 1937. But anyway, I also had to pay the lights, water, and telephone at home. That was my contribution. And naturally what I spent.

DR. PATTERSON: What was your salary?

MRS. SCOTT: I made ten dollars a week. There were families in New Bern taking care of children who didn't make any more than that.

DR. PATTERSON: Now, this was for working five days a week?

MRS. SCOTT: Yes. Forty hours.

DR. PATTERSON: Who were some other girls who were telephone operators? I guess they were all girls. Am I right in that?

MRS. SCOTT: Well, some of them seemed very old to me, Joe Pat, because I really was only sixteen. I had never worked, except at Montgomery Ward, as far as working with the public. In fact, the next operator who came told me later that she walked in and she said, "What are they doing with that baby up here?" Well, naturally, at sixteen you look young. Oh, heavens, there were so many I can't remember them all. Sophie Gaskill; Alma Bryant; Gretchen Jones, whom I was very devoted to. I really thought the world of Gretchen. I worked a lot with her at night. Johnnette Smith; Frances Henderson; Frances Grey. I just can't think of them. Lizette Brewer worked there. Carolyn worked at the license place. Anyway, that's as many as I can remember right now. But they really were very strict on us. We had one shift that not too long after I left they had to stop because it really wasn't fair. I went to work at six-thirty

and I worked until twelve-thirty. That's not right, excuse me. I went to work at eight at night and worked until twelve. At twelve o'clock I was supposed to go to bed up there. I had to be back on the switchboard at six-thirty, which meant no breakfast. No way to take a bath. You could wash your face in the lounge. But they made them stop that because they were not paying us. Once we went in that telephone office at eight o'clock, we had fifteen minute breaks. I could go out. In fact most of the time I did. I went to Clark's Drug Store on the corner just to get out of the building, but I had to be back in fifteen minutes. The last shift left at eleven o'clock and that door was locked and it wasn't opened until the six-thirty shift the next morning. But I had to work and then after I worked, I had to help the long distance girl clean the plugs. We had to clean the plugs at night. We got up at six-thirty and worked until ten-thirty and we had the rest of the day off until eight o'clock that night.

And they really were fair. At one time a supervisor called me aside and said that somebody mentioned that I had really been working a lot at night. She was real fair. She worked that out. But then Cherry Point was open. They started Cherry Point. We had two telephones in Havelock; Trader Store number 2 and number 3 Havelock. This was an entirely new situation for us other than during potato season, Mr. S. M. Jones kept that switchboard hot! But that was the only time that it had been that busy. Then all of a sudden we had all this business of building Cherry Point and it was very hard, because a lot of things, regulations, just had to go out the window. By that time I was working

long distance. We were not allowed, had previously not been allowed to record or answer a signal and record a call until we had the other one already in process. If the call was to go beyond where we rang, say, if the call was to go out up North, we had to start either in Norfolk or Raleigh, those circuits. We were very limited with the circuits. We would ring Norfolk and say, "MX New York." It's much more complicated than that, but mx meant multi-switch and she was to give me precedence and give me a line. There might be two or three places that I went through. We had a large toll book that we could look up these places and we had to collect the money if they were at a pay station. I had a call to Albuquerque, New Mexico. I had no idea how to spell it. But thankfully it was spelled just like it sounds, so I found it very easily and knew how much it was. One thing I remember was this man would call California and he'd talk for three hours. We could move the switch in a way that we could listen in on the call. And when somebody talked over a certain length of time we had to check it because they could have been cut off somewhere between here and California. This man was either taking or getting orders from some supply and I don't know what.

DR. PATTERSON: Did the calls to and from Cherry Point come through New Bern?

MRS. SCOTT: Yes, definitely.

DR. PATTERSON: I would think that this would slow down a lot of local calls then with all of this traffic coming through and the lines limited.

MRS. SCOTT: I don't remember the time. You know, we really are going back a long time. I don't know how it eventually evolved so that there were more lines down there. When it first started there were just those two telephones, and I'm sure, you know, the base put up lines.

DR. PATTERSON: Now, during those days, the operators could listen in on conversations.

MRS. SCOTT: You could over a long distance. I don't think you could listen in on local calls. They had to be from a pay telephone or long distance, because really there was no point in our listening in and we didn't have the time, ha!

DR. PATTERSON: You could keep up with a lot of things going on in town by knowing who called who.

MRS. SCOTT: Who called who, you better believe it. And I am very familiar with one instance that it was very helpful to us. Our upstairs was being rented...

DR. PATTERSON: In your home.

MRS. SCOTT: ...where I was living, in our home, to a very nice looking couple. They could not have been nicer. And I was working in special operation position I became aware of the telephone number of the phone upstairs in our house. A lot of communication between that number and the bus station and the taxi station. And I knew that that's where all the prostitution took place. In fact, when I got off work at twelve thirty at night I was supposed to take a taxi home and I didn't do it. I wouldn't have gotten a taxi. I walked home

at night from the telephone company by myself rather than getting a taxi. I went home to daddy, I said, "Daddy, I'm sorry, but something is amiss upstairs. I think maybe you might want to ask them to leave."

I said, "They have a lot of conversations back and forth." And I did listen long enough to know what was going on. We started in the house and the young man came home and daddy stopped him and he said, "I would like you out by tonight and I think you know why." That was my daddy. He never got angry with people, he was just nice. The couple was gone by that night. They knew why they'd been asked to leave and there was no more conversation. But, see, I had a very good friend who worked at the Health Department, Carol Hall. We were all good friends and we knew what was going on. And unfortunately, that was.

DR. PATTERSON: Well, that's being in the right place at the right time. Helen Ruth, all your life, as far as I've known you, you just loved to dance. You grew up dancing. Tell me about dances in New Bern as you remember them.

MRS. SCOTT: Well, my first dance, the first script dance, costs three packs of Old Gold's cigarettes to get in. That's what you had to have to get in. It was a big dance. It was held at the old armory.

DR. PATTERSON: Where was that?

MRS. SCOTT: The armory is, oh, it's now El Mex down on Craven Street. That's where all the dances were held. That's where our high school proms were held. And all of our banquets were held in the basement of Centenary Methodist Church. That's the only place that could accommodate us. I was a very lucky girl growing up. I had a

lot of wonderful friends and one of them was Elizabeth Patten. She decided that it would be nice if I had a surprise birthday party. Subsequently, we always went to Dr. Charles, Charlie Barker's daddy, I mean Dr. Charlie Barker's office. Charlie Barker was my age and in school with me and we went to the same functions. Mrs. Barker had fixed a nice dinner. Lib and I were going to Charlie's to borrow skates because she didn't have any she said. We were going skating and went there to borrow skates. We got there, rang the bell, and the lights went on all over everywhere and the door opened and they said, "Surprise! Surprise!" So we had a scavenger hunt all over this town. All the girls dressed in tennis shoes and anklets. We didn't wear pants in those days, long pants. So, we were dressed to go skating. Of course it was Carolyn and Albert and Lib and Jack Holland and Sarah Gorham. Let's see, I can't remember other than that. But we had a wonderful dinner. We went down to this dance. We decided, we were all sixteen years old, we would go to a dance. So we went and I remember Henry Whitehurst had to take one girl in and come back and take another one in because there weren't as many boys as there were girls. (laughter) We'd never been to a dance before, so you better believe we had a ball. All the boys danced with us. All the dances were break dance. It was just wonderful.

DR. PATTERSON: Was this down at the armory?

MRS. SCOTT: Um huh. I don't remember where the cigarettes came from or how it worked, but I was lucky enough in when I was a senior; well, first of all, I was lucky. I had a lot of good friends. I got

to lead the prom when I was a junior-when I was a senior. When I was a senior, I, at the time, was dating Ed Smallwood who was an excellent dancer, and he had taught me to dance. He read the superlatives that year. He was real nervous because he said I'll never be able to say, "senior statistics." He said, "I'll never say it", and, I, "Come on, you know you can do it." Anyway, I was voted the best looking girl in the senior class. I was voted the best dancer in the senior class.

And there was no way I was the best looking girl. The best looking girl was Sarah Gorham, and Sarah was elected the most popular. But anyway, we went to the banquet, had a really good time, Ed did a great job, and then we led the prom. We had Les Brown for our junior prom and we had Bubbles Becker who blew smoke rings. He could smoke a cigarette and blow smoke bubbles. That's who played for our senior prom. We had our pictures in the paper. Had a whole page. Mary Boylan led the parade for the Freshmen. Carol Hall was for the Junior. I was the Senior. Lillian Roberts led for the Sophomores. Our pictures were in the paper and there was a real big deal about it. They'd never done anything like that or since. I don't think some of the mothers were particularly happy about it, you know. I don't know why.

DR. PATTERSON: Did you have dances at Stanley Hall?

MRS. SCOTT: We had dances there, but most of the time they were at the armory. I was manager of the basketball team, and as manager of the basketball team my job was to get transportation. There was no bus.

DR. PATTERSON: So what did you do?

MRS. SCOTT: Well, I just had to call different citizens. Always Burke Taylor would send a car.

DR. PATTERSON: This was all done in private vehicles.

MRS. SCOTT: Had to be. There was no way to go. There was no other transportation for our team, even when we went to East Carolina to play our first tournament game. The only trouble was, when we got there, one of the girls, we played Ahoskie and one of the girls was a member of the football team and she was big. We had no tall forwards at all. We had to put Geraldine Stallings in, who was a wonderful forward, we had to put her in as guard to guard this girl. They really beat us I'm sorry to say.

DR. PATTERSON: Now, where did the girls basketball team play in New Bern?

MRS. SCOTT: At Stanley Hall. That's where they practiced.

DR. PATTERSON: Was there much room up there for spectators?

MRS. SCOTT: It was not really large. I don't remember too much about it. My life was a little bit different in that I didn't go out enough at night a lot, Joe Pat. After I went to Hi-Y and after Hi-Y, we went to Gus Davis' and danced. There was a juke box there.

DR. PATTERSON: Where was Gus Davis'?

MRS. SCOTT: It was on the corner of Pollock Street and Craven. Well, the building is still there. It's now rented by the city. But that is where Gus Davis' was. He sold hotdogs, sandwiches, hamburgers, and in the back was a small place to dance. That's where we went to dance after Hi-Y. I mean, this was fine. This was

permissible. But I think because mother had died, daddy was pretty strict. Like, I never went on the river. I wasn't allowed to go out in a sailboat, and I understand that. Now, I did things like go out in large boats. In fact, I remember going to the foot of Middle Street one night after I got off work and Jimmy Smith, there was a big boat, and Leon was there and crowd, we were going out, and they waited for me. They came to the foot of Middle Street and picked me up to go with them. So I got to do things like that, but there were a lot of things I didn't do. My grandparents were elderly. We all lived together. My daddy at twenty-seven had lost his wife, had two little children, his mother and daddy who were invalids, and a sister who was still in high school, and all of a sudden he had the responsibility of all of us at twenty-seven. And as a mechanic, he did a good job. He was a good daddy.

DR. PATTERSON: Helen Ruth, when you grew up, what was the relations between blacks and whites like?

MRS. SCOTT: My own experience was every Saturday I had a rummage sale around the corner at Five Points. I remember a very rude awakening I had one time. This black lady was looking at some pants that I had taken, men's pants, to sale. I said, "I don't have any children's clothes but I have some men's clothes. Would you like a pair of pants for your husband?" She says, "I don't have a husband." I said, "But you have all these children!" She says, "Oh, I don't have a husband, honey." And I puzzled over that for the longest time. I could not figure out why that lady didn't have a husband. We never had help

at my house. I was never exposed to blacks. The ones that I just met casually on the streets, that's the only thing. They were gracious people. They were always happy and friendly. Always singing. The one thing I remember was the night Joe Lewis won the world's championship. Charlie Barker had all of us in his car and we just rode through, as we called it, colored town out at Five Points. Everybody in New Bern was so excited and so happy and we'd just lean out the window and say, "Who won the fight?", and they'd holler back, "Joe Lewis, man!" Everybody was happy and we all enjoyed that together. We just all enjoyed that.

DR. PATTERSON: What do you remember about hurricanes in New Bern? You mentioned the hurricane of '33. Do you remember much about that?

MRS. SCOTT: Only that where I lived we didn't have water. The houses were so close on Pollock Street. We all protected each other I think, because there's one now where there were three. My house has been torn down. It was left to sister and me. My daddy died in 1952 and he left everything to my step-mother and my half-sister, who left and went to Reno, Nevada. They've been out there in California since, though they visit us regularly. But Daddy left the house to sister and me and we rented it for a couple of years. The house sat so close to the ground that it really required constant care. Sister felt badly about it because she was never here to help with the renting and getting the work done and that sort of thing, so we just sold it.

DR. PATTERSON: What about hurricanes after the '33 storm, in

the fifties?

MRS. SCOTT: I remember the year that we had the three. Was it Hazel and Ione?

DR. PATTERSON: '54, '55.

MRS. SCOTT: I have a brother-in-law who's from Florida and he thought it was very unusual. He'd never been in a hurricane in his life, and they left New Jersey and went to Florida and he got in Hazel on the way down and Ione on the way back. (laughter) Ione was pretty rough. By then we had Scott Tile and Carpets. Leon and Mac just waded over there in water, because water was up to our sidewalk on Trent Boulevard. But that was from the back-up, because the eye of the hurricane hung around New Bern for three days straight and it rained. Being surrounded as we are by the rivers, the water was very high, the rain water had no place to go and so the town was flooded. It came up to Craven Street. I remember that.

DR. PATTERSON: (Tape turned over.) You were just talking, Helen Ruth, about George Dick Baxter taking my mother down New Street in a rowboat to see her damaged house.

MRS. SCOTT: Right. Not too far from where George Baxter lives is where the one fatality took place. That was just a very sad thing. Water was up to the little porch of the small house.

DR. PATTERSON: This was a black family living at the corner of Short Street and New Street.

MRS. SCOTT: Right. And unfortunately this little child just stepped out off the porch and he just drowned. He drowned, which was

the casualty. Leon had a good time taking pictures around town because he took a lot of pictures down Broad Street that read "Ocean Highway."

And of course the water is just lapping against the post. We enjoyed, because I guess we had not really seen too much damage. It's been bad and there's been a lot.

DR. PATTERSON: Was there much damage to Scott Tile & Carpet?

MRS. SCOTT: No, there wasn't at all. I started to say and I didn't finish, they waded over to our office because we have a lot of cement and sand and it needed to be raised. Got over there and that little building was sitting just as dry as you please. Water all around it, but the building did not get water in it. The building has been run into twice. We have had cars in that building twice.

DR. PATTERSON: From the curves?

MRS. SCOTT: Um huh. In fact, one of them knocked a 400 pound roll of linoleum right out the back of the building. They did a pretty thorough job. The car ended up, it got caught and there it sat.

DR. PATTERSON: Helen Ruth, when you were growing up, did you go swimming very much?

MRS. SCOTT: Nope. I wasn't allowed to. I couldn't swim and daddy wouldn't let me go.

DR. PATTERSON: What do you think the role of churches has been in New Bern as you progressed along? Have the churches been a big thing in New Bern? Have they meant a great deal to the life of New Bern?

MRS. SCOTT: I am very prejudiced where the churches are concerned,

because I of all people have been most blessed. I went to Freewill Baptist Church, which is on Fleet Street, because the Broad Street Christian Church was under construction. My mother had been a Christian. She'd been a member of the Christian Church and that's where she wanted me to go. None of my family attended church. She died in 1928. But I went around the corner (Baptist) where there was a minister, Rev. Everett. I was very comfortable in the Baptist church.

But in 1929, the Broad Street Christian Church was completed and daddy took sister and me to church. He did not go to church with us, but he took us around the corner. I did not want to go. Those steps looked so tall, I didn't know anybody, and I'd been very comfortable at Free Will Baptist. I looked at the top of the stairs and I saw Nannie Simons.

I was in school with Nannie, I was nine years old, and I was perfectly happy from then on. I had a teacher Mrs. Basnight. But my love was Mrs. Ziegler and I worked with her in the children's division. That is the sweetest, kindest lady in the world. There was a minister, a Rev. Egan. He was there all the time I worked. For some reason that church just was what I looked to. I loved my daddy and I respected him and I wouldn't have done what he asked me not to for anything in the world. But it was so important to me, that even later when I was working I would not go to the movies on Sunday unless I went to church.

I just went to church on Sunday and Sunday School, because it's what, I want to say maybe what my mother wanted me to do. But I don't ever in my life remember being in a church with her. Now I don't know why.

I have no earthly idea why. Leon and I were married there. When

I was twelve years old I was baptized, and we were emersed. Now I was frightened. I had to go to church by myself. It was at night.

Daddy would have gone with me but he was sick in bed and my grandparents were not well enough to. They just were not well. They didn't go out. My grandmother did well to take care of my sister and me, cause sister was little. But anyway, it didn't bother me. And I don't mind saying to anyone, I'm happy to tell it, when I left the church that night, and you know, my dress was wet, I was by myself, but when I walked across Broad Street that night, all of a sudden I felt like a different person. I felt clean. As a nine year old, that was the only way I knew to describe it. I've always looked to the church.

I have always had a deep faith in the Good Lord because he's always been with me. He's just always been with me.

DR. PATTERSON: Now, you eventually joined the Methodist Church.

MRS. SCOTT: After Leon and I were married and came back home. My daddy had joined the church. All of the Scott's were still living. They went to Centenary. Grandmother Scott was still living. Her picture is hanging in the church down there. She founded the Willing Worker's Class. If I had time I'd tell you all about her, the things she's done. But it seemed that that was the appropriate thing to do.

No one had ever been except sister and me. All of the Wetherington's had been Methodist. I knew that because I had accounts of their funerals and I knew that they had been buried by Methodist ministers and so forth.

DR. PATTERSON: Do you think the church as meant a great deal

to New Bern as a town?

MRS. SCOTT: Yes, definitely. I really do. I really can't remember a time that the churches have not always been open. There was a time that we didn't go to the Catholic church, you know, even when I was in Hi-Y and we visited the different churches. But there was no particular feeling about it one way or another. It was that they just went to their church. Even the Catholic girls in high school went to Hi-Y until they had a priest come who said no. They didn't go after that. But I went there one time with my aunt, daddy's young sister who was not but seven years older than me, used to have to take me when she went places. She was very close to Annie Pace McSorley who was Catholic and I went in church with them one time. I didn't have any feeling against. This was just the way that it was. I don't think I've ever in my life been in a church that I was uncomfortable. It's the one place that I can truly say that I can walk into any church anywhere and I feel perfectly comfortable.

DR. PATTERSON: Helen Ruth, I know that during World War II you moved around a lot with Scotty and you weren't in New Bern all the time, but you were in New Bern part of the time. What do you remember about New Bern during those war years? What was New Bern like during that terrible time?

MRS. SCOTT: I remember Sue Flowers opened the Woman's Club to the servicemen. I was dating Leon so I didn't go. But my sister, who is six years younger, was allowed to go down there. Daddy wouldn't allow her to date anybody, any of the men in service, but she was allowed

to go down there. They were very well supervised.

DR. PATTERSON: This was down on Union Point.

MRS. SCOTT: On Union Point. This is where we all had gone to dances so much. We used to all go down there and park because not everybody had a radio in their car. We could park down there around the circle and whatever car had a radio would open the door and we could all enjoy the music. You know, it was just where we went.

DR. PATTERSON: Was New Bern full of people then?

MRS. SCOTT: It was full of people. The time that was the hardest was there was no place for people to live. We worked with Mrs. Carter with the Red Cross when we fixed the apartments on New Street. We never rented to anybody that Mrs. Carter didn't send to us. She knew who to send. They were just delightful people, because it was pretty close quarters. We had one furnace and that furnace heated all these apartments, which meant that the doors had to be left open if you wanted heat, you know, in some of them. When Mrs. Carter no longer could send us people, she said I can't send you some of the people that are here. We did rent. And this is why we sold it; we would go down to go to Sunday school and church after we moved and there'd be beer cans in the yard and they just did not take care of the property. There was absolutely no respect for anything. We just didn't feel like we could continue to rent.

DR. PATTERSON: What was Mrs. Carter's full name? Which Mrs. Carter was this?

MRS. SCOTT: I can't remember her name.

DR. PATTERSON: I think I knew her.

MRS. SCOTT: I know she's been dead several years, but she lived and ran the Red Cross for a long, long time after we left there. I'd see her and we'd talk about it, you know, old times. Of course there was such a scarcity of food and things. But there again, my eating habits were so unusual before I left here and by the time we came home.

We were in New Bern on VE Day. Leon was around at Teensy and Lib Hodges and they were waiting for Walker to be born. We were all laughing and joking and saying, "We should ride Lib up and down the 'kiss me' quick over there", and Leon called me and he had just heard it, VE Day. We even got gas to get home. We always left Baltimore to come home hoping somehow we'd get enough gas to get back, because we didn't get home that often. I didn't get home until I was five months pregnant the first time. You just didn't get gas, coupons. Leon will tell you about his experiences. He did sell cars.

DR. PATTERSON: You mentioned earlier that you had worked in the library. Now, you were talking about the high school library, but did you work also in the New Bern Library?

MRS. SCOTT: I did. I went to work as the Bookmobile librarian.

DR. PATTERSON: Where was the library then?

MRS. SCOTT: It was in the John Wright Stanly House on Johnson Street. New Street, excuse me.

DR. PATTERSON: It had been turned around the corner by that time.

MRS. SCOTT: Right.

DR. PATTERSON: Who was the librarian?

MRS. SCOTT: The librarian by then was Elinor Hawkins.

DR. PATTERSON: Had Fannie Howerton been the librarian before Elinor came?

MRS. SCOTT: No, Mrs. Bill Flowers was the librarian there before then. Mrs. Howerton was much earlier.

DR. PATTERSON: Way back.

MRS. SCOTT: Yes. I don't really know where I got the books I read other than the school library. I did not go downtown a lot. I came Ghent way. I came to Ghent for the first six years. All of my friends lived in Ghent. I really didn't know the downtown children. I mean, my family was unusual in that daddy went out but we didn't. And you can see what I mean, you know, with mother dying young. So my life was a little bit different. You know, daddy's out dating and I'm out dating.

DR. PATTERSON: When you were with the Bookmobile, did you drive the Bookmobile?

MRS. SCOTT: I had to know how to drive it. I was considered the librarian, and because of that I received a nicer salary. I don't remember what it was.

DR. PATTERSON: Elinor Hawkins was the librarian and you were working under her.

MRS. SCOTT: Right, she was the librarian. We had an extension librarian and, Eunice Watson, who taught me, she was from upstate New York but she was the extension librarian. She was in charge of all of the branch libraries. Of course, two weeks we went in Craven County

and two weeks out of the month we went to Pamlico County. At the time I started, Hayden Jones was driver of Bookmobile.

DR. PATTERSON: This was about when?

MRS. SCOTT: I can't remember. Isn't this terrible? All of a sudden the dates have left me. But we were there. I had a very small office. Of course when you went in the building Elinor's office was on the left, the circulation room was on the right. I remember one day, which is the way I thought of it, someone asked where Lucy Hodges was and I said she's up in the living room, because the circulation room was like the living room to all of us. Mr. Harman, a man who came to the library every day, and he had a rocking chair in that front room. That's where he'd sit and talk to everybody. But anyway, Elinor came in one day and told us, of course they had started negotiating to move for a new library, and she said I think I have a place for us to move temporarily if you and Hayden can get the Bookmobile in that driveway. So that's when we moved to the Rawls Home on East Front Street. Both Hayden and I had to go down separately and both show her that we could get that Bookmobile in that driveway. It was a tight squeeze. You could only come from across the street. The bookmobile has a short wheel base.

DR. PATTERSON: Now, let me just go back a little bit. When the library was in the John Wright Stanly Home, there were apartments up above there. Were there two apartments do you remember?

MRS. SCOTT: Emily Bunting lived up there. I think there were two, yes. I know at one time that Allie Mitch and Steve Fowler lived

up there. But I don't remember going up there when people were living there. We went through all of the moving process. In fact, I have a couple of nails that I picked up that fell out of something. They're real old nails. I just put them in an envelope and said, "From John Wright Stanly House."

DR. PATTERSON: Now, you had to be moved because the house was gonna be moved.

MRS. SCOTT: That's right.

DR. PATTERSON: And you moved to the house that Iris Rawls grew up in. Now where was that located?

MRS. SCOTT: It was on the corner of Broad and East Front by then. But see, it was not originally on the corner, was it?

DR. PATTERSON: No. I think the Iris Rawls House was the second one. I think Charles Duffy lived in the house on the corner and Iris' house was next to that. Is that right?

MRS. SCOTT: I know it was right at that corner. They were not the best years. It was all right.

DR. PATTERSON: How long did the library stay in the Rawls House?

MRS. SCOTT: I can't remember.

DR. PATTERSON: Was it a matter of a year or more?

MRS. SCOTT: Oh more. More than that. I remember the move into the new building of course. I was there.

DR. PATTERSON: From the Rawls House.

MRS. SCOTT: Yes. I was there when we moved in the new building. I worked there for five years. In the meantime, after Dana went to

school, when she was in third grade I started going to the office and helping Leon. I worked over there, and I worked over there until I was sixty off and on.

DR. PATTERSON: Now, Helen Ruth, the Rawls Home is no longer there. It was torn down. Is that where those condominiums are built now, the Riverwalk Condominiums?

MRS. SCOTT: No. It was in front of Holiday Inn. It was on the other side of Broad Street.

DR. PATTERSON: East Front Street?

MRS. SCOTT: Well, if you go down Broad Street, you went to the right. Well, the condominiums are there on that right.

DR. PATTERSON: That's right.

MRS. SCOTT: Yes, they are.

DR. PATTERSON: So that house was taken down too.

MRS. SCOTT: Another house was down I know. I remember seeing a rainbow out of that window one day in front of that house.

DR. PATTERSON: What memories do you have of medicine in New Bern, doctors and nurses and hospitals?

MRS. SCOTT: I never went to a doctor until I had my first child at twenty-one. Mother had taken me, and I do remember this, upstairs in Elks building to have a boil in my ear lanced. I remember that because I got very nauseated.

DR. PATTERSON: Who was the doctor who did this?

MRS. SCOTT: A Dr. Daniels. Dr. Wadsworth was our family doctor. He had delivered me, I'll put it that way. But our family physician,

I didn't go to him, was Dr. Ashford, because he and daddy were the same age and they'd always known each other. Dr. Ashford came to the house and delivered Patricia. I had just gotten back to work one night.

It was probably eight o'clock. First of all, I had called home and I said, "Mama, I have to work late," which we really had to do a lot after Cherry Point and I said, "Just tell Leon that I'll be a little bit late getting off work." I had just gotten back in from my break.

I don't think I'd worked half an hour and the telephone rang. I mean, you know, someone came over, the supervisor, and said, "Your grandmother has had a stroke and they want you to come home." Well, the first really bad stroke my grandfather's voice had been affected.

So when I got home, Dr. Ashford was already there. We were all around the bed, very concerned, because we hoped so that mama's voice had not been affected. She opened her eyes and she looked around and she said, "Somebody tell Leon that Helen Ruth is going to be late", which was funny. That's the last thing that had happened before she had the stroke, so of course that was on her mind. We all just laughed.

Dr. Ashford said, "Well, we don't have to worry about that." He came to house to see her one time when I had the flu. He just came to the door and said, "How are you young lady", or something like that. I said, "Well, I've got the same thing." He said, "Well, ya'll will get better soon." Leon didn't have enough time off to go through all that you had to go through to get married in New Bern when we were gonna get married, and his mother was really upset. So we all got busy. Frances and Carolyn got busy and called everybody. I called

and we got the church. Mr. Scott got busy, called Dr. Latham and he said, "I'll see those two. I know the families, I know these children, I know they're all right." But he signed the certificate for us. Tiny McGee, the nurse at the hospital, Mr. Scott got her to give us a blood test. Bennie Baxter opens the jewelry store and we went down and I picked out this wedding band that I have on and we were married at Broad Street Christian Church the next day. Daddy bought two vases of flowers and we had a nice wedding. We went to Kinston on our honeymoon, came back the next day and packed and moved to Baltimore.

DR. PATTERSON: Helen Ruth, what hospitals do you remember? You mentioned the New Bern General Hospital earlier? Where was that located?

MRS. SCOTT: It's on Craven Street, and of course, it's at this point and time being restored.

DR. PATTERSON: That's right at the end of Craven Street where Craven joins...

MRS. SCOTT: Isn't that where the Hughes Apartments were and Dr. Hughes office? Wasn't it right there on the side where those apartments are now?

DR. PATTERSON: I think if you go up Middle Street it's right at the junction of Middle and Craven. Isn't it that large house right next to where the Daughtery's used to live?

MRS. SCOTT: The New Bern General is on Craven Street definitely. There's no question about that. But what I was thinking about is beside that, still on Craven Street, isn't that where the Hughes

Apartments were?

DR. PATTERSON: Yes, that's right.

MRS. SCOTT: Okay. But anyway, the thing I remember, Joe Pat, is going to see mother in that hospital. I knew that she was sick.

But see, she got up, the day that she was taken to the hospital, she got up and fixed my breakfast and, you know, I left and went to school and she went to the hospital. So my last memory of her, you know previously, she was not well. I was old enough to know that. I had even gone around the corner to Anderson's Drug Store. I was the one who did the shopping for the family. I don't know how early I started that. I always went out to Five Points to Mr. Everhart's Meat Market, Mr. Metz's store, the A&P Store, and Mr. Ablen's store. All of those were on Broad Street and that's where everybody bought their groceries and shopped. If there were any pennies left, I could have a penny and I could stop at Mr. Ablen's store and get a penny apple or penny orange. I didn't really care too much for candy. But I had gone to that Anderson's to buy her yeast cakes and co-colas, which is what people took. She was trying to gain weight. I didn't know, of course, that she was pregnant. But she was going downhill very fast and she was down to just in her nineties in weight. So, at that age I was aware she was sick. But when I went to the New Bern General Hospital, I remember going up the stairs and I can remember standing at those two windows up there. She was so sick and I remember daddy saying, "Helen Ruth, why don't you go look out the window, mother really doesn't feel like talking", and so I did. I really didn't understand it because

she'd been well when she'd gone into the hospital. So we left. Then the next day my grandmother was going to take me up to see mother.

We stopped at 146 Pollock Street. I was on the porch and two of my aunts, two of my uncles, were in town, mother's brothers and sisters.

They drove up in front of the house. They were all crying and I remember thinking, suppose my mother's died. But I really didn't understand it. I just didn't understand it.

DR. PATTERSON: Helen Ruth, we have talked about lots of things about New Bern. I, of course, can't get with all of your memories because I don't know what they all are. I wondering if you have some special memories that you would like to talk about that we haven't gone into.

MRS. SCOTT: Well, if I had to describe New Bern to somebody, I guess I would have to say I feel most fortunate to have grown up here. To Leon and to me both, there was never any question about whether or not we were coming back home. We both wanted to come back to New Bern. We'd all gotten along fairly well. Leon and I both had unusual family backgrounds and so maybe this is why we were drawn together.

We grew up in a time that people worked together. People got married and you worked together. You supported each other in whatever you were doing. So this is what we've done with the business.

DR. PATTERSON: Helen Ruth, you think New Bern is a pretty special place?

MRS. SCOTT: They say a town is like its people. I think that in all honesty, at this age, living in a small town all of your life

can create some problems, and I'll tell you why. New Bern or Kinston or whatever, New Bern to me is outstanding. I would not care to live in Greenville. I would not care to live in Kinston. There are qualities of life in New Bern that you don't get everywhere, and I think this is why we are attracting a lot of people. There is a certain quality to life in New Bern, any way you want to look at it. I'm not as articulate as some people. I don't know the words to use, but I know it's here.

However, coming along at the time that I did, because of not having a mother, daddy was so particular about who I associated with that I felt a certain restriction, maybe that's it, that I don't think if you grew up in a larger place where you didn't know everybody, everybody didn't know everything you did, there might be a certain freedom. Now New Bern is probably full of people that never gave that a second thought, so I can only speak from my own personal experience. I have always felt that I had to "be a good girl." I can't say that I wanted to do anything terrible. But still, I think a small town, and New Bern in particular, at the time I grew up, there were a lot of us having to do "the right thing."

DR. PATTERSON: Well, over the years you and Scotty have certainly had many friends and made many friends in this town, and the Patterson's are among those people. You and the Wards and Alice and myself were the first three to build houses out at Trent Shores. That was a fun time too.

MRS. SCOTT: It was a great time.

DR. PATTERSON: What do you remember about Trent Shores when we

were all out there, or when we were all building?

MRS. SCOTT: I remember the first time we went out there and Debbie didn't want to go. There was no road back there. We had to park the car. And at that point in time we might have even been driving Leon's pick-up truck. There was a time that you needed your car, which was understandable. You just started your practice. I drove whatever I could get that Leon could spare. We used to just put the children in the back of the pick-up and Alice and I would take off and go get groceries or whatever we needed to do. We went out there one day because Alice has always loved the water and she really wanted to live out. We just had a wonderful time breaking through to get to the water. But then, as you know, your wife is very adventuresome and she has encouraged me that way, which is one of the things I love about Alice. She has a freedom of spirit I guess, that I didn't experience growing up. She helped me in that she taught me to swim. She made me just simply lay down in the river and put my head under the water, which I hadn't done. We had fun clearing the lots. That's was just the greatest fun. I remember being out there one day and Joe Slater and Billie were riding through and Joe said, "You folks are really having a good time, aren't you?", and we said, "We are having a ball!" And I can remember him saying, "Be sure you enjoy every minute of it. You'll enjoy this more than you do living out here." Now isn't that something? But I remember that just like yesterday. But, we were going to build on the water. I think Leon said he paid \$5,000 for that lot, which was a high price to pay for that lot, but it was a

nice lot. But when we went out there after Ione and we measured where the water had been, and we had had an eleven foot tide, that lot would have been under water. So we sold it and bought the lot that was up high. At the time we started, I did not encourage Leon to do this because he doesn't like to live out. He just doesn't. He never has.

He really likes sidewalks. However, we talked about it very seriously and I said, "Are you sure this is what you want to do?" And he really did, and he enjoyed building the house. We moved in. We signed the papers on Alice's birthday, January 13 on Friday. That's how I remember. We moved in. We thoroughly enjoyed it to a certain extent, but it was hard for Leon, because, I'm not even gonna say what bank, it doesn't make any difference, the bank really let him down. I mean, what else do you say? We refinanced the house but it still would have been hard to pay for and Leon was about as miserable as I've ever known him. I've never known him to be that way. He was miserable. I just woke up one morning and I said let's go back to our house on Trent Boulevard. Burke Taylor and Hap Tucker had both tried to buy this house from Leon and he wouldn't sell it. He said, no, they're not offering me enough money. They had offered him a good price for this house, but he didn't want to sell it. We had had it painted. I said, "Leon, let's go back to Trent Boulevard." He said, "No. I built this house for you." I said, "I am not going to struggle and neither are you to pay for something that you don't even want." So we came back.

We moved back in on my birthday, Alice baked me a cake, we came in and you said, "This is easy. I'm gonna put everything right back where

it was." Ya'll really helped us. It hurt. It hurt. And my children have commented on that, Scotty particularly, he said, "Mother, I didn't realize at the time. That was pretty rough on you and daddy, wasn't it?" I said, "Yes, it was hard, but we still did the right thing."

DR. PATTERSON: Well, we were side by side out there on the hill. I remember the days when we had bush axes and we did clear those lots. We had fun down on the river swimming and having picnics and that was a grand time.

MRS. SCOTT: Absolutely.

DR. PATTERSON: And maybe this is a good time, Helen Ruth, to close this interview. It's been a good interview and it's been a lot of fun reminiscing with you and having you tell your story. I thank you for the Memories Committee and for myself. It was a pleasure.

MRS. SCOTT: It was easier than I'd thought it would be. You're easy to talk to.

DR. PATTERSON: Well, that's good. So I'll shut this off now.

END OF INTERVIEW