

MEMORIES OF NEW BERN

ADELINE "SMITTY" ROMALDA BARTLING

INTERVIEW 1044

This is Dr. Joseph Patterson representing the Memories of New Bern Committee. My number is 1000. I am interviewing Mrs. Smitty Bartling at the Berne Retirement Village, 2701 Amhurst Blvd. in New Bern. The number of the interview is 1044. The date is February 15, 1993.

DR. PATTERSON: Now, Smitty, Fred Latham is with us and he will be taking pictures, copying your pictures for a while, and then he'll be sitting here with us and we'll all three have a conversation. Now, the tape is on and I would like to start by asking you to give me your full name, your maiden name.

SMITTY BARTLING: All right. It's long and youthful. Adeline Romalda. Don't put that down cause nobody ever called me that. I always went by the name of Smitty.

DR. PATTERSON: Your last name was Romalda?

SMITTY BARTLING: Romalda.

DR. PATTERSON: Romalda, that was your last name?

SMITTY BARTLING: Smith.

DR. PATTERSON: Romalda Smith. So, that's where the Smitty...

SMITTY BARTLING: Adeline, but they called me Adeline. I never was called Romalda.

DR. PATTERSON: Where were you born, Smitty?

SMITTY BARTLING: I was born in Belhaven in 1908. When I was twelve years old, my father was a building contractor, and when I was twelve years old we moved to Bayboro, North Carolina and I went to school to Stonewall. I finished high school. We didn't have but eleven grades and I finished when I was seventeen. My father built Stonewall

school, Alliance school, and built Dr. McCotter's big home. I know you've seen that.

DR. PATTERSON: That beautiful home with the big columns on the porch.

SMITTY BARTLING: Well, my daddy built that. As I said, I finished high school. I had an aunt that lived in Norfolk, Virginia. She was very aristocratic and she thought nursing was the lowest of the low profession. She didn't want me to be a nurse, so she sent me a check and a trunk to pack and come to Norfolk to take a bookkeeping course.

I sent the check back and the trunk back and thanked her. She said nurses were not ladies. I thanked her and I told her that that was her opinion and I had my opinion, that I could be in any profession and be a lady and that I was determined to go in training. So Dr. McCotter was the one that recommended me to come to St. Luke's Hospital.

I went there in September 1924.

DR. PATTERSON: At that time, Dr. McCotter, I would imagine was pretty friendly with Dr. Jones.

SMITTY BARTLING: We lived next door to him.

DR. PATTERSON: You lived next door to Dr. McCotter.

SMITTY BARTLING: We lived next door to Dr. McCotter.

DR. PATTERSON: What I was saying, Dr. McCotter was probably very friendly with Dr. Jones and my father, Dr. Patterson, who had built the hospital.

SMITTY BARTLING: Yes, they were. He was. He died in St. Luke's Hospital up in number two.

DR. PATTERSON: Smitty, when you came to New Bern in 1924, did you go straight into nursing then?

SMITTY BARTLING: Straight into nursing.

DR. PATTERSON: Where did you live?

SMITTY BARTLING: Well, we lived in Bayboro at that time. About four years after I went in training, mama and daddy moved back to Belhaven and they lived there ever since until they both died, '91 and '92.

DR. PATTERSON: When you started at St. Luke's, did you commute from Bayboro?

SMITTY BARTLING: No, no. We lived there. We had to live there. We lived up on the fourth floor.

DR. PATTERSON: Of the hospital?

SMITTY BARTLING: Yes. That was the nurses quarters.

DR. PATTERSON: How many nurses were there?

SMITTY BARTLING: There were fourteen of us.

DR. PATTERSON: All living on the fourth floor.

SMITTY BARTLING: Fourth floor. We had double deckers and we had double beds in rooms.

DR. PATTERSON: What class was that, Smitty? The nursing school had been going on for a while, hadn't it?

SMITTY BARTLING: As I told you, Joe Pat, I cannot think of names, and of course there are some of the names that you would know, but there's one of the nurses that's living and her name is Bernice Willis. She's in a nursing home down in Atlantic. Then there's Jean Harris.

DR. PATTERSON: Was she in your class?

SMITTY BARTLING: Yes. Annie Humphrey went in training. Jean went in training the year after I went in training. She went in, I think, in '25 or '26, but I went in in '24.

DR. PATTERSON: Who were some of the girls in your class?

SMITTY BARTLING: Well, as I say, there was Glennie Bell Lowrey. She was from Elizabeth City. There was Lenora McDerman. She was from Hendersonville. There was a Mizzell girl. She was from Mt. Olive. Minnie Mizzell, she was from Mt. Olive. There was a Caroon girl. As I told you, I cannot think of names. She was from Oriental.

DR. PATTERSON: How did all these girls know about St. Luke's, coming from far away places?

SMITTY BARTLING: I don't know. You had to have a high school graduation and you had six months probation when you went in. You went in with a blue uniform and a white apron, six months probation, and you studied most of that time and worked too.

DR. PATTERSON: Smitty, how do you think these nurses learned about the St. Luke's nursing school? The girls in Hendersonville, for example. That's a long ways.

SMITTY BARTLING: I don't know. How did Dr. Jones and Dr. Patterson find Miss Stratton, and she from Ithica, New York?

DR. PATTERSON: Who was Miss Stratton?

SMITTY BARTLING: Jean Stratton, she was Director of Nurses when I went in training. She weighed about two hundred pounds. Gosh, she was a good looking woman. Big, fat, robust, black hair, black eyes.

She was a hellcat, but she was a real supervisor.

DR. PATTERSON: Did she run the nursing school also?

SMITTY BARTLING: I mean she ran it with an iron hand.

DR. PATTERSON: And the whole hospital.

SMITTY BARTLING: Yes sir, she ran that hospital.

DR. PATTERSON: Who were the doctors who were your teachers and what did they teach?

SMITTY BARTLING: Well, we got up at six thirty in the morning. Of course, at first we were upstairs. We came down, we went in Dr. Patterson's office and we had chapel. They observed us of course. Checked us, you know, to see if our uniforms and everything was all right. Then we went down to breakfast and at seven o'clock we went on the hall. When we went on the hall, Miss Stratton had the register, who was to go where and what. But the probationers, I think there were seven that went in the same month that I went in and I was the only one that graduated out of the seven.

DR. PATTERSON: What happened to the rest of them?

SMITTY BARTLING: They quit. Some of them got married. Martha Simpson got married. She went in when I went in. Glennie Bell Lowrey from Elizabeth City, she went somewhere up north, because she came back years and years and years after that looking for her records and they were gone. When the Sisters bought the hospital, they discontinued all those records, you know, the patients, the nurses and everything, the training school and everything. They just swept everything out.

DR. PATTERSON: Smitty, you mentioned going to chapel. Now, was

this a religious service in my father's office?

SMITTY BARTLING: Yes, yes. Miss Stratton read a quotation out of the Bible and we said the Lord's Prayer and that was chapel.

DR. PATTERSON: Where did you have breakfast?

SMITTY BARTLING: Down in the basement. We went down to the basement. We had a dining room.

DR. PATTERSON: So you started working on the floors right away then, did you?

SMITTY BARTLING: Yes. We had a ward down in the basement and that was for colored people, the blacks. The emergency room, the laboratory, the x-ray department, everything was down there. The kitchen, the dietetic's room, the dining room, the room that you fix the trays in, and the nurses's dining room, that was all in the basement. And there was one big ward that had colored men in it.

DR. PATTERSON: As I remember, it was on the west side of the hospital towards the north.

SMITTY BARTLING: Yeah. It came down the steps. On the side, it came down the steps.

DR. PATTERSON: And turned to the right.

SMITTY BARTLING: You turned to the right and you found the ward and the kitchen and the dining room. Then up right next to it on the left as you came down the steps was the emergency room.

DR. PATTERSON: And that was a room about eight by twelve feet in size.

SMITTY BARTLING: Not much larger than that little office. Not

much larger. One little table in there. Then next to that was the x-ray department. Then up to the front on the right was the lab. I think I stayed under Miss Stratton til three months before I graduated. Under her almost three years. Miss Stratton fell in love with some man in Sanford and married him and left. Then Miss Guthrie Sledge came. She was from Greenville, South Carolina, and they went from one extreme to the other. (laughter) She was a real southerner, I'm telling you, and I didn't like her a bit in this world because I was used to Miss Stratton. Miss Stratton, when she said, "Miss Smith", I said, "Yes, Miss Stratton."

DR. PATTERSON: What was Miss Stratton like?

SMITTY BARTLING: She was a Canadian Yankee. She was something in this world! She was strict. When we went to the dining room to breakfast in the morning we were afraid to look on the bulletin board. (laughter) We were afraid our names were on there and we were restricted for something, because we stayed restricted two years out of the three. Half the time we didn't even know what we were restricted for and we were afraid to ask.

DR. PATTERSON: Smitty, how long did this school last? I mean, how many years did you have to go to get your nursing degree?

SMITTY BARTLING: Three years. Three years. I went in training in September and I graduated in August, because I gave up two weeks of my vacation, and I graduated in August.

DR. PATTERSON: Now during the three years, did you receive instruction, lectures, all this time?

SMITTY BARTLING: We worked from seven to three. We had two hours a day off duty. Those two hours were to study. They were not to go and gad, go downtown and do this. A lot of the girls did it, but I didn't, I studied. Then we had a half a day a week. Sometimes it would be Sunday morning from seven to one o'clock and sometimes it's be from one until seven, but we had a half a day and that's all we had. At seven o'clock at night we went to Dr. Jones or Dr. Patterson or to the dining room or to Miss Sledge or to Dr. Bender or to Dr. Latham and we had class, from seven until nine five nights a week.

DR. PATTERSON: Was this at the hospital?

SMITTY BARTLING: At the hospital. No going out.

DR. PATTERSON: Where were these lectures given in the hospital?

SMITTY BARTLING: In the office.

DR. PATTERSON: So, Dr. Jones would teach in his office?

SMITTY BARTLING: Dr. Jones' office, Dr. Patterson's office, in the dining room. And of course Dr. Bender and Dr. Latham used Dr. Patterson's office because he taught one day a week and then Dr. Latham taught one night, I should say, a seven day. They would arrange it so the doctors would always have an office to teach in.

DR. PATTERSON: What subjects did these doctors teach?

SMITTY BARTLING: Well, Dr. Jones taught Anatomy and Physiology. (laughter) I'll never forget that as long as I live. I got a gold star, believe it or not, on my state board taking it. You won't believe it, but I did. Dr. Jones and Dr. Patterson taught Obstetrics and...

DR. PATTERSON: Pediatrics?

SMITTY BARTLING: Pediatrics. Dr. Latham taught Materia Medica, drugs and solutions. Miss Stratton taught Ethics. Then we had a teacher that went with Tom Kehoe. She later married little Tom Kehoe, Jr. She was a dietician at the high school and she came in one night a week and taught us Dietetics. And I mean, she taught us Dietetics. We learned diets.

DR. PATTERSON: Did these lectures go on throughout the whole three years?

SMITTY BARTLING: From September until June, then we took the final examination in June. June, July, and August, we had our two weeks vacation. September, our studies started over again.

DR. PATTERSON: The same subjects?

SMITTY BARTLING: Same subjects, same books. Three years, no new books. Same old books.

DR. PATTERSON: So you were in school, then, with two other classes all that time, is that right?

SMITTY BARTLING: One night a week. But, as I say, each doctor had a class and each doctor used the other doctor's offices.

DR. PATTERSON: That means that each of these doctors had to teach three different groups then, because there were three classes there. So Dr. Jones would teach your group when you were seniors, and he'd teach another group for the second year.

SMITTY BARTLING: After we got our caps, we started with our books, after we passed probation. We worked during the first six months of probation and then we took a test to find out whether we were equivalent

to be a nurse or not, and then we got our cap. I was so proud of that cap.

DR. PATTERSON: Were these doctors pretty good teachers?

SMITTY BARTLING: Yes, they were doggone good! Joe Latham, (your daddy, God love him, he was a devil!) , he'd sit up there and smoke that pipe and put his foot up on Dr. Patterson's desk. I can see him right now smoking that pipe and lecturing to us all at the same time, and we're not paying him a bit of mind. We just thought that he was a stuff, you know, and we could just run over Dr. Latham. Dr. Latham was smart as the devil. He knew business. He knew what he was teaching. He thought we were taking notes all this time and listening to him. (laughter) We didn't take him seriously. Let's face facts, we just didn't take him serious. I passed all my exams. The last year that we took exams I made 70 on Materia Medica and Dr. Latham read that and gave me the devil. He says, "You know better than that." He says, "You haven't been paying attention to what I've been saying." I said, "Oh, yes, we have." Said, "No, you haven't either." He said, "I'm gonna tell you what I'm gonna do. I want you to take that Materia Medica book and I want you to learn it." You see it up there. It's a little brown book about that big. He says, "I want you to learn that book", and I learned it. I memorized every darn thing in that book. That's the truth. I slept with it. I ate with it. I didn't go out. So then he said, "Now, Smitty, I'm gonna give you your examination because you're gonna take the state board and you have to pass that examination, and I'm not sending you to Raleigh with a

70 because you know more than 70." He says, "You know how to learn", and he says, "You just haven't been paying attention." He says, "These other girls are not ready to graduate yet, and I'm just gonna let them repeat." But he says, "I'm gonna give you that examination over and I'm gonna take it over in my office." That was over in Bridgeton upstairs, over a building upstairs. So one day I had the afternoon off and he carried me up there. Scared to death! I was so scared I didn't know what to do. I carried my two pencils, paper, and my Materia Medica book. I sat down, he sat down. He propped his feet up on the desk and lit his pipe and said, "I'm not gonna give you a written examination. I'm gonna give you an oral examination." Well, that scared me worse. But I could talk better than I could write, let's face it. He said, "Now, why in the hell couldn't you do that at first?" I said, "Because I wasn't paying any mind." I said, "We were too busy waiting for the boys outside." They were standing out at the window and we had about fifteen minutes and we'd go out there and talk to the boys about fifteen minutes, you know. We weren't paying any attention. We didn't do Joseph Patterson that way. Boy, we sat there like this, because we knew very well if we looked out that window what we were gonna get. But Joe was so easy going. But he was smart and he knew what he was doing, and as I say, he was leaving it up to us.

DR. PATTERSON: What did Dr. Jones teach?

SMITTY BARTLING: He taught Anatomy and Physiology. And he was on the board the year that I took the...it.

DR. PATTERSON: Smitty, when you worked on the floors during this three year training period, what did you do and were you under supervision?

SMITTY BARTLING: This was our schedule we were suppose to have. After we got our caps, of course, we were nurses. We got up of a morning and we had to bathe the patients. Of course we had to be a senior nurse before we were allowed to give medications. We gave baths, we tended to the patients, just like they used to do.

DR. PATTERSON: Someone was teaching you this all the time, is that right?

SMITTY BARTLING: At night. At night we studied. Then during the day we'd put forth what we had learned the night before.

DR. PATTERSON: Were you the only nurses taking care of the patients then?

SMITTY BARTLING: Yeah. There were fourteen of us.

DR. PATTERSON: There were no senior nurses who were already...

SMITTY BARTLING: Oh yes. That to me, Joe Pat, that was the greatest thing that ever happened to St. Luke's Hospital, was seniority. We had seniority. If a nurse went in training two weeks before I went in, she was my senior and I had to stand to her. That killed me. (laughter) But, we had to stand to the doctors, which I admired. We had to stand to our senior nurses. We had to stand to the director of nurses. We had to stand to everybody that was under us. And me going in as probee, I had to stand to everybody. Of course, I never will forget the first experience I ever had with losing a

patient. I was a probee and I was in the room and this patient was dying, down in number 7. I was chief mourner. I cried my eyes out.

I just cried and cried and cried. One of the nurses with the caps on grabbed me, a Register Nurse. (She wasn't a Register Nurse either, she was a student nurse. She had a black band on her cap. I never will forget her.) She grabbed me by the arm like that and pulled me out of that room. I was just a crying and she said, "Miss Smith, you can't do that. Now, you cannot do that." Says, "You have feelings and I know you have sympathy for the family, but you have to put your feelings back of you. You cannot sob with the family." She says, "You have to hold that back. Don't you let me see you go in a room and cry anymore with the patient." But I was chief mourner with that one patient and I never will forget it. But after that, I learned to console myself more.

DR. PATTERSON: So, you bathe the patients and you made their beds?

SMITTY BARTLING: We made their beds. We did everything. We served their trays. We had a dietician down in the kitchen. We had a nurse that was in the kitchen. Every time Miss Stratton got mad and restricted me, she'd send me to the kitchen, and that tickled me to death because I love to cook. (laughter) I served some beautiful trays, which I still got compliments for. Then after we stayed on the hall six months, we had three months of night duty. Then when we came off night duty, we'd go back and forth on the hall. We'd go from one floor to the next. Then we'd go to the operating room. I

was in training not quite two years when I went in the operating room as a scrub nurse. The doctors used to love for me to assist them because I was left handed. Dr. Jones and Dr. Patterson both loved for me to assist them because I was left-handed and they were right-handed. Dr. Jones and Patterson both begged me to go off and specialize in operating room supervision. I didn't do it. I didn't want to.

DR. PATTERSON: Smitty, tell me if I'm right about this. There were three classes in the hospital at the same time.

SMITTY BARTLING: Yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: I know a lot of them dropped out, but, at any one time there were more than fourteen student nurses in the hospital.

SMITTY BARTLING: Oh, I reckon there were about eighteen, Joe Pat.

DR. PATTERSON: Well, if a class held fourteen people, there should be more than that. There should be thirty or forty.

SMITTY BARTLING: Oh no. We didn't have room for that many nurses.

DR. PATTERSON: You didn't take that many every year then.

SMITTY BARTLING: See, that wasn't a big hospital.

DR. PATTERSON: Well, you said that there were fourteen in your class. I thought maybe there were fourteen in every class.

SMITTY BARTLING: No, there were fourteen nurses when I went in training. There was six that went in training with me.

DR. PATTERSON: I see. All right.

SMITTY BARTLING: There were six that went in training in September with me, and I was the only one out of the six that finished.

DR. PATTERSON: Was the fall-out rate that great for most classes?

SMITTY BARTLING: Well, if the doctors and the Director of Nurses, Miss Stratton, saw that they did something that they were not suppose to do, or they were not equivalent to making a nurse, they'd just tell them to go. They'd pack their trunk and leave.

DR. PATTERSON: How long did this nursing school last?

SMITTY BARTLING: I'm trying to remember. I know I was married, and I was married in '29. Annie Humphrey, I think, was one of the last nurses in the training school. I think Annie Humphrey's class was one of the last of the training nurses. Then there were about eight of them that was sent. Some of them was sent to Wilmington, and I think there was two that went to Rocky Mount and one went to Smithfield.

DR. PATTERSON: To work, you mean?

SMITTY BARTLING: Yeah, to finish their training. They got credit for their work at St. Luke's Hospital, but they discontinued the training school. Jones and Patterson sold it to the Catholic Sisters.

DR. PATTERSON: That's when it stopped.

SMITTY BARTLING: That's when it stopped.

DR. PATTERSON: That was in the forties then.

SMITTY BARTLING: I finished training in '28 and I was married in '29.

DR. PATTERSON: Smitty, when you were a student nurse and you were working so hard, what did you young ladies do for fun? Did you have dates?

SMITTY BARTLING: Oh, we had one night a week out - Saturday night until eleven o'clock. The Director of Nurses, was standing at that table as we came in that door and she took our name and the time we came in that door. And I mean we were in at eleven o'clock. If we were not, we paid for it. We were restricted.

DR. PATTERSON: Smitty, I've been told that none of the nurses who graduated from the training school ever failed the state board.

(Mrs. Bartling replied that that was not true, that one nurse had to take the exams three times and one two times.)

SMITTY BARTLING: Had to take it twice. They are the only two that I ever knew that ever failed the board.

DR. PATTERSON: They eventually passed.

SMITTY BARTLING: They all passed. They are the only two that ever failed the board that I know of. You don't remember when New Bern General was here.

DR. PATTERSON: No, I don't.

SMITTY BARTLING: I had finished training, in other words, when New Bern General burned down and those doctors came over there. That was a whole new world when Duffy and Pollock and Wadsworth and all those other doctors came over.

DR. PATTERSON: Let me ask you about that. Until that happened, the staff at St. Luke's, the medical staff, consisted of what doctors?

SMITTY BARTLING: Jones, Patterson, Bender, and Latham.

DR. PATTERSON: And then when the New Bern General burned down...

SMITTY BARTLING: They came in and it was a riot. Of course I

was out of training - thank goodness. I had finished training. I nursed one case over at New Bern General Hospital and I never will forget it. I was doing private duty. As I told you, I went in training when I was seventeen. I told a story about my age. I was suppose to be eighteen. I wanted to go in training so bad, so I told them a story. I told them I was eighteen years old when I went in training.

When I had to fill out my application to send to the state board, I filled it out and told the truth. Five days before I got my permit and my number to take the state board, I got a little letter with a pink slip in it that I could nurse until I became the age of twenty-one.

I had to take the state board when I was twenty-one. I wasn't but twenty. I cried and I cried. I went in Dr. Jones' office and I cried.

He said, "Well, damn it, if you told a lie one time, tell it again!" (laughter) I never will forget it. He said, "Tell it again!" I said, "Well, Dr. Jones, I'm suppose to take the board in about five days."

I said, "I studied so hard." So he got on the phone and he called, (I've forgotten her name. See age takes its toll and I've forgotten the woman's name that was in charge of the state board.), and he told her that Miss Smith had made a mistake in writing her application out and that her real age was twenty-one. I got to take the board. I was number 137. There were 137 nurses and I was number 137. That blue slip came in that I could go take the board.

DR. PATTERSON: Smitty, a lot of the nurses who graduated from this nursing school stayed in New Bern and worked in St. Luke's and in private nursing. Is this true?

SMITTY BARTLING: Yes, there was a lot of them. There was Jean Harris and Annie Humphrey. Oh, there was quite a few that stayed here. Rowena McSorley. She nursed for years you know. Emmett didn't work. She had a baby and he'd stayed home and tend to the baby and she'd go to work.

DR. PATTERSON: And Tiny McKee.

SMITTY BARTLING: Tiny McKee. Tiny graduated before I did. She was one of the first classes that ever graduated from St. Luke's Hospital. Do you have one of those little brown books?

DR. PATTERSON: About St. Luke's?

SMITTY BARTLING: Yeah.

DR. PATTERSON: I can't find it, Smitty.

SMITTY BARTLING: I can't either. Marianne has it stacked away in the storeroom. I told her the other day, I said, "Joe Pat is coming out, Marianne, and I have got to have that book." She sold the house that I gave her that she was born in on Spencer Avenue. She sold it about a year and a half ago and moved in a smaller house, which she really didn't need that house. She stored all my things and they're in a storehouse someplace. I want that book so bad because there's pictures in it of the first graduation class. Dr. Jones', Dr. Patterson's, picture was in there. I misplaced that book. I wouldn't take a hundred dollars for it. It's somewhere. But I'll be dead and gone before I ever find it.

DR. PATTERSON: Smitty, in those days, who did the x-ray work?

SMITTY BARTLING: Dr. Latham.

DR. PATTERSON: He took the x-rays, developed them?

SMITTY BARTLING: Dr. Latham did the x-rays and read the x-rays.
Dr. Joe Latham.

DR. PATTERSON: Who did the laboratory work?

SMITTY BARTLING: The first laboratory technician I remember coming here was Chinnis Lewis, Sherman Lewis' wife. She was the lab technician

DR. PATTERSON: Thelma Lewis.

SMITTY BARTLING: Thelma. I saw her today to church. She was to the picnic. But, she was the first. They had lab technicians to come in, and I can't remember their names. I just can't remember, but I do remember Thelma Chinnis. I remember she was the first one.

DR. PATTERSON: Was the surgical load pretty heavy at the hospital? Did they do a lot of operations?

SMITTY BARTLING: Oh yes! They did a lot of operations!

DR. PATTERSON: What kind of operations were done?

SMITTY BARTLING: Everything. I mean, Jones and Patterson really were surgeons. They were real surgeons. And I appreciate them more every day of my life now that I'm 85 and I've been out in the world and seen things.

DR. PATTERSON: They were not only surgeons, they did...

SMITTY BARTLING: They were medical and surgeons. They were everything.

DR. PATTERSON: Did they go outside of the hospital and operate in outlying communities?

SMITTY BARTLING: They did deliveries outside in the homes. They did a lot of deliveries. In fact, Latham and Jones and Patterson, all three, went outside and did deliveries, because I used to go out with them.

DR. PATTERSON: When they would deliver patients in the home, would the patient have any sedation at all?

SMITTY BARTLING: Oh yes, we carried chloroform. We had an obstetrical bag and that bag better have everything in it. You had everything in it for emergency, you know, for deliveries; forceps, everything.

DR. PATTERSON: Who administered the chloroform?

SMITTY BARTLING: Usually me, or the nurse that went.

DR. PATTERSON: How did you know how to do that?

SMITTY BARTLING: Well, the doctor was standing right by me.

DR. PATTERSON: And he taught you how to do it.

SMITTY BARTLING: We never give a patient a heavy anesthesia.

DR. PATTERSON: Never had any accidents.

SMITTY BARTLING: No! I never remember losing a patient. I never remember a patient hemorrhaging. I never remember having to take a patient to the hospital to do a caesarean on, and I went out on a many delivery. The minute they'd go into labor they'd call. They'd call over to the nurse's home, "Miss Smith, come over and get the OB bag and meet Dr. So and So down front. He's going out to Mrs. So and So's home on a delivery." Dr. Jones, would go in and he'd examine her. "Oh, she has got about six hours", he'd say, and he'd go to bed and

I had to sit there and watch her. (laughter) It was a lot of fun.

DR. PATTERSON: Smitty, in the operating room, who gave the anesthesia for these operations?

SMITTY BARTLING: The Director of Nurses.

DR. PATTERSON: Her name was?

SMITTY BARTLING: Jean Stratton.

DR. PATTERSON: Was she pretty good at that?

SMITTY BARTLING: She was good.

DR. PATTERSON: What did she use, ether?

SMITTY BARTLING: She had taken a course in it. She had taken a course in anesthesia.

DR. PATTERSON: When you were a student nurse, can you remember whether she used open drop ether or what kind of anesthetic she used?

SMITTY BARTLING: Open drop ether.

DR. PATTERSON: After she left, who took over that job?

SMITTY BARTLING: Miss Sledge.

DR. PATTERSON: The supervisor.

SMITTY BARTLING: The supervisor took it over.

DR. PATTERSON: When Miss Sledge gave up that job...

SMITTY BARTLING: Now, Miss Sledge was there about three months when I graduated. I didn't have but three months. I had three months under her and I got out. I took the board.

DR. PATTERSON: Who were some of the administrative people in the hospital in those days, secretaries? Madie Belle Hay?

SMITTY BARTLING: My goodness, I ought never to forget. Madie

Belle Hay; Kathleen Harris, she was the first one there. She later married and moved to Greenville. Oh, I guess she lived in Greenville maybe 20 or 30 years with some very wealthy man. She married a widower.

She was about forty-five I guess when she married. But she was a good secretary. She was Dr. Jones and Dr. Patterson's secretary. At seven o'clock at night, one nurse had to answer the phone from seven o'clock until nine. That gave the hall nurse time to get the patients to bed and give them medications and get them ready for bed and get them to sleep, and they didn't have to answer the phone. But one nurse had to answer the phone from seven to nine, seven nights out of the week.

DR. PATTERSON: What was the number of St. Luke's? 5-4

SMITTY BARTLING: Don't ask me that! 5-4 I think, if I'm not mistaken. We had two phones. Dr. Jones had one in his office, Dr. Patterson had one in his, and there were two in the main office.

DR. PATTERSON: And Madie Belle Hay was the secretary for both Dr. Jones and Dr. Patterson.

SMITTY BARTLING: Madie Belle followed Kathleen Harris. She was a beautiful woman.

DR. PATTERSON: Yeah. Well, when Miss Harris was here and when Madie Belle was here, they were both secretaries for both Dr. Jones and Dr. Patterson.

SMITTY BARTLING: Yeah, Jones and Patterson.

DR. PATTERSON: Smitty, do you think that this nursing school equipped you pretty well for the art of nursing?

SMITTY BARTLING: Well, I'll tell you this much, I appreciate it more every day of my life after going out and seeing the sights that I have seen in the last twenty-five years. They go out here at this school. They say they get a wonderful training out here at this college. Two years, and they're a registered nurse. We had three years and we had to go to Raleigh and take a board. I never will forget when I took the board, I was three months hearing from the board and I was so anxious. Of course, I wasn't married then. We didn't do at that time, I might have mentioned this, we didn't know what 7 to 3 was and 3 to 11 and 11 to 7. We didn't know what 7 to 7 was. We went on duty seven o'clock at night and if the doctors made rounds at nine or ten o'clock in the morning, we stayed until that patient was bathed and they had breakfast and the doctors had made rounds. I got home a many a morning at eleven o'clock, stayed up all night with a patient.

DR. PATTERSON: Smitty, when you finished, did you go into private duty nursing?

SMITTY BARTLING: Yes, I took the board. I never will forget, Dr. Jones was on the board. He gave Anatomy and Physiology. I'm was so proud, he came by and he saw me and he said, "Hey, Miss Smith." I wouldn't take a million dollars for him, cause I was scared to death. But anyway, I waited three months and I still was so anxious to know if I had passed that board or not. I worried myself to death. So Bill came up to the hospital about nine o'clock one Sunday morning for me. I had gotten off duty. He said, "By the way, didn't you want

to know whether you passed the board or not?" I said, "What?" He said, "Didn't you know whether you wanted to pass the board?" I grabbed that News and Observer, I said, "Oh, give me that paper! Give me that paper!" I couldn't even find my name I was so excited. At that time, Kenneth Jones had a filling station down on the corner where Tryon Palace is, you know. He drove up in there because I was about to wreck the car. He drove up in there and stopped and found my name where I had passed the board. I said, "Turn around and take me right back to that hospital." He said, "Why do you want to go back to the hospital?"

I said, "I want to go back and I want to tell Dr. Jones and Dr. Patterson I passed that board." So I went back. Dr. Patterson had finished his rounds and he was gone, and Dr. Jones was in his office chewing tobacco. (laughter) He, bless his heart, was sitting back in there, and I went in and I knocked on the door and he said, "Come in." I said, "Oh, Dr. Jones, I'm so excited! I'm so excited!" He said, "What's the trouble, Miss Smith?" I said, "I passed the board." He said, "I could have told you that three months ago." I said, "You mean thing.

Why didn't you tell me that?" He said, "I can tell you something else. You're one of the three nurses that's ever graduated from St. Luke's Hospital that got a Gold Seal." I said, "Why didn't you tell me that?!" He said, "Cause it would give you the big head." He said, "You know Miss Smith, you made a 100 on my examination." He said, "But I never give anybody a 100." I said, "Why? If they deserve a 100, why didn't you give them a 100?" He said, "I can't do it. It'll give them the big head. So I give them 99, but I wouldn't give them

100."

DR. PATTERSON: Smitty, let me ask you a different type question. Do you remember the tennis court across the street where the Baptist church is now?

SMITTY BARTLING: No. That was Tabernacle.

DR. PATTERSON: That probably came later.

SMITTY BARTLING: That was before my day.

DR. PATTERSON: Yeah.

SMITTY BARTLING: How old were you in 1924?

DR. PATTERSON: I was seventeen.

SMITTY BARTLING: I can see you just as good holding your daddy's hand going in that hospital. You on one side and Simmons on the other going in that side door. You know we never used the front door much. We used the side door. That was our door. But I can see you and you had on little pants up to here and they were buttoned around. You looked so cute.

DR. PATTERSON: Was I polite?

SMITTY BARTLING: Yeah, you were polite. You were a little devil. (laughter) No, you were both good little boys, cause your daddy made you go in there and sit on that old black couch until he made rounds. I don't know what ya'll did with that door closed cause I was busy with the doctors. But I'll tell you some little hints that you might not be interested in. You know, we were taught a lot of things in training. We were taught a male doctor never went in a female's room without a nurse accompanying them. That was one of the rules of the

hospital. You had to go in with a female patient. When a doctor went into a female patient's room to make rounds...

DR. PATTERSON: When a male doctor went in the room he had to have a nurse with him.

SMITTY BARTLING: A nurse. If he sent you out to get something, he stood to that door when you went to get it. That door was never closed, because there was a lot of talk going on of doctors taking advantage of patients. You know, all this gossip that's gone on for ages and always will go on. But that's one thing that we were never allowed to do. When we saw those doctors come on that hall, regardless of what we were doing, we took those charts and we followed those doctors in those females patient's room. I know one time I was doing private duty long after Dr. King had come here. I was making rounds with him with Mrs. Maude Chadwick. I took a chart and I went in the room with him. He stood there a few minutes and he turned around and he looked at me. You know he could be very abrupt. Francis King can be abrupt as the devil when he wants to be. I don't care what anybody says. He's a good doctor, but he can be abrupt. I don't know what he is now. But anyway, he said, "Why do you keep following me?!" I looked at him like I thought he was crazy, and I said, "I beg your pardon?"

He said, "Why do you keep following me? Every time I go in a patient's room, you come in the room with me." I said, "That's the way I was trained." I said, "We were trained that a doctor was never to go in a female patient's room without a nurse accompanying them." I said, "That was the way I was trained, Dr. King. But if you don't need me,

thank you Sir!" I threw that chart ont the bed.

DR. PATTERSON: (Tape turned over) You had just told Dr. King you were trained to be with male doctors when they went in a female patient's room.

SMITTY BARTLING: He thought that was ridiculous.

DR. PATTERSON: You then went out of the room when he said he didn't want you.

SMITTY BARTLING: I sure did. I threw that chart on that bed and walked out of that room.

DR. PATTERSON: And he called you back?

SMITTY BARTLING: Yeah, and I wouldn't go back. I sent another nurse back. I said, "I'm not going back. Go in there."

DR. PATTERSON: Let me ask you this question. I remember the black patients in the basement too, and I can see that ward right now. In your opinion as a nurse who was there, do you think they got good care, those black patients?

SMITTY BARTLING: Excellent! Excellent! They got excellent care. Joe Pat, this was a small hospital remember, and I mean those patients got good care. I don't care what anybody says. We were never allowed to leave a room without a patient's bed being fixed; you know, we didn't have air condition in hot weather, the draw sheet changed if it was damp with perspiration, the patient's back's rubbed, their pillows changed, feet up, the rooms all tidy, inspected before we ever left the hall.

DR. PATTERSON: This was in the basement or upstairs, it didn't

matter.

SMITTY BARTLING: Every room. See, we also had a ward up on the first floor if you remember. That was when the Cutter was here, and that was mostly for sailors. Other patients were in that ward. There were eight beds in there, but it was mostly filled most of the time with about five or six sailors off that boat. But it was when the Cutter was in here. And they could be smart when they wanted to be, and they could be really sassy when they wanted to be. But they met their match when they met a lot of us, I'll tell you right now. I don't know whether you know this or not, but when the Sisters took over, I nursed thirteen years and then I had a baby. Marianne was born. I never thought I'd have any children. Then I stopped nursing until she was ten years old. I wanted to go back nursing so bad. I'll never forget Dr. Kafer, he told Bill one day, he said, "You have one of two alternatives." He said, "You can either let Smitty go back to nursing or you're gonna have a nervous breakdown on your hands because she loves nursing, we need her, we're short of nurses." Marianne's in school, ten years old. I had a full time maid. There I was home going to the Garden Club, the Woman's Club, playing bridge, miserable as I could be wanting to go back to nursing and Bill wouldn't let me go back to nursing. I didn't have to nurse. He was making the salary. I could have his money, I didn't have to work. But I still wanted to go back. So he finally let me go back. Each week I'd sneak out of town and I'd get me a uniform and I'd hide. I got me four uniforms and I put them in a cedar chest. Dr. Kafer said,

"Keep after him, Smitty. Keep after him." So one night I went in Bill's room and I said, "Bill, I want to talk to you." He said, "What is it?" I said, "I'm going back to work." He said, "What?!" I said, "I'm going back to work." "Well, what's gonna become of Marianne and myself?" I said, "Well, I'll promise you this, you and Marianne are first in my life, and regardless of what happens to you or Marianne or regardless of who I'm on with, I will leave them and come to you." I said, "But I am going back to work."

DR. PATTERSON: Smitty, what was private duty nursing like?

SMITTY BARTLING: Seven days a week - five dollars a day! And that wasn't any twelve hours. That was 12, 14, 16 hours. Thirty-five dollars a week! That was private duty.

DR. PATTERSON: What did you do for your patient?

SMITTY BARTLING: Everything! Except there's one thing that I have never understood, and ya'll might not appreciate this, but this is one thing I must tell. I have never been so disillusioned with the nursing profession in my life as I am now. Never! Because I've been a patient up there about seven times in the last twenty years with hepatitis and different things. The nurses don't wear caps. The last time I was up there a nurse came in at nine-thirty one night.

I thought she was a ward secretary or scrub woman. I didn't know who she was. She had on striped pants and a checked jacket. No cap, no pin, no nothing, and she came in to take my history. She kept asking me questions and I kept answering her very undignified. Finally I said to her, "I want to ask you something." I said, "What is your

profession?" She says, "I'm a Registered Nurse." I said, "Well, I'd be ashamed to tell it." She looked at me so funny. She said, "What did you say?" I said, "I would be ashamed to tell it." I said, "Do you know the only distinction a Registered Nurse has is a black band and their pin?" I said, "The waitresses, the beauty operators, the cooks, the chefs, everything wears white uniforms." I said, "That's all right. But our pin and our black band on our cap...", and I said, "Here, you don't even have on a white uniform." Had on tennis shoes, and she a Registered Nurse. Wouldn't you have been ashamed of it?

DR. PATTERSON: When you were doing this private duty nursing, you continued to bathe the patient, administer the medications?

SMITTY BARTLING: Yes sir.

DR. PATTERSON: Feed them.

SMITTY BARTLING: Well, I stopped, as I say, ten years and then I went back to work. I went up and I talked to the Sisters. The Sisters owned the hospital at that time and they had built on all this new part to the back.

DR. PATTERSON: Excuse me, Smitty. I think the new part had been built on before the Sisters took over.

SMITTY BARTLING: They had it built on after they bought it, before they moved in.

DR. PATTERSON: Well, about that time the new part was added.

SMITTY BARTLING: Yeah. But I went in and I talked to the Sisters and I told them I was a Registered Nurse and that I had been out of circulation for ten years. Penney Kafer, in the meantime, had gone

back to work. She said, "Smitty, are you going back as a Registered Nurse. Are you going back with a cap and a uniform on?" I said, "Listen, Penney. Once a Registered Nurse always a Registered Nurse." I said, "I'm proud of my profession. I'm going back and I'm going to learn and going to learn the hard way." I had never given a transfusion. I knew how to take blood pressures. I knew how to take temperatures, but I had never given a transfusion in my life. So I went up and I talked to the Sisters and I told them the whole score, you know, what I was capable of doing. Sister Vincent, I don't know whether you knew her or not.

DR. PATTERSON: Oh yes. Yes, I remember very well.

SMITTY BARTLING: I was crazy about her. She was a good woman. She was a Catholic. I wasn't a Catholic, but let me tell you something right now, she was smart. She said, "Miss Smith, I want you to come back. We need nurses and I want you to come back and do private duty. And if there's anything I can do, day or night to help you, you let me know, you call me. I will be glad to help you do anything you want to know." I said, "Well, you know, I've been out ten years". And I said, "I do know the credentials of nursing, but I have never given a transfusion." She says, "The first transfusion you have to give you call me." Three days, the third case, was on, I had glucose to give. It wasn't a transfusion, it was glucose. I went flying down the hall just as hard as I could to Sister Vincent to come in there. So she came in very nice. Got everything. Got the tray and came in and set everything up to give the IV. I stood there and watched

her and said, "If you can do that, I can do it too." I always thought I could do more than anybody else. I don't mean that to be facetious, but I had a lot of confidence in myself, So she gave that. She said, "Now, Miss Smith there's an art in this", and she said, "I don't think any nurse should stick a vein unless they are qualified." I agree with her to that day because I have had some horrible experiences.

Five times and not even get a vein on me, and I told her the fifth time, I said, "Don't you stick me anymore." Of course I knew how to take it down. It was through dripping and I took it down and fixed it. The next day it was ordered again. So I went running for her.

She says, "No. I'm gonna let you do it." She says, "I'm gonna take the tray in there. You take the tray in there and set up everything, and I'm gonna stand there and I'm gonna watch you do it. I'm gonna let you stick that vein one time and if you don't get it, then I'll take it." But she says, "I want you to try it this time." I thought, well, if you can do it, I can do it to, smart me. I took that tourniquet out, put it around that man's arm, told him to make a fist and he made a fist, and I went in that thing just as pretty. I was so proud of myself I didn't know what to do. From then on I was the chief, I'm not saying this braggingly, really, I'm not, but I was the chief sticker in that hospital for years and years and years. We had two nurses from Duke Hospital, we had two from Chapel Hill, that came to New Bern to live and to do private duty, they had never given a transfusion. They had never given an IV. Duke Hospital graduate! Chapel Hill graduates! I said, "Well, where in the world did you get your

training?!" Said, they had interns. "When they had to have IV's or transfusions, all we had to do was to call interns." I don't know whether you remember Betty Marshburn or not. She worked with Dr. Warren. She was one of the smartest nurses that ever breathed a breath of life. She was the doctor of the two, let's say that. She was smart.

But she was a graduate of Duke and she had never given an IV, and I taught her how. I said, "Come in here. I'm gonna show you how to give an IV." So she left one day and said, Dr. Warren told her, said, "Betty, come in here, I want to show you." She said, "You don't have to show me how to give an IV. Let me show you how." Said, "I bet you I can give one better than you can." (laughter) He said, "Who in the hell taught you how to give an IV?" She said, "That's all right.

I bet you I can give an IV just as good as you can." I taught her how. I taught a lot of those nurses to give IV's.

DR. PATTERSON: Smitty, what was the hospital like under the Sisters?

SMITTY BARTLING: It was run "Number A." It was run very efficient. I'm no Catholic, but I can say one thing, they knew how to run a hospital. If you came in that door, if you didn't have five cents in your pocket and you were sick and you needed help, you were admitted and you got tender loving care. If you didn't have any money to pay when you went out, you went out. You didn't have to go sell your farm, sell a cow, or sell an automobile, or sell your house, or mortgage anything, you went out. They never were strict about money. They got it.

DR. PATTERSON: The Sisters had one of their group in charge of every floor?

SMITTY BARTLING: Every floor. There was a Sister on every floor. There wasn't but one that I had a run-in with. I really had a run-in with her. She was straight from Ireland. She had a very Irish brogue. I never will forget her. She came up there one day. I hadn't been nursing too long. I had done private duty I guess about a year and a half and Sister Fidelis was the Mother Superior at that time. She called me down in her office one day and she said, "Mrs. Bartling, would you consider supervising the third floor?" You and Simmons were practicing there at the time. Said, "Would you consider supervising?"

I said, "Oh, my goodness! I don't know about that." I said, "I'll tell you what, let me try it thirty days, if I suit you, I'll take it, and if I find out I can get along all right, I'll accept the job."

I said, "But if I find out I can't do it, I'll be glad to turn it over to someone that can." So in thirty days I had the job and I nursed and everything and seven years I stayed until they sold the building.

DR. PATTERSON: Smitty, do you remember Miss Lou Justice?

SMITTY BARTLING: Do I remember her? Yes, I do.

DR. PATTERSON: Tell me about her.

SMITTY BARTLING: Dr. Barker's nurse.

DR. PATTERSON: She was Dr. Barker's nurse?

SMITTY BARTLING: Oh yeah. She was Dr. Barker's nurse. She went out on all his OB's with him. Was she a director of nurses?

DR. PATTERSON: She was a nurse anesthetist. She gave the

anesthesia.

SMITTY BARTLING: Is that what she did over at New Bern General?

DR. PATTERSON: At St. Luke's. When Simmons and I came here, the only anesthesia available in the operating room at St. Luke's was open drop ether given by Miss Lou Justice. And she had been doing it for years I understand.

SMITTY BARTLING: I can't remember that.

DR. PATTERSON: Smitty, you did work at Kafer Hospital some.

SMITTY BARTLING: When I had to.

DR. PATTERSON: What was that hospital like?

SMITTY BARTLING: It was all right. But you know St. Luke's was my home. I had trained there and I had always nursed there and I nursed under the Sisters. I never had but one patient that resented the Catholics. He came in one day for a herniotomy. I'll never forget.

He walked in that room and he said, "The first thing I want to done in this room, I want that crucifix taken down." I said, "Well, I have news for you. You came in this hospital and you knew it was a Catholic hospital when you came in here and that crucifix is not coming off that wall." I said, "That crucifix might not mean anything to you, but if you look at it and you study it, that's Christ on the cross."

I said, "It doesn't have to be a Catholic. It's a crucifix and the Catholics put it up there, but it is not to be moved." I said, "Now, if you don't want to be operated on in the hospital, that's your alternative, but that crucifix is not to be moved." He wanted it taken off the wall.

DR. PATTERSON: Who were some of the dentist you remember in the old days?

SMITTY BARTLING: The dentist?

DR. PATTERSON: Um huh.

SMITTY BARTLING: I can't remember. Johnson, of course, and Hand. We had another one here that didn't stay here too long. I don't remember. He did some dental work for me. I can't remember his name, but I remember Johnson and Hand and Civils.

DR. PATTERSON: Did they work at St. Luke's? Did they do business at St. Luke's?

SMITTY BARTLING: No. They were not affiliated there. We didn't have a dental surgeon. Dr. O'Cask is one. Anyway, we didn't have one of those here at that time. They had to go to Greenville. I know Marianne had to go to Kinston to have her wisdom teeth pulled.

DR. PATTERSON: In your early days, Dr. Daniels was an ear, nose, and throat, was he?

SMITTY BARTLING: Eye, ear, nose, and throat.

DR. PATTERSON: He did eye work also?

SMITTY BARTLING: Eye work. He was smart.

DR. PATTERSON: He had his office in the Elks Temple?

SMITTY BARTLING: He had his office in the Elks Temple. He and O. C., they were brothers. There was R. L. and O. C.

DR. PATTERSON: And they worked together?

SMITTY BARTLING: They worked together. R. L. lived down on East Front Street and O. C. lived in Oriental. He doctored a lot in Oriental,

but he came up here and helped R. L.

DR. PATTERSON: Did they do any surgery in their office? Did they do tonsillectomies in the office?

SMITTY BARTLING: Yes, yes, they did surgery, they did tonsillectomies.

DR. PATTERSON: Sent the patients home.

SMITTY BARTLING: They took Bill's tonsils out in the office and sent him home.

DR. PATTERSON: Did they work at St. Luke's?

SMITTY BARTLING: Yes, they worked at St. Luke's.

DR. PATTERSON: And they would do patients there too.

SMITTY BARTLING: They worked at St. Luke's. But, you know, when I get to thinking about it, Joe Pat, I can't ever remember them doing a cataract.

DR. PATTERSON: I don't believe they were done very much in those days.

SMITTY BARTLING: Because Dr. Davidson was the first one. No, there was another doctor here that got killed. What was his name? Eighty-five years old, it's pitiful, you can't think at that age.

DR. PATTERSON: There was a doctor from Baltimore, Dr. Lee Cohen, who used to come down here and operate.

SMITTY BARTLING: Oh yeah. He used to come down and do Jones and Patterson's eye surgery and nose surgery.

DR. PATTERSON: Nose surgery.

SMITTY BARTLING: Nose surgery. He did more nose surgery than

any doctor I've ever known.

DR. PATTERSON: He would come down from Baltimore several times a year, would he?

SMITTY BARTLING: Yes. John Hopkins.

DR. PATTERSON: And they'd have patients waiting for him for nose operations.

SMITTY BARTLING: Yep, have them lined up. Dr. Lee Cohen.

DR. PATTERSON: Do you remember a Dr. Claude Coleman, a neurosurgeon from Richmond who would come down and do neurosurgical procedures at St. Luke's?

SMITTY BARTLING: No. As I say, I stayed out. Ten years I stayed out of nursing and there was a lot of things that went on during those ten years that I stayed out of nursing. I used to go up to the hospital and visit, but I stayed home and tended to my daughter until she was ten years old.

DR. PATTERSON: Smitty, in your career, you did hands on nursing. You took care of the patient; bathe them, fed them, provided medication, changed their beds. Who does that for the patients now?

SMITTY BARTLING: Nobody. You take a pan of water and carry it in there and put it in front of the patient and tell them to take their bath. I had hepatitis. The first bad case of hepatitis I had was about fifteen years ago and Dr. Rick Moore was my doctor. He immediately put me in the hospital for thirty days, absolute bed rest, bathroom privileges only. I got one bath the thirty days I was in there. I had to take my own baths.

DR. PATTERSON: Here in New Bern.

SMITTY BARTLING: In New Bern, St. Luke's Hospital. Oh no, Craven County Hospital. I beg your pardon. But I helped move the patients from St. Luke's Hospital. I helped move everyone of those patients over to Craven County Hospital.

DR. PATTERSON: That should be an interesting story.

SMITTY BARTLING: That was quite interesting. That was a day I'll never forget.

DR. PATTERSON: Describe what that day was like, Smitty.

SMITTY BARTLING: Well, they had four ambulances over here. I think Kinston sent one, and Jacksonville sent one, and we had two. We had four ambulances. Dr. Kafer's mother was the last patient moved and I moved her out. I was the last nurse to walk out of that hospital, with tears running down my cheeks going into that new hospital. I went over there and I supervised the whole hospital after we went over there. Mr. Moore took it over if you remember, Lonnie Moore.

DR. PATTERSON: Um huh.

SMITTY BARTLING: And I supervised. After the Sisters left, I quit. I left St. Luke's. I couldn't take it, because everything just turned upside down and it was just like day from night, so I started back doing private duty. After we found out we were moving over to the new hospital, he carried a crowd of nurses over there to show us the hospital and the layout. The first thing I said, of course you know I had to be very critical of it, I said, "Well, to me, it's made backwards." I said, "You put all the private rooms on the back where

you can't see a thing but the woods and the smokestacks and everything, and all the semi-privates and the wards are on the front on the south."

Fuson did the plans for it you know. But to me it was never a real hospital. It is now from what I can understand. But I don't want to go in there anymore than I have to. But anyhow, Mr. Moore asked me if I would supervise until he could get a supervisor, and I supervised that hospital two years.

DR. PATTERSON: You were the chief nurse?

SMITTY BARTLING: Chief supervisor of three floors in the new hospital for three years. And I was a nervous wreck running from floor to floor!

DR. PATTERSON: Were there a lot of patients there?

SMITTY BARTLING: "Mrs. Bartling, pick up so and so and so. Mrs. Bartling, pick up so and so and so." Everything that come in the emergency room, I had to go down there. Everybody that was delivered, they called me for delivery room. Everything I had to be here and yonder. I almost had a nervous breakdown. I came home one night.

I had been married to Bill thirty-some years. And that's the only time in the fifty years Bill and I were married that he ever told me, this is the truth, what I could do and what I couldn't do. I came home one afternoon at five o'clock exhausted. Just as I got ready to go out some policeman had shot his wife. The emergency came in of course. I had my pocketbook on my arm getting ready to leave. I had checked out, but I had to go back and help couldn't save them.

So I came home that afternoon at five o'clock and I was so exhausted.

Bill came in the kitchen, I was fixing dinner, he says, "Mama, I got some news for you." I said, "What is it?" He said, "Tomorrow morning when you go back to the hospital, you go to Miss Harrison", she was Director of Nurses then, he says, "you go to Hildred Harrison and you give her two weeks notice." He said, "You don't have to work. You've never had to work since the day you married me. You don't have to work and you don't have to come home in the condition you're in tonight."

And he says, "This is killing you and you don't have to do it. You could get all the private duty you want to do. If you want to do a little private duty, I'll never say you can't do that, but you are coming out of that directing of nursing, supervising of that hospital."

He said, "You're through with that. That's it." So I told Miss Harrison. She said, "You can't do that!" I said, "Oh yes I can."

I said, "When the big boss speaks, he means business." I said, "This is the first time my husband has ever told me in his life what I could do and what I couldn't do, and he told me I had to give it up." I said, "Two weeks I'm gone." So I gave it up and I started doing private duty. He says, "Miss Harrison has charge of the registry duty. It don't matter a darn whether she calls you or not." Says, "You have enough friends in New Bern and it can give you all the work you want."

If you want to take a private duty case now and then, you're welcome to do it." But he says, "You're gonna give up that hospital work."

So I guess I had been off about five days when I got a call to come on duty. It was Mary Nelson from over in Bridgeton. She'd had a slight stroke and I went on with her. I was on with her about three weeks,

she really didn't need me, but she kept me for company more than anything else, and Harry MacDonald called me and says, "Smitty, can you come around to my office after you get off duty?" I said, "What do you want with me, Harry?" He said, "I want to talk to you." I said, "Well, what do you want?" I couldn't imagine what he wanted. He said, "I want to talk to you." I said, "I'll be around there when I get off duty." And he said, "Will you consider taking the public health school nurse for the city schools?" I said, "Oh my lord." He says, "You have a good budget", because it was with the ESCA government, you know, and they gave me a good budget to work on. And of all the nursing I ever did, that was the most challenging thing I've ever done in my life. You'd be surprised at the poor people I helped. I helped rich ones too, but I, more or less, catered to those that really needed it. Eyes and teeth. Sometimes I'd have as many as six people at the time. They had a great big trailer that they used for dental work. They'd pull it right on the lot, the school lot. And, I'd have my patients in there before the door opened. Before the dentist got there, I'd have my patients in there. There are two or three doctors that have stayed her. One of them married...

DR. PATTERSON: Kenneth Gibbs.

SMITTY BARTLING: Yeah, Dr. Gibbs. I worked for him. I nursed for about four of them. Two or three of them left, two or three of them stayed. But I really enjoyed that. The only thing, I thought I could never give up my cap and my white uniform. I worked under the public health and they wore blue stripes in the summer and in the

winter they wore navy blue and no cap, and that killed me. I didn't like that. But it was really the most challenging thing I think in my nursing career.

DR. PATTERSON: Smitty, in the early days of World War II, or before the war started, things were getting very busy around here, and in Jacksonville, Camp LeJeune was being put together and Cherry Point was being put together, what was St. Luke's Hospital like during those periods?

SMITTY BARTLING: Well, I was home having a baby.

DR. PATTERSON: You didn't work there then.

SMITTY BARTLING: I didn't work then.

DR. PATTERSON: The reason I asked, there was an ambulance service between Camp LeJeune and St. Luke's and the workers who were injured would be brought to New Bern.

SMITTY BARTLING: And they begging for rooms. I felt so sorry for those service people coming in here. They were building up Cherry Point. And people knocking on your door morning, noon, and night begging, "Please, just let us sleep on the floor." It was so pathetic until they got the quarters built down at Cherry Point. But I had a baby and there was no nursing for me until Marianne was ten years old.

DR. PATTERSON: The town was pretty full of people then I'm told.

SMITTY BARTLING: It was full.

DR. PATTERSON: Fred and I weren't around New Bern in those days. We were far away.

SMITTY BARTLING: Where were you?

DR. PATTERSON: At that time, during the war, I was in the Pacific and Fred was too. Fred went through all the big battles in the Pacific. I was on Okinawa and Hawaii.

SMITTY BARTLING: Marianne was too. (laughter) She was in Hawaii. Her husband was sent from Hawaii to Viet Nam.

DR. PATTERSON: Fred, you have been listening to all of this. Your father was very much a part of the story in New Bern then. Do you have any questions you'd like to ask Smitty?

FRED LATHAM: I wonder if she was there the day I got my tonsils out. I went up to Dr. Daniels' office and Dr. Daniels' office was taking care of Martha Shupp. Her tonsils were being removed.

SMITTY BARTLING: Yes. She used to be the first superintendent of the hospital, did you know it? Miss Shupp, she was first Director of Nurses at the hospital. Jean Stratton took her place. But I don't remember. I remember your sister.

FRED LATHAM: Mary Alice.

SMITTY BARTLING: I remember her very distinctly. And your younger sister.

FRED LATHAM: Janet.

SMITTY BARTLING: But I kind of lost you somewhere. I don't know where I lost you, but I lost you.

DR. PATTERSON: But your tonsils were taken out.

FRED LATHAM: They were taken out at St. Luke's. I was tricked into going up there. I was five years old, so it would have been 1929.

It was apparently on the second or third floor wherever it was. I was put in one room and they came in. I had always gone up in the hospital with my father, you know, and so I went right in willingly.

Then suddenly I found out. An orderly or someone picked me up and put me on the table. And I was more or less terrified. And they were holding me down and they just dripped ether. They put this ether on me, and I was frantic being held down. Somebody's arm came across my mouth. I couldn't move anything except my hands, and I reached up and I got me some arm and I bit hard! I heard an epithet. Then pretty soon, though, that ether got me and all I could see was this rolling...

SMITTY BARTLING: Isn't that a horrible feeling? Have you ever had an anesthetic, Joe Pat?

DR. PATTERSON: An anesthetic?

SMITTY BARTLING: Uh huh.

DR. PATTERSON: I've had lots of them.

SMITTY BARTLING: So have I. Well, I was married in '29. I should remember that. But so many things happened that year until I don't remember.

FRED LATHAM: Well, I was living in one house in Riverside, in the Block house we call it, at that time when I got my tonsils out.

Then when I went home about three days later, they took me to the new house in Riverside, which was 45, number 45 at C Street and National Avenue.

SMITTY BARTLING: Oh yeah. Your mother's still there. Does she

still have a colored woman working for her once a week named Essie?

FRED LATHAM: She certainly does.

SMITTY BARTLING: She worked for me fourteen years.

FRED LATHAM: Essie's a wonderful person.

SMITTY BARTLING: She worked for me fourteen years. She worked for me until after Bill died.

FRED LATHAM: Well, you taught her well.

SMITTY BARTLING: She was a good colored woman. A good Christian colored woman.

DR. PATTERSON: Smitty, let me ask you about a particular person at St. Luke's who I think was very important to the hospital and very important to a lot of doctors around, Alberta Bagley.

SMITTY BARTLING: Oh yeah. She came her from South Carolina. I think she was under Miss Sledge. She supervised the halls. You know the funniest thing, our days of training were so entirely different from what they are now. Oh, I'm glad I don't live through this world now! We were so professional. We were taught how to drape a patient, you know, a male patient, to give them a bath. We draped them this way, we draped them this way, and we'd bathe them. Then when we got to the essentials, we called the orderly and the orderly came in and finished the bath. We never bathe a patient down there in our life!

I never bathe a patient in my life! And now they go in there and take the cover and throw it back and bathe the patient all over and think nothing of it. I liked to died when that nurse told me that.

I said, "I don't believe it." She said, "I swear, it's the truth."

She said, "We don't think anything about it." Said, "We just throw the cover back. I said, "Well, I'm glad I'm not nursing."

DR. PATTERSON: Smitty, what was the Depression like in New Bern? You were here then.

SMITTY BARTLING: Yeah, I was here. I was married. I was doing private duty, five dollars a day. That was a lot of money. It went a lot further than twenty does now.

DR. PATTERSON: Was that a bad time in New Bern?

SMITTY BARTLING: Well, it was bad everywhere you see, Joe Pat. Really, it was a bad time.

DR. PATTERSON: Did patients have trouble paying you then?

SMITTY BARTLING: No. I didn't have a bit of trouble. All the years that I nursed I never had but one patient, I never lost but five dollars. This is the truth. In all the years that I nursed, doing private duty, supervising, doing other work, I never lost but five dollars.

DR. PATTERSON: Did you have to use your nursing skills during the hurricanes in the 1950's or '33?

SMITTY BARTLING: Oh yes. And the Sisters were so good to me. Marianne was in high school during some of them. We'd pack our suitcases and they'd get me a room to go up there and stay. Because Bill was out you see. Bill was superintendent of the water and light department. I'd go for three days and nights and never see Bill.

DR. PATTERSON: During the hurricane.

SMITTY BARTLING: During the hurricane, I never saw him. I never

stayed home because the Sisters would send for us and we'd go to the hospital and stay. They'd take Marianne too.

DR. PATTERSON: And they had you there to help with the medical...

SMITTY BARTLING: I stayed up all night long and worked day and night during the hurricane, because some the nurses couldn't get in. They couldn't come in. They didn't have a way to get in. The trees were down. The current was off. It was terrible. Of course we had our own electric, or whatever you call it, system that we could turn on and have electricity, but we had to be very careful with it. But those hurricane days were something to remember.

DR. PATTERSON: Smitty, in the early days of the county hospital after St. Luke's closed, Good Shepherd Hospital was closing too, or had closed.

SMITTY BARTLING: It burned.

DR. PATTERSON: Good Shepherd burned?

SMITTY BARTLING: Uh huh, it burned.

DR. PATTERSON: I didn't know that!

SMITTY BARTLING: Yeah, that's why it closed. It burned.

DR. PATTERSON: It's there now.

SMITTY BARTLING: I know. They've done it all over. Have you not seen it recently?

DR. PATTERSON: What year did it burn?

SMITTY BARTLING: I don't remember. I had finished training.

DR. PATTERSON: Good Shepherd. Now, this is the black hospital on West Street.

SMITTY BARTLING: Oh, you're talking about the black hospital. I don't know.

DR. PATTERSON: You were talking about the New Bern Sanitorium that was out there on George Street. It burned during the fire?

SMITTY BARTLING: No. Old New Bern General was down on Craven Street.

DR. PATTERSON: New Bern General we're talking about. Okay. It burned.

SMITTY BARTLING: New Bern General.

DR. PATTERSON: Well, what I was gonna ask you is, when the new county hospital opened, it was an integrated hospital.

SMITTY BARTLING: Yes, very much so.

DR. PATTERSON: And this was new to New Bern.

SMITTY BARTLING: Yes.

DR. PATTERSON: How did that work out in the hospital?

SMITTY BARTLING: Well, you had to accept it.

DR. PATTERSON: Was it difficult?

SMITTY BARTLING: Well, it was for me because I never would go in a room with a black. I'm different now. I'm more broad-minded.

I still wouldn't like to go in a room with a black, because I've never been in anything but a private room. I know when I was taken with hepatitis, Dr. Moore said "You've got to go to the hospital and you've got to go right this minute." When they did a biopsy on my liver, they went down in my appendix area and my liver was down there, to do a biopsy. That's how far my liver had come out from under my rib

cage. I liked to died. He said, "You have got to go to the hospital."

I said, "I want a private room." He said, "Well, I can't get you one." I said, "Well, I'll go home." He said, "Smitty, you can't go home. You've got to go to the hospital!" I said, "I am going home until I can get a private room. I am not going in a semi-private room.

I've never been in one and I'm not going in one." So I went home.

The next morning they called me from the hospital at seven o'clock, says, "Can you be up here in fifteen minutes?" I said, "I can be there in ten." I got me a private room, but I was lucky. I was really lucky getting private rooms. But I had a perfect horror of going in a semi-private room.

DR. PATTERSON: Smitty, when the new hospital opened and there were black patients there, you had a difficult time personally. How did the hospital handle the situation? Did it seem to go all right?

SMITTY BARTLING: Just the same.

DR. PATTERSON: There were no problems about this?

SMITTY BARTLING: Black was black and white was white and you were all treated the same.

DR. PATTERSON: And it worked all right, did it?

SMITTY BARTLING: Worked all right. There was some of them that resented it. You know, older people that resented being put in a room with a black. But it worked out fine. And as I say, nine tenths of the people that work up there now are black and nine tenths of them here are black. And we've got some smart ones here.

FRED LATHAM: Smitty, were you at St. Luke's in 1948?

SMITTY BARTLING: No. I wasn't there in 1948. Let's see, Marianne was born in 1941. No, I wasn't there in 1948, cause I back to work when she was ten years old .

FRED LATHAM: I was trying to remember when I first came back from the service in that first quarter of 1948. I'm sorry, it is 1947, '47 there, before I went back to school, my father had an emergency call to go down to the emergency room at the hospital. He said, "You want to go with me?" I said, "Okay." So I went with him and they had a patient in there. A trauma patient had been stabbed in the back with a German swastika dagger. It went right in through his backbone and through his pelvis and sort of penetrated his intestines and there he was. He was still lying face down on the table and they were trying to figure out how to get that knife out of him. It had gone right through, we'll say, through green bone and had graft. Well, they were just trying to figure out how to get it out. Dad looked at it and he was questioning to see if his nerves were cut, and his nerves were not cut. So they strapped that fellow down and, I believe it was Charlie Duffy, stood over the top of him, and just like he was pulling a sword out of the stone...

SMITTY BARTLING: That sounds like Charlie, doesn't it?

FRED LATHAM: He got over there and he pulled that dagger right out of his back with me there.

SMITTY BARTLING: Did the blood gush?

FRED LATHAM: There was not much. It was enough blood, that me looking at it and having been through enough battles and things like

that, I just got weak.

SMITTY BARTLING: You did?

FRED LATHAM: I got weak and I had to sit down. My dad said, "Put your head between your legs." Anyway, Charlie Duffy had his souvenir. I don't know if it's still around or not.

SMITTY BARTLING: You know, he's bad. He has to have a companion with him now. Did you know that, Joe Pat?

DR. PATTERSON: Yes, I had heard that.

SMITTY BARTLING: I was real sorry to hear about that.

DR. PATTERSON: Smitty, we're coming to the end of the tape and I wonder if they're are any particular happenings that you remember or people that you remember that you would like to speak to before we close this out.

SMITTY BARTLING: Oh lord, no. I don't, other than it was a wonderful life.

DR. PATTERSON: Would you advise your daughter, if she was the right age, to go into nursing or a granddaughter?

SMITTY BARTLING: Not now.

DR. PATTERSON: You would not.

SMITTY BARTLING: Not now. Not around here. I would in some larger hospital.

DR. PATTERSON: Well, that's what I mean. Would you advise a young girl to be a nurse?

SMITTY BARTLING: If I had a daughter that wanted to be a nurse and she wanted to go to Duke or to Carolina or to some big hospital,

Mayo Clinic or somewhere like that, yes, I would advise her to go, if she had the nursing blood in her. But you've got to want to be a nurse to be a nurse. Did you know that? You don't go in for the fun of it. That's why a lot of them left. They went in it because they thought it was gonna be a merry-go-round, but it was anything else but a merry-go-round. It was work 365 days to the year.

DR. PATTERSON: You're glad you did it.

SMITTY BARTLING: And I'm glad I did it. I never resented it. Never! Never. I had a lot of fun. Had a lot of heartaches.

DR. PATTERSON: Smitty, you have been a great nurse and you are a great nurse.

SMITTY BARTLING: No, not anymore.

DR. PATTERSON: I remember you through the practice years I had here and I remember my father and what he thought of you, and Dr. Latham the same way.

SMITTY BARTLING: You know I had the third floor. It was so funny, I can't remember Joe Pat and Simmons directly, but I can remember Ernest Richardson. God love him. He's retired now. He's his worst enemy. The cussingest man I ever heard in my life. I used to get him on the hall. You know how small the third floor was?

DR. PATTERSON: Yeah.

SMITTY BARTLING: We didn't have a nurses station. The desk was out in the hall. But all the doors were open, and if you wanted to talk anything confidential you went back in the diet kitchen or you went in the medicine room if you wanted to talk anything confidential

to the nurses. Nothing was confidential with Ernest. God dam it! Out on the hall one morning, he was out there just a cursing. I said, "Shut up!", and he looked at me so funny. He said, "What?" I said, "I said shut up." I said, "You are not suppose to come on this hall using profanity like that." I said, "Do you realize every door on this hall is open and every patient on this hall is hearing you when you use this profanity?", and I said, "It's not suppose to be used on this hall, and as long as I'm running this hall you are not to use it on this hall!" He said, "Huh!" He went upstairs...

DR. PATTERSON: (Interruption) Ernest had gone up the steps and he'd come back down and he called you over and he said, "Honey,..."

SMITTY BARTLING: "Honey, come in here!"

DR. PATTERSON: And then what happened?

SMITTY BARTLING: He put his arm around me and called to me the diet kitchen, he says, "Honey, I'm so sorry I did that." He said, "I'm so sorry." I said, "Dr. Richardson, you know better than to use profanity on this hall like that." I said, "In the first place, you're taking the Lord's name in vain". And I said, "In the third place, every patient on this hall has heard you, even your patients going down this hall, using profanity. I said, "It's against your profession as well as mine and I don't want to hear you using that profanity."

Then I got scared and I ran downstairs. After he went upstairs, I ran downstairs to Mother Superior because I was afraid he was going to report me for telling him to shut-up. I went down and I knocked on Sister Fidelis' room. She said, "What's the trouble Miss Smith?"

I said, "Oh, the devil has broke loose on that third floor." She said, "What's happened?" I told her and she said, "Go on back upstairs. Go on back upstairs. Don't worry about a thing. He's not coming down here. He knows better to come down here to say anything to me. He's not coming down here. Don't worry about him, he's not coming down here saying one word to me. He better not!" That's one thing they did, they took up for the nurses. That's one thing I admired in them. They went in on all those doctor's meetings. They never missed a doctor's meeting. That Mother Superior didn't, and I mean she took up for those nurses, and you appreciated it. But Ernest came down. I had to call him about two hours after that. This girl was just vomiting and so I went to the phone and I rang the number. Little Ivey, this little Registered Nurse, she had gone back to work. She had been out of work a long time. She had decided to go back. Every time anybody would say "Boo" she'd run. She really did me more harm than she did good on my hall till I got her broke in. But she heard me ringing Dr. Richardson's number and she went flying down the hall. She said, "Who you calling?" I said, "I'm calling Dr. Richardson." She said, "What are you calling him for?!" I did to her like that and I said, (Sophie Gaskill was working for him) I said, "Sophie, let me speak to Dr. Richardson, please." He came to phone and he says, "Hello." I said, "Dr. Richardson, Mrs. (we'll call her Mrs. Jones) in number 11 is about to vomit her tonsils out." I said, "She's been vomiting. She was vomiting when you were up here. You know she has pernicious nausea and you didn't even order her any glucose." @#*@*%,

I said, "Shut-up that cursing. Just shut-up that cursing right up! Stop using that profanity over this phone and give me some orders on her." He said, "Give her some glucose!" (laughter) Ernest was a bird. You know he's retired now.

DR. PATTERSON: Yeah.

SMITTY BARTLING: I met him a lot of times over when Ava Smith was in her last illness. He married Ava's daughter, you know, and he used to go over there and I used to go over to see Ava. We used to laugh and I told him, "Ernest, you remember the time I grabbed you and told you to shut-up on that hall?" He said, "Smitty, I could have said, Lord, have mercy, I wanted to go out that window." He said, "I went upstairs and I turned round and round and round on that fourth floor and I said I've got to go back down and beg that woman's pardon."

Said, "Of course, she's gonna get me again." (laughter) I said, "You don't know the half of it. I went and reported you to Sister Fidelis cause I thought you were going to report me and I'm going to be the first one down to report you." He died laughing. He said, "Did you tell her what I said?" I said, "I sure did." I told her you were up there using profanity on that hall." He was a bird. If you've taped every thing I've said, Joe Pat, I'm gonna kill you. (laughter)

DR. PATTERSON: Well, it's all on tape. (laughter)

SMITTY BARTLING: This is being friendly, you know. It's been off the record.

DR. PATTERSON: Yeah. Well, Smitty, it's been a good interview and you've told us a lot of things about nursing in New Bern in the

early days.

SMITTY BARTLING: Well, you know, I've had more people to tell me, "Smitty, really and truly you should write a book." There are some things that I'd tell little instances I'd have, like you know nursing patients. They'd say, "I declare, Smitty, you really ought to write a book about your nursing life. It would really sell." I said, "No it wouldn't." I never will forget one time, it was two days before I got my cap and they were sending downstairs for a patient for pre-op and they hadn't given the pre-op. They ran to me and they said, "Miss Smith, run give that Mr. Jones (we'll call him John or whatever his name was) his pre-op right now, they're on their way down from the operating room to get him and he's suppose to have his pre-op a long time ago!" I said, "I can't give him pre-op. I don't have a cap and I'm not suppose to give a hypodermic without my cap on."

"Well, you're gonna get your cap tomorrow. Go ahead and give that right now." This was Miss Stratton. So I went in there, and I turned his butt over and I rubbed it good and gave him that hypodermic and I shot him like that and I rubbed it good. He said, "Gee, that was an easy hypodermic. Have you ever given many hypodermic?" I said, "I wish I had a nickel for everyone I've ever given", and I walked out and I thought, "You old fool, you wouldn't have but five cent."

(laughter) I never will forget that. That's the first one I'd ever given.

DR. PATTERSON: Smitty, in those days, after the operation was over, the patients would go right back to their rooms.

SMITTY BARTLING: Right back to their rooms, until the Sisters went there. They'd go right there to their room and you had to stay with them until they stabilized.

DR. PATTERSON: If they didn't have private nurses, one of the floor nurses would stay with them?

SMITTY BARTLING: Yes, the floor nurse had to stay. Somebody had to stay right in that room until they were completely reactive and stabilized; blood pressure, everything.

DR. PATTERSON: I know that in the early fifties when the Sisters were there and Simmons and I were operating, there was no recovery room then. They still went back to their rooms.

SMITTY BARTLING: They had a recovery room.

DR. PATTERSON: Not then. Not in the early fifties.

SMITTY BARTLING: I don't know. They did when I went back to work.

DR. PATTERSON: I think recovery rooms didn't start until later.

SMITTY BARTLING: They had a small room upstairs they pulled them right out. See, they changed everything around that. That operating room used to be the nurse's solarium. That used to be our living room, our living quarters, when we lived up on the third floor when I was in training.

DR. PATTERSON: The front operating room was a solarium.

SMITTY BARTLING: The front, the operating room was a solarium. The back part was the operating room facing Mitchell's house.

DR. PATTERSON: Yes, I remember that.

SMITTY BARTLING: That was the operating room. That was the back. But the front was the nurse's solarium. We had a nice place up there. We had nice furniture and they had a victrola for us. We nurses would go back there and talk. I never did much talking. I was too busy studying. I was scared. I wanted to make good grades and I mean I studied. They all laughed and frolicked. Some of them had to take that board over. But not me. I went in training to be a nurse, and I was determined to be a nurse.

DR. PATTERSON: Do you have any other memories of particular incidence during your nursing career?

SMITTY BARTLING: No, not many worth telling. One time I went in a patients room, this is so funny, and his name was Mr. Jones and he was down from Bear Creek. You know where that is, way down in the country. We used to get them from all down there, all in the country. He had had just a plain appendectomy. I was a student nurse and I had another bath to give. We had to have all the baths given and the beds fixed and everything ready when those trays came up at eight o'clock. We had one hour. And there was no slop in doing, it had to be done right. So, I had bathe this Mr. Jones and I had draped him and I had finished all his bath but his private, so I had got a fresh pan of water and soap and I went to call the orderly, Marion. Do you remember old black Marion?

DR. PATTERSON: Yes.

SMITTY BARTLING: 'Ole Marion would get drunk and go to bed. (laughter) I never will forget 'ole Marion. Well, anyway, I couldn't

find Marion. I called and I called. I ran clear down in the basement looking for Marion to come finish this old man's bath. But anyway, I had bathe him and I said to him, "Now, Mr. Jones, here is the soap and here is the water and here is the bath cloth, I want you to finish your bath. I can't get the orderly because he's busy. As soon as you finish your bath call me because I have another bath to give before breakfast." "Yes mam." So I went out and I said, "Now, soon as you get through turn your light on." So I went out and I stood and I looked and I looked and I looked and I thought, I reckon that man's had time to bathe six times, let me go see what he's doing. So I knocked on the door and I went in there. He had right black hair. (laughter)

This is funny. His hair was standing out like this. He had washed his head. His head was just as full of soap as it could be and he had just give himself one of the best shampoos you've ever seen. I said, "I've a good mind to throw you out of that window!" He said, "I'm gonna tell Dr. Jones you're talking to me like that." I said, "No you're not. I'm gonna tell him." I said, "I'm gonna tell him about you washing your hair." I had to go get a kelly pad and a pitcher of water and wash his head. (laughter) I never will forget it! Then after I got all through with him I went and got another pan of water and a bath cloth and put soap on it. I said, "Do me a favor." He said, "Yes mam, what is it,?" I said, "Wash right down there... and hurry!!", and he did. He was so embarrassed he didn't know what to do. He was so countrified. I don't know whether he was embarrassed or what. Then another time one of the Sisters called me

and said, "Mrs. Bartling, come down to the office and get a little girl. She's to be admitted on the third floor in a semi-private room.

Come down here and get her." So I went running down the steps to get her and I said, "Come on", so I carried her to the elevator. Now, you remember, it's an old fashion elevator. We didn't have the punch button. We had to pull a string and holler "elevator." We always had to holler elevator because somebody might be on another floor pulling it, you know. We had to lock it, but we had to call elevator before we locked it to get the patient on or off or what have you.

So I took this little girl in pigtails. This little long dress on and high-top shoes. I can see her just as good with a little paper suitcase. I put her on the elevator and I opened the elevator door and I said, "Elevator, elevator." Her mother says, "Honey, it ain't elevator, it's Ellie Bell." (laughter) I thought I'd die. She said, "Her name's Ellie Bell. It ain't elevator, it's Ellie Bell." So I said, "Well, that's all right. Ellie Bell, get in the elevator." She'd never been on a elevator before and she got in there and sat down on the floor. I can see her right now at the corner of that elevator and she sat there with her feet propped out, scared to death going up on an elevator. (laughter) I had some experiences, I'm telling you. Somebody said, "Smitty, I swear you ought to write a book about the experience you used to have nursing. I said, "No, no." But of all my nursing and my whole nursing career, I never remember giving but one dose of medicine to the wrong person. Never! I had been off duty Saturday and Sunday and I came back on Monday. We had a ward

that held four patients, women patients. Right as you went over the threshold.

DR. PATTERSON: At St. Luke's.

SMITTY BARTLING: St. Luke's. The Sisters owned it then. There were four Mrs. Smiths in there; A, B, C, and D. Dr. Ashford had been up and ordered castor oil and cascara, milk of magnesium and cascara for a patient for Mrs. Smith A or B. I looked on the card and I pulled the wrong card and I gave the wrong Mrs. Smith the cascara. The minute she swallowed it I couldn't get it back. I knew what I'd done. I just dropped everything and I went to that phone and I called Dr. Ashford. I said, "Dr. Ashford." He said, "What have you done now, Smitty?!" I said, "Dr. Ashford, I've just given Mrs. Smith the wrong medicine." He said, "Which one?" I said, "Well, there's four in there; A, B, C, and D. I gave B cascara and milk of magnesium and she wasn't suppose to have it. A was suppose to have it and I gave it to B."

He said, "Well, I'll tell you what. Don't worry about it. We'll find out in about an hour whether she's obstructed or not." I said, "What?!" He said, "We'll find out in about an hour whether she has intestinal obstruction." (laughter) I had given her the wrong medicine.

DR. PATTERSON: Well, that's a pretty good record.

SMITTY BARTLING: It's a pretty good record, I'm telling you. But I sure did give Mrs. B the wrong medicine. But she didn't have any obstruction.

DR. PATTERSON: What kind of a man was Dr. Jones?

SMITTY BARTLING: R. DuVal?

DR. PATTERSON: Um huh.

SMITTY BARTLING: A devil. He was a retired Navy doctor and you can imagine what he was. I never heard profanity. My mother and father never used profanity. I never heard damn and hell and taking the Lord's name in vain and all this. I never heard of that when I was growing up as a child. I was raised in a poor home but a Christian home. And Dr. Jones, that was his by-words. He just never thought. Now, your father, I never heard your father say damn in my life. I can truthfully say that I never heard Dr. Joe Patterson say God damn in my life. Never! Never! But Dr. Jones, that was his pet word. Damn it so and so and so and so. Just cursing. I never told him to shut-up, I'll tell you that right now. He was one doctor I never told to shut-up, cause he'd told me to get my suitcase and get out of there. But he was a cursing man.

DR. PATTERSON: He commanded a big Navy hospital in France during World War I. When he went away to the war, my father was left with the whole thing to handle, and I think that worked him very, very hard. Then Dr. Jones came back. The hospital had been built by that time. St. Luke's was there. They took up their partnership again when he came back.

SMITTY BARTLING: I didn't know that.

DR. PATTERSON: I have no recollection as to where my father's office was before St. Luke's was built. I never asked him that question. Do you know, Fred?

SMITTY BARTLING: I know as you walked in the front door, Dr. Jones' office was the first one on the right and Dr. Patterson's was the second one on the right.

DR. PATTERSON: Dr. Jones was on the corner.

SMITTY BARTLING: On the corner and Dr. Patterson's was next to it. Then you walked down a few steps and then you walked down and went down to the basement. Then you walked and turned this way to the left and you walked upstairs. Then you walked this way to the left and walked in the big office. That's where all the business was transacted. Miss Harris was bookkeeper there then.

DR. PATTERSON: Well, Smitty, maybe we better stop.

SMITTY BARTLING: If you've got all that written down, Joe Pat, I'm gonna kill you!

DR. PATTERSON: We've talked you half to death. Unless you can come up with some other good stories like you were just telling us... Think back now. Do you have anything else?

SMITTY BARTLING: No. I've told you too much cause I didn't know you were putting it all down. (laughter) Oh golly. You've got an epistle down there.

DR. PATTERSON: I'll shut this off.

SMITTY BARTLING: Tell me one thing, excuse me for interrupting you, how's your mother, Fred?

FRED LATHAM: She's doing real well.

DR. PATTERSON: You're talking to Fred?

SMITTY BARTLING: I'm talking to him. I'm not talking about your

mother, God bless her.

DR. PATTERSON: Well, let me just close this tape then. Smitty, it's been fun. I thank you for the oral history program we're doing and you helped us a lot and this is gonna be a great story. So I'll cut it off.

END OF INTERVIEW