

MEMORIES OF NEW BERN

OZIE TREVOR FAISON

INTERVIE 1001

This is Dr. Joseph Patterson, Jr. representing the Memories of New Bern Committee. My number is 1000. I am interviewing Mr. O. T. Faison.

The interview number is 1001. This interview is being conducted on April 7, 1992 at Mr. Faison's home at 913 Bern Street in New Bern.

Mr. Faison says that O. T. stands for Ozie Trevor.

Joseph Patterson: Mr. Faison, as I told you a little bit ago, when we start these interviews we have a pretty set way of doing it, and so I'm just going to go ahead and talk to you about your life's history more than anything else; then we'll go to the hospital situation. I wonder if you would tell me when you were born?

Ozie Faison: I was born September 14, 1916, in El Dorado, Arkansas.

JP: And your full name is Ozie Trevor Faison?

Mr. Faison: Right.

JP: What were your parents' names?

Mr. Faison: My father's name was Robert L. Faison and my mother's name was Georgia Faison. They are both dead.

JP: Do you have brothers and sisters?

Mr. Faison: I have one brother living now. He lives in California. There were six of us in the family and only one brother left.

JP: What were the names of all of your brothers and sisters?

Mr. Faison: My brothers and sisters; Hattie Faison, Gussie Mae Faison, Otis Faison, Robert Faison and Luther Ray Faison.

JP: Did you stay in Arkansas most of your younger days or where

did you go?

Mr. Faison: As you might say, like recruiting basketball players and football players now, I was recruited you might say. My senior year in high school I was asked to come to North Carolina by a coach.

The coach was home for his father's funeral. He by chance saw me play football and basketball while he was there. He was impressed with what he had seen of the basketball. So, after the game, after his father was buried, he came and talked to me and asked me if I would like to come back to North Carolina with him and play football and basketball. I told him yes, but he would have to talk with my mother and father first. He said, "I'll take care of that." He talked with my mother and father. At first my mother said, "No, I can't let him go". My father was in accord and he talked to her, and finally, finally, jokingly my father said, "Let him go, let him go, if he wants, it's one less to feed." (Laughter) So, they finally decided to let me come to North Carolina to finish my high school in Asheville, North Carolina. At that time we had twelve grades in high school in Arkansas, where here in North Carolina they only had eleventh grade as a senior year. Therefore, when I came here, I was in the eleventh grade. I had already finished the eleventh grade, but eleventh grade here was the senior year. So, I came and finished high school in Asheville, North Carolina in 1937. In 1937 I was promised a scholarship if I came and went to Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina. I went to Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina. I spent four years there and played both basketball and football. During my stay there

I met my wife, Martha Smith at that time. We were married September 7, 1941. Therefore, last September 6 we had our 50th wedding anniversary at the Sheraton.

JP: On the basketball team, what position did you play?

Mr. Faison: I played Forward.

JP: How tall were you then?

Mr. Faison: I was about five feet, eleven.

JP: That was a pretty good size then.

Mr. Faison: For that time. Same question have been asked about football. You got to remember, at that time, you didn't have these big men like they have now, and I was a good size. Of course, I played end, in college, but we played the "double-wing" formation and I always had help with the tackle. We always had to get the tackle.

JP: Did you have a successful athletic career?

Mr. Faison: I had a successful athletic career at Shaw. In November of 1991 I was inducted into Shaw Hall of Fame. It was long ways late, but I got it! (Laughter)

JP: I didn't know all about this athletic ability that you had! That's great! Now, you grew up in El Dorado?

Mr. Faison: El Dorado, went to Asheville, from Asheville to Raleigh, from Raleigh I went to Wilmington. I taught school one year.

JP: What did you teach?

Mr. Faison: I taught French and English. In Polkton, North Carolina. It's out from Wadesboro, in Anson County. After school was out, I went to Wilmington. That was war time, shipbuilding.

I went to the Shipyard and a became a Foreman in the North Carolina Shipbuilding Company. I stayed there for three years. I was suppose to go on back to school to teach. My wife had the same degree and qualification that I had, both courses in French and English, so, I didn't go back to school. I called the Superintendent and told him I was going to send my wife. They accepted her, and she taught and took my job. I stayed there in Wilmington, North Carolina. The wages were pretty good, comparative speaking, at the time. After being in Wilmington for three years, shipbuilding had begun to taper off and I was approached by a person, Mr. Louie E. Woodbury who was the General Housing Manager in Wilmington. I had been working at the Housing Authority, and he recommended me to the Bishop - Bishop Thomas Wright, Diocese of East Carolina. He thought that I would be a good person to take the job in New Bern after the death of Rev. R. I. Johnson who had just died in August.

JP: What job was it that you were taking?

Mr. Faison: I was taking the administrative job of Good Shepherd Hospital.

JP: So, the Rev. Johnson was the administrator employee before you?

Mr. Faison: Right. Rev. Johnson was the administrator, he was the founder, and he was the entrepreneur who helped to get money and everything there. He was the pastor of St. Cyprian's Church.

JP: If I could change this just a little bit, and you're telling me exactly what I want to hear, but if I could just ask you this

question? Do you know what the medical care for black people was like in this community before Good Shepherd Hospital opened?

Mr. Faison: Seemingly, from what I know, the medical was at nil you might say at that time. There was two fires that broke out in 1922. The first fire destroyed a saw mill where 100 black employees worked. The second fire, later on that day, destroyed the major portion of the Black community. After that, there were many hardships. People had begun to get sick with pneumonia and everything. They converted St. Cyprian's Church into a hospital. They'd house them in the basement and the upstairs and downstairs. Doctors went from cot to cot day and night. Babies were born and so forth. They stayed there about three or four months. Immediately after that, Rev. Johnson, who was the Rector of St. Cyprian's, immediately saw that there was a great need for medical care for the blacks in New Bern from the event that they had just been confronted with. He immediately approached the Diocese of North Carolina to give him the permission to start soliciting and trying to raise money in order to build a hospital.

JP: St. Cyprian's was an Episcopal church?

Mr. Faison: Yes. After they had given him the permission, he began to make a search here and there. Finally, the Diocese of Pennsylvania came to their rescue and gave them \$25,000. Next the Duke Endowment, \$15,000, and the Diocese of East Carolina gave them \$10,000. There were many other smaller donations from local citizens.

That was the beginning of Good Shepherd Hospital. This went on for years. Finally, they saw the need for a Black institution and they

decided to start out and build something in 1937. In 1938 the Hospital was opened. When the Hospital first opened there were seven patients admitted the first day. The staff consisted of both black and white.

Dr. H. B. Wadsworth, Dr. R.N. Duffy, Dr. O. A. Kafer and Dr. C.H. Ashford. The black doctors were Dr. Hunter Fisher, Dr. William Martin and Dr. William Mann. We had three black doctors here at that time.

They were the ones serving on the original staff at Good Shepherd Hospital. All other doctors in the community and surrounding area had courtesy privileges to serve. This hospital continued to operate for some time. Soon the staff became more involved and other people joined the staff. That was the first stage of the Good Shepherd Hospital.

JP: What year did you come here?

Mr. Faison: 1946.

JP: You didn't know the Rev. Johnson at that time?

Mr. Faison: No. I never knew the Rev. R. I. Johnson. From all that anybody has ever told me since I have been here, he must have been a good man, because I never heard nobody say anything bad about him. So, now in 1946, I could say this, "The year of O. T. Faison". (Laughter!!)

JP: The Rev. Johnson had died?

Mr. Faison: He died August 1946. I came here November 1946. I had some business training but I had no hospital training. In the meantime from the time that they elected me from August to November when I came, I went and spent my little internship at the hospital,

Lincoln Hospital in Durham, North Carolina. From there I came here and began. I came here in November of 1946 and we struggled for some time. I would like to go back a little bit. Before I came here there was another addition made to the hospital. Originally the hospital was, I believe, twenty-seven beds. In November of 1942 through the Hill-Burton Act, money was appropriated and donated. They gave money enough to build an addition, the "new wing" we called it. This brought the capacity to fifty-eight. They also at that time built us a nurses home in 1942. All of this under the Hill-Burton Act. We struggled and we struggled! Patients began to increase. We got donations from various places. The Duke Endowment would give us some money and the Kate B. Reynolds Trust out of Winston-Salem gave us some money. We'd proceed to try to up grade our hospital. We could've sat there and struggled and just keep things going, but I had different ideas. I had in my head that we were going to become accredited. Out of all the circumstances and conditions that we was under, I set out and asked for instruction and information in regards to what it would take to get the hospital accredited.

JP: This accreditation was by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Hospitals, and I told you that I was with that group for eleven years. At the time when I was with you, I didn't know anything about this, but you did the right thing! Let me interrupt a minute and say that out of fairness, the black people were not without medical hospital care. At St. Lukes Hospital, which was built in 1914 by my father and Dr. Jones, there were bed facilities available.



Now, I will admit that they weren't the greatest; they were in the basement and not too many of them. I think there was a lot of talk about it. I do remember making rounds with my father in the basement and seeing the black patients there. So, there was something.

Mr. Faison: Well, for a catastrophe, there wasn't enough beds available for something like that fire I gave you earlier.

JP: That's right. That was a special time. St. Luke's was evacuated during that fire and so was Good Shepherd. Anyhow, we are back to your looking for accreditation from the JCAH, so go ahead with that.

Mr. Faison: We set out and got the information what we had to do. We started out and got these itemized lists as to what we needed and what we had to do. I set a goal and drew up the plans. First of all we had to get the doctors organized and get the by-laws. We had a problem with the doctors for a while getting the histories written up. We finally solved that problem by getting a dictating machine and we employed a person who could transcribe and we solved that problem. We got a record librarian and we got that department straightened out. Next thing we decided, we went to the dietary department. We knew what we had to have in there, and we got a dietitian and got the facilities. From there we went to the laboratory, and we got that all straightened out. The operating room we even put in light fixtures, that explosive-proof light fixtures, we changed the floor, and all of that we set out to do it and we did it. We did it on our own with the little income that we had coming in. In

the delivery room we tried to meet the criteria they asked for in there, explosive-proof fixtures and all facilities that we needed.

We moved from one phase to another one, and we knocked them out. We felt that we were ready, we wrote to the Joint Commission; they came in, they inspected us, and we were approved. This was about 1960, but I'm not positive. Mr. Ryan, I believe, once wrote an article on the Good Shepherd Hospital. That is something hard to get and harder to keep. He wrote a special article for the Associated Press about Good Shepherd Hospital telling all what we had accomplished and telling them what we had to go through. It was a problem in keeping it up because you can't just sit down on it, you got to keep improving, you got to keep going and going. We brought in radiologist, we got a pathologist, we got anesthetist and everything that we were suppose to have gotten. When the gentleman came to survey us, he was somewhat shocked that a small institution with a limited amount of money could do what we were doing under adverse circumstances. That was his talk while he was here. Everyone was proud! All the physicians, after they had done what they did, well you know you get lazy sometimes. There was pride in what we had accomplished, there really was.

JP: Mr. Faison, that is really an achievement, and I know from first hand what you are talking about. After you got accredited in 1960, then what happened?

Mr. Faison: We worked on our approved program for some time. We brought in a doctor, I believe about 1965-66. Anyway, Dr. Disosway came in, Dr. Disosway as our medical Director. This is Dr. Lula

Disosway, came to us as our Medical Director in 1955.

JP: You were filling the position of administrator and she was the medical director, which meant she was in charge of all the services in the hospital?

Mr. Faison: Right. She was a plus to us when the accreditation came. She was there at the time they came for the survey. She did a lot of charity work for us there and a lot of emergency work for us. She solved a big problem in the emergency situation a lot there. You know, there is problems with calling doctors and getting them to come in and do these Saturday night fights, and this and that cut up. She had a clinic too and helped a lot of babies, a well-baby clinic, and she also delivered. She delivered a lot of children while she was there and helped us tremendously in every respect.

JP: What sort of person was Dr. Disosway?

Mr. Faison: Dr. Disosway, you couldn't find a better person. Everyone liked Dr. Disosway. She was a little nervous at times. I guess that would be the reason she hadn't been confronted. She'd been in China and other places all her life working, not working in the United States.

JP: Was she a medical Missionary in China?

Mr. Faison? Right, and in Alaska too.

JP: That was for some years before she came back to New Bern, but she is a New Bernian.

Mr. Faison: She's a New Bernian. She's originally from on Spencer Avenue here. She also had a sister who was a director of nurses

somewhere in New York at that time. She added a tremendous power to Good Shepherd Hospital when she came. Some of the doctors didn't like her; some of the black doctors didn't like her for the reason they felt it was kind of cutting their throat financially. Some of the things she was doing that they used to do. We'd have such a problem, that when they had the problem themselves they didn't want to do it.

Somebody came! As Dr. Disosway once said, "You can get them grown up when you hit the pocketbook." That's what she would say. Some of them kind of resented that. We had some problems with Dr. Disosway with the doctors at times. She tried to hold them right to the pin and needle, and they resented it at times.

JP: How about going on from 1960 to the time of closure of Good Shepherd?

Mr. Faison: We continued to increase our census as the time went on. We ran a census of about forty some odd and we had fifty-eight beds, that wasn't too bad for a hospital at that time. If we had had certain agencies at that time that we have now, I definitely don't see why Good Shepherd wouldn't have continued. I would say there was three things that kept Good Shepherd from continuing as it was.

Number one, at that time Dr. J. E. Littman, he did some surgery, but he didn't do major surgery and made up his mind to go back to school to get more surgery. While he was gone, that was a time that everything went sour. He had twenty-five and thirty patients himself in the hospital most of the time, and when he left our census dropped.

Number two, the Craven County Hospital opened up somewhere around

1963. Some of the doctors who were on our staff said that they just didn't see it feasible to have patients at both hospitals. It would be too time consuming for them to go to this hospital then go to the other hospital. So, they resigned from the staff. The doctors were not sending the patients like they once had. Number three would be, and I have been thinking about this for some time whether it might be some of my fault that it closed sooner than it did. I sent in my resignation after the hospital began to slack off after the doctors would not patronage it. I think that if I hadn't done that, I think we would've survived much longer because I think that might be part of it, when I resigned.

JP: What year did you resign? Was it before the County hospital opened or after?

Mr. Faison: The county hospital had opened. It opened in 1963. I left right around that time. The county hospital had taken over, and I was informed by the administration over there, Mr. Lonnie Moore and Mr. George Allen Ives, who was Chairman of the Board of Trustees, if you'd close they would go and absorb everybody who was over there, and they said they couldn't promise what job I would be given, but I would have a job. I had a drug store at that time, and I thought this would be a good time to go and try and develop it, and we built a new drug store. So I resigned and went back to try and develop that.

JP: Did the hospital close soon after that?

Mr. Faison: Soon after that the county closed the hospital.

It ran for about over a year after I left. When the county took it over, no food was prepared at the hospital over here. It was all brought from the other hospital.

JP: Did the Diocese of North Carolina sell the hospital to Craven County Hospital?

Mr. Faison: They sold it for one dollar. They sold it to the county, the county took it. It was with the understanding that it would be used as a hospital or if they closed it, it was returned back to the Diocese of East Carolina. So, that's what happened. After they closed, the county gave the hospital back to the Diocese of East Carolina. The Diocese of East Carolina felt that the black people in New Bern had done such a good job of solicitation in getting money and so forth that they in turn gave the black St. Cyprian's church here the hospital. We sold the hospital to a private group of blacks, four or five, who converted it into this rest home. We sold to them. I believe the figure was \$54,000. The Diocese let us keep the money. Right at the present time now, that is helping our church to carry on. I'm the treasurer of the church right now. Right now we ain't getting nothing for CD's, ain't getting nothing! We have that in trust and kept the interest from that.

JP: Mr. Faison, that is really a wonderful story of Good Shepherd, and it is going to be of great help to the thing we are trying to do. I would like to go back and ask you some questions about Good Shepherd during the time you were there. You mentioned earlier the original medical staff. Can you add to that? During the years, what

other physicians joined the staff?

Mr. Faison: Dr. Stockton, Dr. J. J. Barefoot, Dr. Verna Barefoot, Susanne and Reece Little, Dr. Hollister, Dr. Warren, Dr. Willis, Dr. Simmons Patterson, Dr. Joseph Patterson, Dr. Francis King, Dr. Larry Erdman, he's dead, Dr. Bell was the radiologist, and the pathologist was Dr. Lippitt.

JP: These are all white doctors you are talking about, now how about black doctors?

Mr. Faison: Dr. E. E. Holt, Dr. J. F. Burton, and Dr. J. E. Littman.

JP: I want to ask you a general question. Do you think the quality of medical care delivered in the hospital was good or bad?

Mr. Faison: I think at that time, it was good. It's not what it is today now! Evidently doctors are more progressive, and they do more testing and analyze the situation. You go into a hospital now and you go through it! (Laughter)

JP: Mr. Faison, did you notice any difference in the way you personally were treated by the white doctors and the black doctors?

Mr. Faison: I saw no difference. At that time I think we got superior service, I mean they treated those patients over there just like one of themselves. I personally got along fine with all the doctors.

I had no problem with the doctors. I think it was due to my personality. We had problems coming up. You knew if you were going to work with nursing things, you knew you were going to have some problems! We were always able to come to some kind of understanding.

JP: I remember too, that you were a very fine person to get along with, and I don't recall any doctor ever being critical of your performance and that's wonderful. How about dentists? Were there dentist on the staff?

Mr. Faison: No, we didn't have a dentist on the staff. Dr. Samuel Bryan was here practicing. Dr. Daves was here. That's the only two dentists I can recall.

JP: Let me ask you about the nurses. Do you think that the nursing care was of good quality?

Mr. Faison: Well, it was hard to get good nurses at that time, but I say this, we had some pretty good nurses from this angle. When a nurse left from Good Shepherd Hospital, if they weren't good, they were much better when they left from us, because they were kept on their toes. They did things, they got the experience over there. Whereas, some of these larger hospitals they go to, they would go into that department, and that's what they did, but over there they had to do everything, obstetrics, medical, help in all phases of the program.

JP: Where did these nurses get their training?

Mr. Faison: We got our corps of nurses from two places. One was Community Hospital in Wilmington, North Carolina. Well, I say more than two, St. Agnes Hospital in Raleigh and Lincoln Hospital in Durham. We also got some from Kate D. Reynolds in Winston-Salem.

JP: Do you remember any particular nurses being outstanding or special?



Mr. Faison: I remember one outstanding nurse of all was Miss Mamie L. Phillips who came to me just as a staff nurse. She was elevated to the Director of Nurses. She worked in the operating room too. She asked for a leave of absence for a year and she worked in New Orleans and took up anesthesia. She promised she would be coming back. We gave her some assistance, and she promised she would come back and stay at least three years. She came back, she stayed over her three years and then decided she would leave us, and she went to Detroit. With the family, we stay in contact. Actually my cousin was here to see us one year, and she happened to come down to see us one day and they saw each other. When she went back, they wrote each other, and they got married.

JP: She was there during the 50's. I knew her then in the operating room. There were other anesthetists too.

Mr. Faison: Miss Janice Dudley, Mrs. Brock she was, Ruth Lewis, and Miss Virginia Down Joyner. I don't believe she probably was there when you came because she was there when I went in 1946, and that was one of the first headaches that I had! She finally left and went back to home in Rocky Mount.

JP: I remember in the operating room, and this was true of St. Lukes too and Kafer hospital, open drop ether was used. I also remember that during my career as a surgeon in New Bern and working at Good Shepherd, two of the most complicated, involved operations that I did were done at Good Shepherd, and both patients did all right afterwards. What about the emergency room? I remember that

as a very busy place that kept me out many a night.

Mr. Faison: Right! We use to have a schedule for an emergency doctor. Some time it worked and some time it didn't work. Mostly the black doctor was called for the emergency at that time. It was this thing when things went kind of hay-wire when Dr. Littman and Dr. Holt left because we didn't have the source of calling on them. Dr. Disosway came in and helped us along and kept things going.

JP: What was the cost of medical care in those days compared to now at Good Shepherd?

Mr. Faison: Medicine, you can't compare it, today's medicine with yesteryear's. For example, a patient would come into the hospital, we had a moderate rate for our services. Let's take for granted, a major operating room fee for us was \$15. Anesthetic was \$15. That was \$30. Laboratory fee, \$4, that's what your laboratory fee was. The room rates were as follows: our private room was \$6, and our ward was \$4. That was the on-going rates when I first came in 1946.

JP: Did they go up much?

Mr. Faison: We carried them up to, I think the highest we got a private room up to \$10 and ward went up to \$5, in 1960's.

JP: It's just hard to see how you can make expenses with that. Did many of the patients have insurance?

Mr. Faison: At that time you did not. We saw more Blue Cross cases at that time than I guess they do now, because the Blue Cross rates were not high like they are now. There was a insurance that's

paying so much a day, no other thing. This was a Pilot Life Insurance, it was standardized. You didn't hear anybody call that name, did you? A Pilot Life Insurance Company who did a lot of work among the Negroes in selling them insurance, but it wasn't much to it. They paid \$14 a day, that's period. It didn't pay nothing for anything else, just a flat \$14 a day. We had a lot of those patients to come in. Let me say something about the welfare situation. At time, the case had to be approved by the Welfare Department. They would give us only \$3.50 a day for the patient, nothing else, just \$3.50 per day! They didn't pay anything for the operating room, if they had anesthesia at all, \$3.50 per day is all they got. We would get from the Duke Endowment, if it was a welfare case, we'd get \$1 towards that. Medicare Commission would give us something. I think it was about fifty cent per day for welfare cases. We also had Blind Commission cases with Dr. Davidson. They would pay us a flat fee too, I think it was around ten or twelve dollars. That had to take care of everything. We couldn't get any more money from them. That's all we could charge.

JP: Were the relationships between the black patients and the white doctors pretty good, on both sides? The black patients liked having the white doctors? I don't mean preferred them, but they got along all right?

Mr. Faison: They were pretty good - all right.

JP: How did the black patients feel about the black doctors?

Mr. Faison: Well, there weren't but so many black doctor at

the time when I was there. I can't remember a time when we didn't have but one at a time when I was there, and he was pretty generous with them. I think they got along pretty nicely.

JP: I don't remember any great troubles of any kind like that. Do you have any special memories of the hospital, things that stand out in your mind as really great events, tragedies or happiness?

Mr. Faison: The accreditation was one of the greatest. It was a real thrill to me, just what we had done with nothing you might say. It was not easily accomplished. Many big hospitals don't get it.

JP: Did you stay accredited?

Mr. Faison: While I was there. We were accredited while I was there.

JP: What happened to you when the hospital closed, what has been your career since then?

Mr. Faison: We had a small place on Broad Street. I had a drug store. It was called Smith's Drug Store, name given because our first pharmacist's name was Smith. Dr. Littman and myself had the drug store together. We felt it might be better for Smith to have the name than to associate it with us, and let's stay away from the drug store. So, we gave it his name instead of any association with the two of us. That was in 1958 that we opened the drug store and we ran it. It was located at 1038 Broad Street in Johnny Clarence's building, the Bail Bondsman. After I decided that I was going to resign, I told Smith that we'd buy a piece of property. The piece

of property is where we are located now at 1040 Broad Street. I said, "I think we'll go ahead and build a bigger one." I must say when we built the drug store in operation, (it's my son's right now) we had a first class drug store just as good as any drug store here in town, black or white. I went into the small place first, and in the meantime we struck luck just at the time we were building. There was a man in Kinston who had three drug stores. One of Lilly's salesmen told me about they had closed one, and he gave me the information. I went over there and talked with him, and he gave me permission, and he said, "Whatever you want we will let you have it at \$2,500," at that time. We were successful in getting a soda fountain, all the shelving, the air-conditioning, just everything. We got more than \$2,500! So, that's the way we got a good start with a little amount of investment. We opened the drug store, and the business kept going higher and higher. There was a time that we did \$12,000 to \$14,000 monthly just under Medicaid work-up cases, just drugs at that time. I worked in the drug store, managing it. Mr. Smith ran the pharmacy. I worked up in the pharmacy department with him since I knew a lot about the medicine. I got trained up there and I could do everything up in the prescription department. Along as he was there, I did fill prescription and everything else while I was running the drug store. We sold the drug store, but we got it back. My son in the meantime was in the pharmacy school in University of North Carolina. When he graduated, he came and opened it, and he's been there every since. When we opened our drug store in 1958, not to

long after that, the sit-in situation came here, the lunch counter sit-in at Clark's Drug Store! People were closing their accounts there at Clark's Drug Store. That was a God send for our drug store at that time. People were asking Smith's to get copies, oh, I don't know how many copies during the day! Every day everybody would change from Clark and come to Smiths'. That is what actually made Smith's Drug Store.

JP: The blacks came from Clark's Drug Store to your drug store because of the sit-in.

Mr. Faison: You see they had a lunch counter, Clark, that's what they had and blacks couldn't sit there, so folks said they wouldn't do business with them and came to Smiths. You remember when the sit-ins in Greensboro broke out! That's when we took a vow like that.

JP: Unfortunate in some ways, and good for business though. You still have the drug store?

Mr. Faison: Still have it and my son is running it.

JP: When did you stop working there?

Mr. Faison: I stopped in 1980.

JP: This drug store is still a source of income for you though?

Mr. Faison: Yes. Well, only in the rental.

JP: Did the black folks like the new hospital? The care should be excellent there.

Mr. Faison: I think they do. I've heard no complaints from anybody in regards to out there in not getting the right care. I might say this though, after I left my hospital I was put on the Board

of Directors out there at Craven County Hospital. I was the first black to serve on the Board. It was about 1965. I served two terms. Originally a term was four years, I think it is five years now. I think I served seven years out there on the Board. I might say that being the first black to serve on the various key position in the city, it did create a little tension, I think, among some of my people because I think they felt that I was not a native New Bernian and that someone else should've had that privilege of serving on these Boards rather than a new-comer into the community. That was some dissension like on the Board of Education and on the County Board and also up here on the Salvation Army Board of Directors. I think it was good though due to the fact that I was not a radical. It takes a calm person to get things planted like they are supposed to be. We had some radicals that might've done more harm than good in trying to get over the hump.

JP: Do you recall the Civil Rights movement in New Bern and what all went on at that time, and the Martin Luther King episode?

Mr. Faison: I don't recall that too vividly. I really don't. I did not take part in a lot of these things. I'll be frank with you, I did not. Some of these people who were taking part in these things were kind of radical, and I just didn't blend in. I think being the first person to be considered from the black in New Bern was due to the fact that I was not a radical, and next I had been associated with the various key people in the community, the doctors and the public official of the county and the city. I was well known

at that time. They thought there were many native New Bernians that should've been the first to be chosen for these positions, and they considered anybody who wasn't born here was an outsider. Now, I think they would consider me an insider.

JP: Yes. Well, you have had a very distinguished career and all throughout your life. I would like to ask you some general questions now. Our history program doesn't really involve the present, we try to cut it off about 1970. So, let's look back to the time you came to New Bern and about 1970. Do you think that race relations improved during that time, from the time you came here until 1970?

Mr. Faison: Well, there was a lot of dissension during that time. I would like to make this comment right here. The person who I know did more for the race relation and integration here in New Bern was Mr. W. C. Chadwick. He was on my Board at the hospital. I had met with groups; he was there, city manager, a lot of other key personnel and other key blacks were there. He did a lot when this integration upstir was going on. I would put him number one in making the thing jell better in every respect. Mr. W. C. Chadwick is the person who I think did a lot for New Bern. I was in a lot of meetings with him. We used to have a group that would meet on these things like that. I never will forget him saying on one occasion when we were talking, when he was talking about these "hot-head boys, the blacks", he said, "well, they no longer get along, say, 'We are going to have to do it a different way,' say, 'there's a lot of hot-head whites out there too.'" He would bend this thing sorta so that you



would see that he meant what he said. He was trying to work something out for all concerned.

JP: About that time too, wasn't there a Race Relations Commission set up with Rev. Sharp on it? Were you on that Commission too? Do you remember Mr. Sharp and James Gavin?

Mr. Faison: Yes, there was a Race Relations Commission and Rev. Sharp was on it. I was on it. I remember Mr. Sharp and Mr. Gavin.

JP: It's nice to hear about Mr. Chadwick, I think most everybody was fond of Mr. Chadwick.

Mr. Faison: He was the Mayor when I first came to New Bern in 1946. He was on my Board of Directors. He got connected with the Vice-Chairman of the Board. He was the Vice-Chairman, which was a Methodist; although, we had an Episcopal hospital, he was a Methodist.

On our Board we sat all denominations. It was just an Episcopal hospital in name only, because everybody was associated in all the denominations that supported it.

JP: We are interested in black medicine in New Bern and how it was practiced, and you are our number one person to hear from. Do you have any suggestions as to other people that we might interview?

Mr. Faison: Have you thought about Dr. Samuel Bryan?

JP: I know his wife quite well, and I know of Dr. Bryan, and he would be a great one to interview from the stand point of dental care and from many other aspects, wouldn't he?

Mr. Faison: Yes, he would.

JP: What black doctors are practicing here now?

Mr. Faison: We don't have any, no dentist, no physician.

JP: No black doctors. Are black people not going into medicine as much or just not coming to small towns?

Mr. Faison: Not coming to small towns and that is a problem. They are heading for these larger places.

JP: Now Johnny Ray Kinsey was raised by Dr. Sydney Barnwell, but he has moved away. He is at Meharry Medical School, I think.

Mr. Faison: He was at Meharry. We talked to them Sunday, and he's no longer at Meharry. He had changed, but I don't know which hospital, still in Asheville, however.

JP: That makes it harder with no black physicians here to find out about, so you are going to be our mainstay, and you have just told me a wonderful story, and this information is very valuable to us. I'm glad to know more about you.

END OF INTERVIEW