

Interviewee: Cleo Hall

Interviewer: Althemese Barnes

Date of interview: Unknown

Date Transcribed: January 14, 2019

Interviewer: Okay, Cleo Hall let me ask you this. Okay, that was your parents, your grandparents, could you go any further back than that?

Cleo Hall: No.

Interviewer: When you were born on Floodland Plantation-

Hall: The Floodland go back would be my grandmother and her sisters and I cant go back any further.

Interviewer: And your grandmothers name was?

Hall: Carrie Oliver-Carolina Oliver.

Interviewer: Carolina Oliver. Who were some of her sisters and brothers?

Hall: She had a brother, sister named Jane Brown, and a sister named Mary Oliver.

Interviewer: And you said you moved in-

Hall: And she had a brother named Anthony Mason.

Interviewer: Anthony Mason. Okay, and you said you moved off the Floodland Plantation when you were about two or three years old?

Hall: Probably, some like that cause the years I think I could- putting dates together, I could go back four or five years old, when we were living in a Boulevard St. then, in 600 block.

Interviewer: Okay, so when you moved from Floodland, you moved to the 600 block?

Hall: Right.

Interviewer: Which is now-is that MLK?

Hall: Yeah.

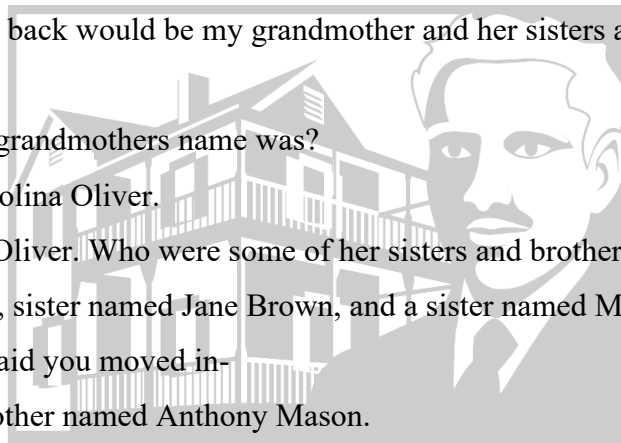
Interviewer: Okay, its now MLK-

Hall: Boulevard.

Interviewer: And you were living in 600 block?

Hall: Right.

Interviewer: Was that near Baptist church?



Hall: Well it was just the block between Free Garden (check this) and Georgia St. That's about three blocks from the church...The Perkins Property. Professor Perkins owned most of that. Property...I think it all- I think Norwood still owns part of it. Norwood and...Norwood would be...Professor Perkins would be his granddaddy.

Interviewer: There's a house sitting there, right behind those shops. You know (don't catch this) sits right here and then there are some shops and then there's a house sitting. It's the only house left-

Hall: On the corner? That's the Old Coleman house. His daughter was a teacher in Leon County for a long time. She married several times, so I really don't know what her last name was, but she-

Interviewer: And the block, the next block down and there was Ms. Yellowhair's house (check last name) was.

Hall: Ms. Yellowhair house (check last name).

Interviewer: Did you know Ms. Yellowhair house (check last name)?

Hall: Yeah.

Interviewer: What did she look like?

Hall: She was a little short gal. She won't what you call real a black woman, but she always- she was one of the better- I mean upper...Negros, you wanted to work with and she always wore makeup, and what not and dressed real.

Interviewer: Because when I first had heard that name I thought that it was the most unusual name. Now, have you ever heard of anybody else with a name like that?

Hall: That's about bad as that other lady down the street from Ms. Mulletcount (check last name). Have you ever heard of that one? She lived next door to the McFiston (check last name) house there, but her house is still there. They renovated it. It's a white house. I think it's the one on the right-hand side of the street and that's between Carolina and Georgia St., on the right hand side.

Interviewer: Did Ms. Yellowhair (check last name) have any family? Like children or anything?

Hall: I don't know, but this person, Robbie Lee- let's see her family lived down on-

Interviewer: I know who you talking about the Robinson.

Hall: Her family lived right on Carolina-

Interviewer: (don't catch the first name) Robinson.

Hall: Yeah, that was her...I don't know whether they were related, but Robbie, oh, she ran a theater, you know. When I first met Robbie, she was selling tickets for Ms. Yellowhair (check last name) at the movies. As matter of fact, Robbie later on, I married into Robbie's family and from what I can understand I still hadn't found out whether she was a relative or she just took a liking to Robbie, but anyway all of her- she will eventually left everything to Robbie, I think.

Interviewer: Okay, let kinda go back to over- okay, you move back to Boulevard St. and did you stay there most of the-

Hall: I stayed at Boulevard St. and moved around the corner on Georgia St... course this 407 and we stayed there into like 1939 and moved down on Georgia St. to 462 and I stayed there until I was-until 1955.

Interviewer: And then you moved up on Springfield?

Hall: Moved up near the church on Springfield.

Interviewer: What age were you when you started working for Asheville (check this)?

Hall: Well, I don't really start working for this one. I started working for his cousin. His name was Asheville (check this), too and I was about, I think I was about eight or nine years old and she had me apply for a social security card. So, that's right-I think I started around eight years old, but I knew when I was nine, she had...a security guard.

Interviewer: Now, when you say she, who is-

Hall: That was his wife, Robin Nashmore (check this) and I think at that time, she was secretary over Tallahassee Loaning company or something. It was a job where she would always kept the books to the store and when she left the job, she would always come out there. That they just started social security out there then and it's really important that everybody had a card and they were enticing everybody to get a card.

Interviewer: Was the store where it is now? So, its always been right there-

Hall: It started, he started off it was a...he was a-what you call a- maybe a Wholesale. He don't sell groceries, but like umm snacks. Bob's crackers was his umm...landline that he. He distributed for Bob's crackers. Yeah, I think that started with peanut's. They put out something like packing peanut's, and cheese crackers. You know the little candy bars and then, he decide to open up the store next and that's where that come in.

Interviewer: What did you do when you were eight or nine years old?

Hall: Mostly hanging around, but I would get a couple of dollars every week or so.

Interviewer: And you would deliver to people in the community? Of course, you had to walk to them?

Hall: No, I was able to ride a bicycle.

Interviewer: Back- let's see how far- we are curious to know, we know a lot of the area down there has been pretty much demolished. They changed so much, but say starting at the corner of Boulevard and umm Macomb. Okay, you turn the corner and I know at one point, there used to be, right around the corner the Knights of Epiphanies Hall. Right. As you turned the corner from Asheville and go down Macomb. People were sorta of attached to the drugstore-

Hall: All that was a two story building and one time, it was, it was rented, I think the building clock furniture store. They built the building, the two story building. They built it and they ran this furniture school there. Sold out to Tallahassee furniture store and Tallahassee furniture store stayed there until they built the store across the street and at the time, they built this store, the Knights, I think the Knights and the Masons used the building one time because you know, the Knight- the Masons lost that building and Dr. Campbell-

Interviewer: I heard about that.

Hall: Okay and then for some reason, I wreckin' it was just to old, to old to do anything with it. The Masonic Lodge was torn down. So, both of them were renting the building used for the lodge meetings. So, I don't, I don't think that went on except for about five or six years.

Interviewer: Where was the old Masonic building at or was lost?

Hall: Okay, it was on the southwest corner, on umm Tennessee and Macomb St.

Interviewer: Southwest corner, which would be where that parking lot...its an automobile place is right across the street?

Hall: Yeah and down stairs was Afro Life and Lamp Life insurance companies and I think next door, or maybe in the same building as Central Life. It was a three black- Negro insurance company.

Interviewer: Did they own the building or somebody else-?

Hall: The Lodge owned the building.

Interviewer: The Lodge owned the building. Rather than rent it, they actually owned it?

Hall: They owned the building and rent it downstairs. The Lodge facility was upstairs, and downstairs was rented out to Lamp life, Afro Life, and Central Life was somewhere in there.

Interviewer: Are you familiar with the Johnson furniture company? Was that in there?

Hall: I was across the street, where...one time we was on the corner right there where Vernon Auto (please check this), it was a two-story building there and then down the street, where the Haven Rest or something like that is, the homeless sleep overnight.

Interviewer: It's a shelter.

Hall: Yeah, well that building was put up during the war, right after the war, but it must have been before the war because upstairs was a doctor's...he was a dentist doctor. No, he moved and went to California...no, have to get back to him. No, he, he...but he was first to open his own dentist place-

Interviewer: Black man?

Hall: Yes and later on, he met Dr. Williams came and moved into the same office, but downstairs during the war was U.S.O. and I don't know if that was the furniture store before they made it a U.S.O. or not, but after the war Johnson, I think that's when Johnson first moved into the store, in that building. , in the bottom there and then went on down the corner and built the two story.

(Clip was cut)

Hall: Southwest was where the Lodge was and north was where the Johnson furniture store was.

Interviewer: Okay and did you only have a furniture- was anybody else operating out of the Johnsons furniture store?

Hall: No. It was solely Johnson furniture store.

Interviewer: Okay, let stay on that side of the road, where Johnson furniture is and if we were to come on down, where all those hairdressers are and economy (???) is now...

Hall: Okay, now that will be with east side of the street.

Interviewer: Oh, in the east? Okay, so I was on the wrong side Johnson was south-

Hall: Southwest side.

Interviewer: Southwest.

Hall: And the Lodge was on the south-

Interviewer: East.

Hall: No, southwest corner. Johnson was northwest corner and the Lodge is on the southwest corner.

Interviewer: Okay, I got it.

Hall: Its across the street from each other.

Interviewer: Okay and if we are on the southwest corner-

Hall: (uses sheet of paper to show where the buildings were) Okay, this is the furniture store. Now, this is north up here. This is the furniture building and this is the Lodge building and this over here would be where the common drugs store was, but on that corner was a grocery store and a fellow who ran that store for years named Lee, he was a white fellow.

Interviewer: And this was next to Johnsons furniture store?

Hall: No, street the-I just...this is Macomb St. and this is Tennessee St. Can you see it right there? Okay, you coming down the Macomb St to get to Tennessee St. The Johnson furniture store was on this corner. You cross the street, the Lodge was on that corner. Over on this corner, across from the furniture store before you cross Tennessee St. was the grocery store .

Interviewer: And Lee , a white man owned this store?

Hall: Ran that store for years. Then, coming here was two houses and...three houses and there was a tin building...from the present location where the store corner would be now, then they had a...barbershop, Lincoln was running his jewelry store-

Interviewer: Who was Lincoln? Was he a black guy?

Hall: He was a black man and all these people now were black people and you remember...McKinley. He taught, he sorta taught...had an island accent. He had a daughter that work for A&M now and they lived down on the seven hundred block of Carolina St.

Interviewer: I remember Kenny.

Hall: Kenny?

Interviewer: Kinley McKenny (please check this).

Hall: Kenny use to put out the Pittsburgh courier. His real business was, he was a...male order suites. He would take your measurement and what not and he would order your suite. I think he was representing...what was that place out in Chicago? You could buy your suits from...but he was there-

Interviewer: And all these people were right there in the economy drugstore block?

Hall: No, not the whole block. Just-come to there or where that barbecue thing is there.

Interviewer: On the corner?

Hall: That was really made to be a filling station. It was made- it was a filling station. Before they tore the old one down and build the other one and blocked it, it was a filling station but between this metal building and this other building was a wooden building there. The lady, you probably heard of Squeal or Squeal Adams (please check this)-

Interviewer: I've heard of Squeal Adams.

Halls: Okay, his mom, it was a two-story building, his mama in a restaurant, I think her name was Ruth Adams and upstairs there... was another Lodge we talked. Those other two. The ones with the gamble-the elks.

Interviewer: And the Elks was in that building?

Hall: The Elks were upstairs over a café.

Interviewer: Did the café have a name?

Hall: No, it wasn't Squeal Adams. Was it Ruth Adams or they called it Ruth Adams, but it probably had a name. I'm sure it did.

Interviewer: But Ruth Adams ran it?

Hall: Yeah she was the only proprietor.

Interviewer: Okay and who was Squeal Adams?

Hall: Her son.

Interviewer: Her son.

Hall: You see she was married to...Poppy Adams. Her husband was married to Ruth Adams first before he married and that's how-that's Squeal Adams, daddy. He had another sister. Yeah, Squeal had a sister and there was two children. Then, on the corner was filling station, Mr. John Nims ran that.

Interviewer: Mr. Johnny Nims ran that filling station that was right there where that barbecue places is.

Hall: And round the corner was the store first and several people had ran that and all the way at the end was the barber shop where the dentist is now. I don't know who was running it before the dentist. I remember when the dentist took it over. It used to be another fellow and it was always a barber shop.

Interviewer: Okay. Now, if you kept coming Macomb-

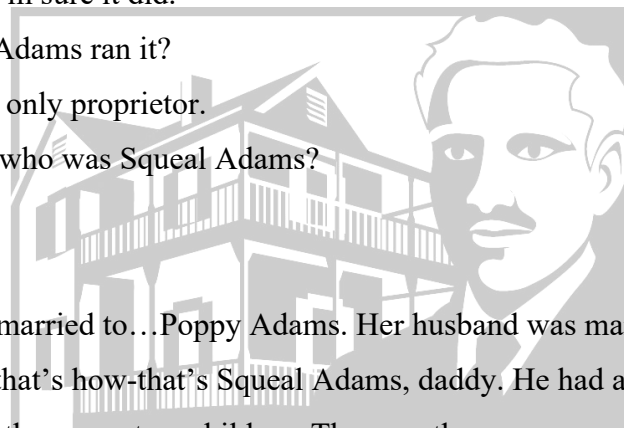
Hall: We on the corner now. So then we would-

Interviewer: Go across to where the pool hall was?

Hall: Yeah, we would go across Virginia St. We right on the corner on Virginia St. So...you go across the corner of this, this would be the Masonic Lodge, Red Bird, that's what you call that.

Interviewer: And we are on which side? Are we on the east or west side?

Hall: We are on the west of Virginia - of Macomb St., at the intersection of Virginia St.



JOHN G. RILEY
CENTER & MUSEUM

Interviewer: Okay, we on the west side?

Hall: West side.

Interviewer: Cause before now this was up here is where Economy is right now-

Hall: That's where Economy is now.

Interviewer: Because this is on the east side?

Hall: Yeah, you know there two parts of that building. The first part they were renting and then later on Dr. Roberts built the other part, but he build it down to the...where the old filling station is. That's has two different building. That they are not the same building.

Interviewer: And this was on the east side?

Hall: This is on the east side before you cross Virginia.

Interviewer: Okay, now we going down the street?

Hall: Yeah. Now, we are coming across here. This is the lodge. On this side there, was a little building there, fish market, the Redbird café and two grocery stores.

Interviewer: And this on the east-

Hall: East side. That's like when you was telling me to go round-

Interviewer: So the Redbird was on the east side of the street?

Hall: No. The Redbird was real, but we always referred to as the Masonic Lodge and they was some like the- I was telling you about the Lodge on the corner right there. The Lodge facilities upstairs, I think they used it building to building. Rented the lower part to pay for the building or something like that, but downstairs, I think they had a juke or a poolroom or something at Leithen Allen (please check this). You heard that name before?

Interviewer: I heard of Leithen Allen.

Hall: He had a juke and several people before him had ran a juke downstairs and then there was an alley, a barber shop and a beauty parlor...and then the theater was next.

Interviewer: That was the Leon theater?

Hall: No, the Capital theater.

Interviewer: The Capital theater? That was Ms. Yellowhair?

Hall: That was Ms. Yellowhair theater and then this was- I don't know the first people who ran the beauty parlor, but back when I got to know about the barber shop, it was the Green brothers.

Interviewer: I remember the Green brothers.

Hall: Okay, you know one-

Interviewer: In fact, I just left a meeting with his daughter, Faith Green, Mrs. Mal (check the spelling) Green's daughter.

Hall: The one that ran the liquor store? He and his brother, I think he had finished and his brother was still going to school, but they had, they ran the barber shop and Ms. Yellowhair had a theater and I think back then that lot was vacant between the theater and Mr. Nim's house.

Interviewer: I remember the Nim's house.

Hall: And then there was a lot and another little shotgun house was there in the corner. Now, we up to Carolina St. and that's on the west side. Getting back to...over here by the fish market...

Pat McKinney ran the Redbird café.

Interviewer: Pat McKinney?

Hall: That's wasn't his name, but-

Interviewer: They called him Pat McKinney.

Hall: Ran the Redbird café. It was a regular little café, about 10 or 12 little tables. He don't allow any smoking or this or that. The special was chitlin's and rice on Fridays and Saturdays.

Sundays, he bought up a full course dinner. Everybody come back after church and start eating.

So, after you leave there, there was a building, sort of built up off of the ground. It was a wooden building. Bob Richardson ran that building.

Interviewer: Did it have a name?

Hall: It had a name. He had a name for it, but everybody referred to it as Bobby's place.

Interviewer: And this is back on the-now we are back on the...east side?

Hall: We are back right in that spot where they-where the...

Interviewer: Pool hall was?

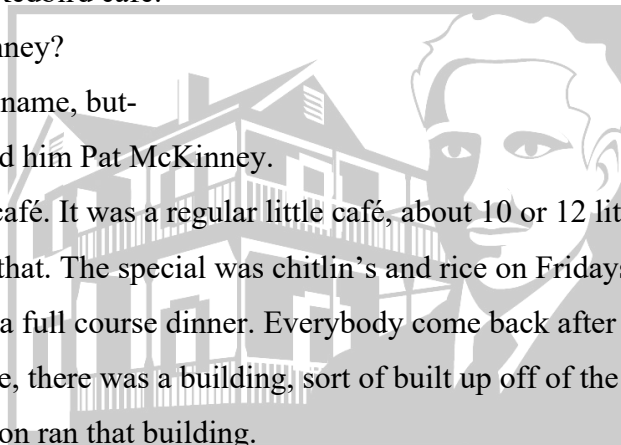
Hall: Yeah, the pool hall and the (don't catch this) was and next to that was the Peach Poolroom.

Next to that, they had the pool room.

Interviewer: It was next to Bob Richardson?

Hall: It was next to Bob Richardson. Then there was the barbershop were Shortie (check spelling) White in there. That was run by...what was the fellow name that ran that? Might Johnson (check spelling)-

Interviewer: Might Johnson ran the barbershop. It was a magnificent thing. He had a- one time he catered to, he was uptown, he catered to white people and for some reason they found out he wasn't white and something happen. Anyway, he came to Frenchtown and no one could-



JOHN G. RILEY
CENTER & MUSEUM

Interviewer: Okay, put a pin right there. Okay, Might Johnson (check spelling) you said he had a-he was cutting hair one time uptown?

Hall: Uptown or Madison somewhere, but he was catering to white people and he, he almost all his appearance was white. You couldn't really-you couldn't really tell him from being a white man. He was semi-bald. He looked more like a Greek.

Interviewer: And so they found out maybe-

Hall: Yeah, something might have came up. Other than what I heard. Something like that because...but anyway he had been in Madison originally and I don't know he cut hair for white people involved in Tallahassee or he just came to Tallahassee and built that shop, but it was just like, it was just as good or nice of the shops in town was. He was about the only Negro that had a barbershop like that and he was- he got most of the trade, barber trade and three chairs in his barbershop. Shoe shine boy and I know-

Interviewer: This is Might Johnson (check spelling)?

Hall: Might Johnson and there was a little...what you call it a...say a six by eight hole in there where the taxi...139 was the name of the black taxi cab.

Interviewer: 139?

Hall: 139 over.

Interviewer: 139 over. That was the black taxi company...and that was the name of it?

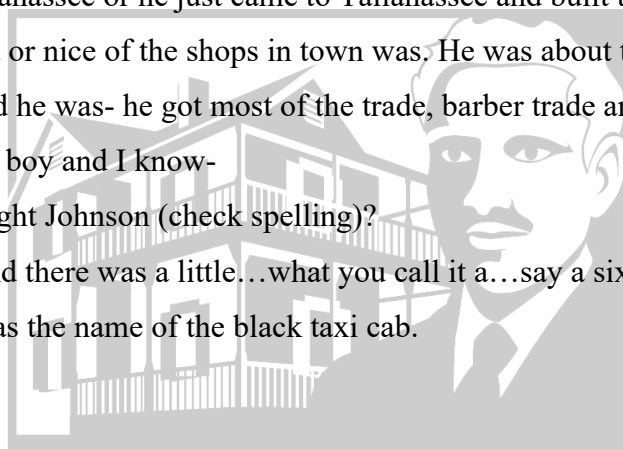
Hall: That was the name of it. They don't have a lot. They would park on the street. There was Bran out there, Nathan Dawson and John Hopper and ummm...this fellow, Bill, that lived over on Merlin St. right over there.

Interviewer: What color were their cars? The taxi cars?

Hall: It was green something like when they started painting them. By then, they weren't painting them. They just had taxi written on the side. You talking about 139 taxi written on the side. They actually don't have a color scheme until later years. I think it was green and cream or something like that.

Interviewer: And those four guys kind of owned the taxi company?

Hall: Well, they owned- I cant say who owned it, but they owned a little place just about big as here and a lady stand right there and answer the telephone all the time. They had a little bathroom in there and a little heater because (don't catch this) winter time, but all the taxi park out on the street and there was another building...dry cleaner. I think one time, Bob Richardson



ran it, too but, in later years, two men came from Panama City and they started running it. I don't recall their name, but one of them still lives in Barn, now.

Interviewer: And this is over here. Now, we still on the-

Hall: This is the dry-cleaning place. Its right where the liquor store was. So, they come down and they try to hop from building to building for this poolroom, but before then...there was a little...it might have been twice the length of this room and it sit right on the sidewalk and they call it the Chicken Shack.

Interviewer: I remember the Chicken Shack.

Hall: Not the original Chicken Shack. This was just a-they had a thing and they cooked all the different foods. They just pile it up in the window and you never did go inside, you just went to the window and ordered what you want and next to it-

Interviewer: This is- this is on down- that poolhall was just on down from it?

Hall: Okay, that's the poolhall and this is the little Chicken Shack. Now, we get down at the corner of Carolina and Georgia St. On this corner, was where that...no, Carolina and Macomb St. On this corner was where the Chikorita Chicken Shack was, but it was upstairs. It was called a-before they built the block it called the Green Lantern. Juke upstairs and they had rooms like hotel room and downstairs was the café and next to it-

Interviewer: So, before the Chicken Shack, it was called the Greenland?

Hall: Green Lantern. It burned back in, I think about '39, might have been '40. It was before the war started.

Interviewer: Who ran the Green Lantern?

Hall: Martin...I know it was Martin, but somebody's told me it was him and Monroy Harris ran it. You remember Monroy? That's Ms. Fields brother. You know Field's...married Walter Field out on Georgia St.? What year you went to Lincoln?

Interviewer: I graduated in '61. I went to Lincoln in '51-'59, no '58

Hall: You should remember...we call her Tulla. Her and Siliy would be together all the time..., but she was over Monroe insurance.

Interviewer: I've heard the name Monroe Harris.

Hall: Yeah, I think they ran the Green Lantern and the café downstairs and their was a little fill up and the wife had a little what not thing..., but he was in a wheel chair, paralyzed from the waist down on the corner was other grocery store and I think at the time Heartfields ran it.

Interviewer: The white Heartfield?

Hall: And the Green Lantern burn, so then they built a building back. They don't call it the Green Lantern. I don't know what they called it, but anyway upstairs, they built it back by the block and that was by the time Keystone came along. You heard of Keystone? He ran a little juke in there during the war and just before the war ended, he owned a café and Freeman bought it out and that started the Chicken Shack... and round the corner was-they built the Central Life and Lantern Life insurance company, but umm up until I say-all the way to Boulevard, going up above going east on Carolina St. for all white people lived on that side of the street there. Till the corner of Boulevard.

(PT1 ends)

I think there were about seven or eight houses and there was the only whites living in the area, on his side of town and crossed over here, it was a big ditch that came down by the-do you remember that ditch right there? That's ditch that come down by the McFreshen (check the spelling) house down on Carolina St.? Well, before they paved the street, they would turn and go here and down on Virginia St. to the playground.

Interviewer: I remember that.

Hall: Well, it was on the north side the...Macomb St., on Carolina St. It was a little crest and it always seemed like any given moment if he step to close to the wall, it might trumping into the ditch and other than that, there was a-

Interviewer: That was a clothing store. Is that near Mr.- where Joe Franklin use to be?

Hall: No. This is on the corner-what they have on the corner now?

Interviewer: A hairdresser.

Hall: Yeah. Okay, that was the spot. Eddie White, a little red-head white man, that had the peach thing on the side, ran all this property from half of the block to...came to almost half of the block, apart from the Garden's property.

That was all that property. And it was... one year he owned that, I think he owned that too. W.H. left that year and he was living in Macomb street.

Interviewer: W.H.?

Hall: Mhm, but let me move down to Georgia St., in a house down there. He ran the Deluxe down in Michigan.

Interviewer: The Deluxe was down on umm?

Hall: The Deluxe was on Virginia St. We get back down to Virginia St. Come on back on the side we was. Behind the Tampa store now and the fish market. On Virginia St., there was a present club, it was called (don't catch this).

Hall: After the war, she and her whole family just closed up shop and moved to a Chicago and they also, you know that corner where you said Nick was born, not really on the corner, but you make a right on the corner. That vacant lot was her house. Well, the family house. Eventually, Bethel Baptist bought the property and then, next to that was the Deluxe.

Interviewer: And Campbell house was?

Hall: Yeah, must have been next, across Boulevard St.

Interviewer: Okay, we would gotten on Macomb-

Hall: It was almost to where Bill service station was, on that corner. This is Georgia St.

(Clip changes)

Interviewer: Okay, we were at the corner-

Hall: We were at the corner of Georgia St... Till after the war, that was just a vacant lot. Johnny Nims in the shotgun store there and then another part was just a vacant lot. After the war, they filled it in.

Interviewer: With a service station? I remember Bill's service station.

Hall: On the side of the hill, it was the house all the way...on this side of the street.

Interviewer: (Cant hear the question asked)

Hall: Yeah, but her house is cross the corner, but right in the middle of the block across from the service station...before the war came, John Allen built that service station-I mean that drycleaner. The Steamline (verify name).

Interviewer: That was the name of it? The Sunshine Greens?

Hall: Sunshine, no. Steamline.

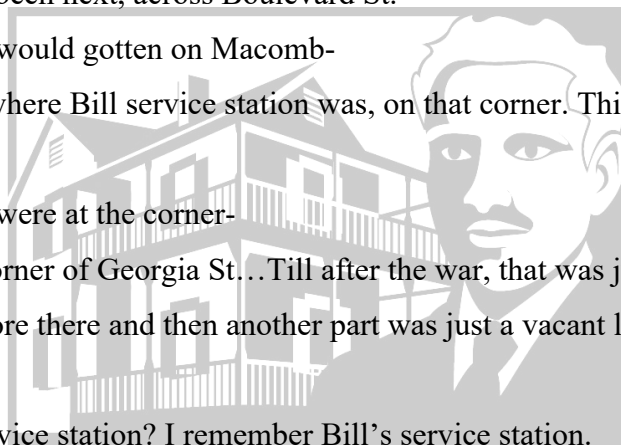
Interviewer: Steamline, oh okay. I know the Steamline.

Hall: That was John Allen's.

Interviewer: Steamline Greens, okay. That was at the runway of Georgia St.?

Hall: yeah. That's where...whats there not? Bill Mason Hall was there, but it was located right where the present day- where the Mason Hall parking lot.

Interviewer: Okay, William's house is there-



Hall: Now, her's is across the street, on Macomb St. Her house was there and then there was another house here. Ms.- I don't know who or what owned that house. It was sort of...I done forget what kinda house it was, but umm several people owned it anyway. Mrs./Ms. Brags and them...

They wound up staying for about 30 years. Franklin bought the property. Up above that in the next house was Papa Bear, Virgil Norris. You heard of that. That's any old family. Okay, that was their home...the place right there and you know where that brick building on your right, approaching Brevard St. That was right next to that brick building. The brick building was built right next to their house.

Interviewer: And that was on Brevard St. and Gillum was right there on the corner?

Hall: That's where Gillum married Mrs./ Ms. Brags daughter, which was (don't catch the name).

Interviewer: Okay, I know that. I was there.

Hall: So, then you turn the corner here and your on-Brevard. There was a furniture store here and Bainbridge road has started at that point.

Interviewer: I used to walk all up and down there.

Hall: Springfield there.

Interviewer: So, some of the great people- black people, I guess a lack for better words the movers and shakers, were like...

Hall: The Nims were one.

Interviewer: The Nims.

Hall: There were financial people.

Interviewer: Like Money Johnson.

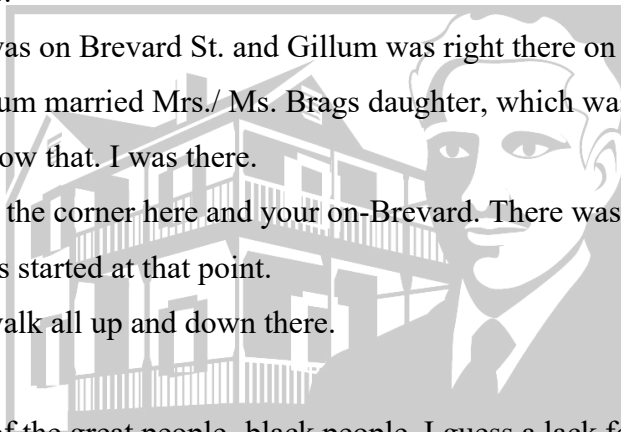
Hall: Money Johnson and Bob Richardson. He was always in business. There's Pat McKinney and Lefty Allen (verify name) and there these people like in places like Mrs./Ms. Dixie, Malone and-

Interviewer: Now, those places were back off of Macomb St. right?

Hall: Well, Mr. Dixon place came on in later year. This was what it was like before the war.

Then, after the war, they started building this thing because out in the Springfield, across Lewis St. on Brevard St. was...the Sims there. They had a café, barbershop,..

Interviewer: Taxi.



JOHN G. RILEY
CENTER & MUSEUM

Hall: And a taxi. Then, there was Tom Hadley and down below that was several little small building and business and then across the street over there was Gillum services. He didn't build that till after the war though and umm-

Interviewer: When you say after the war, which war are you talking about?

Hall: I'm talking about around after '40, '45, after '45.

Interviewer: So, that was after WWI?

Hall: 2.

Interviewer: 2?

Hall: Yeah, but Mr. Tom Hadley and Mr. Sims was located on that corner.

Interviewer: You said someone had a dry cleaner?

Hall: That was Mr. Twine (verify name). Twine in the dry-cleaning.

Interviewer: Twine in the dry-cleaning and Mr. Davis had the laundry mat?

Hall: That's right. The dry-cleaning on the corner and the laundry mat was behind that. Well, that was built after WWII. I don't think there wasn't any business- wasn't any business on the north side and that was the 700 block, on corner of Duval St. Everything was on the south side.

Interviewer: Those were resident people-

Hall: Yeah, those were residential.

Interviewer: Now, Malone's place was back-

Hall: Down on Copeland and Virginia. He was located on the corner behind the Undertaker.

Interviewer: Did you remember the Undertaker before Swine Jones?

Hall: Mitchell.

Interviewer: Mitchell and what was his first name?

Hall: I never did- all I remember is- I don't really know his name, because I was small when he two big old tall boys. They did most of the work.

Interviewer: Mitchell funeral home, but it was right- it was the forerunner to Strong and Jones.

Hall: Yeah. Well, see after Jones-Strong and Jones brought Mitchell out, he ran it for a long time, just Strong Funeral home and I think after he died, Mrs. Jones bought him in partnership with him and Strong, but they don't originally open together, you get what I'm saying. She bought him in with her after her husband died because she was always a nurse. She knew the business, but...and Robin, he just came up in the business. He probably was bombing people

before he finished high school even though he wasn't licensed. He know the trade, so they let him do his own thing.

Interviewer: Now, where did you go-did you go to Lincoln as well?

Hall: Uh huh.

Interviewer: Who was principal when you were there?

Hall: Ummm...it was the fellow before Porter. What was his name?...Walker.

Interviewer: You were up there with Cielo Walker? (verify name)

Hall: Yeah.

Interviewer: Now, I understand he died relatively young?

Hall: Yeah, he was a young man. I think he was under 50 or something like that. He may have been, maybe 40. I started school at here at the old, wooden building. The building was behind the elementary building when it was burned down.

Interviewer: So, you were there before the brick building that's there now?

Hall: I was- the first building was always there and I don't know if wooden or not, but it was always there. When I started school, there was a lime on the two-story wooden structure, which was where the elementary building is. It was there-I remember it burning down. I was going to school-I don't go to school at that one, but they built the other back, that's when I started school. I had-my birthday came in February and back then, in February, you was almost, always seven years old and school- I would pass through the Riley school, go to the relative good grader (please check this) and Mrs./Ms.- we always called her Mrs./Ms. Swine...she called me up and asked me if I was ready for school? I told her I was and she told me, to tell go back and tell my mother to dress me for school tomorrow and send me to school, so. I was excited to start school.

Interviewer: So, you got to go really early than-

Hall: Yeah, I got to go. It was about-it was after September thru December. She told me tell her to dress and send you to school tomorrow. I think that was '35, '36 or something. I wasn't able to find a birth certificate. I went out to the school board and got that one. (Don't catch what was said)

Interviewer: Is the school board the same place it is now?

Hall: I don't know. I imagine all of that was in the courthouse. You know what I'm thinking all those county offices are located in the courthouse.

Interviewer: That's right.

Hall: Cause I couldn't remember-

Interviewer: That's where it use to be. Did you have sisters and brothers?

Hall: No.

Interviewer: So, you're an only child?

Hall: Only child. I had some cousins.

Interviewer: I bet you saw some interesting sights and heard some interesting stories through your years around Frenchtown. Did many of the ministers come into the Frenchtown, just- over time, I know you say change take place down there, but back when it was in, I was say glory days?

Hall: Frenchtown was the only place he could go. I mean there wasn't anywhere else and most of them did and I mean it, it wasn't anything like it was before they tore it down. That's was some blacksmiths place there. Everybody enjoyed it. I mean...

Interviewer: Now, place like E&K and those type of things, come on-

Hall: Later on. Yeah, all those are after '45. '45 or something like that.

Interviewer: Cause someone said that Stafford and Jewelry use to have a place down there?

Hall: Well, back up on the-you talking about Tallahassee-that umm clock, furniture store and that Lodge at? Well, that was a vacant building and Clark came along and built a little furniture store and a mattress factory back there. Well, he had two in that building and he let his brother the end part for upholstery shop, clock shop and then there was a vacant place with Goldsmith in it.

Interviewer: I remember Goldsmith.

Hall: Yeah, and gold and then the next other two compartments was about of the clock furniture store. One door came out on Brevard St. around there and then they go pick up your mattresses morning, bring it back and re-gin and cotton it and put it in a new ticket and whatnot...and they deliver it that afternoon, but anyway Stafford jeweler was a walking man with a satchel full of watches, selling them a dollar down, a dollar week and Goldsmith's rented him a little corner up in the front of the store for his jewelry. That's where he started right there.

Interviewer: And that's the Stafford store right there?

Hall: The building downtown that opening up all the stores on Thomasville, but that where he got his start right there.

Interviewer: Walking around with a satchel of watches?

Hall: Yeah, a satchel full of watches.

Interviewer: And they were a dollar down?

Hall: A dollar down., a dollar a week. In fact, I think he was walking about 50 something a week or whatever it was, but it was that's just how he got started and he got to be a million, but at the same time, he keep it going, a dollar down and a dollar a week.

Interviewer: Did you buy a watch from him?

Hall: Oh, yeah. (Laughing) Back then, you had to go downtown and tell you was looking for watches.

Interviewer: Really?...There is something else I was going ask you...Where does your grandchild do to school?

Hall: I believe FAMU, I mean umm (I don't catch that).

Interviewer: My daughter graduated from there.

Hall: We tried for years to get her- my last grandchild graduated from FAMU and we tried to get for years to get him in there, but I don't know.

Interviewer: Tried to get him in FAMU?

Hall: Yes his grandmother-(audio interruption)

Interviewer: The watches that you said umm Stafford started with, you said you brought one of them? What brand watches were they selling?

Hall: I think all brand. (He is naming the different brands, but I cannot hear him). He had all name brand watches and they were any cheap brand watches, but you just- you know most people couldn't- there were about a few people who couldn't- I know a few people who would pay for about-most of them sold for about \$29 or \$39 dollars. You have to pay cash for a watch like that. Necklace, cross...string of pearls, and what not.

Interviewer: Did you- I wanted to asked to you who did you use work for? How was the Asheville? (I don't catch the question)

Hall: Very good.

Interviewer: Did you ever encounter any of the kind of, back then of course, we all know there were separate, certain places you couldn't go downtown and all that, but how much of that spilled over into a Frenchtown area?

Hall: Well...there weren't any...I mean...and the drugs- we had a sugar factory, I mean, but that was eliminated by not putting down any tables and chairs there.

Interviewer: So, people just had to walk in?

Hall: Yeah. They really don't have a choice. Either stand inside or walk outside and drink it. He tried to change it. So, by not putting down any chairs that eliminated the policy of Jim Crow or segregated service.

Interviewer: Was Nims- Joe Nims place right across the street at the same time?

Hall: Right and he lived in there, I don't know, since '19...1900 I think. 1905 or something like that.

Interviewer: And he and the Ashville got along well?

Hall: Oh yes, got along very well. The Nims got along well with everybody, I believe. Cause I think we really- well, they really, I think, knew it was a white man world and they were under a lot of pressure. As a whole, I mean they were recognized as very nice people and they got along with everybody.

Interviewer: I know they had a umm sister and a brother who was really white...or went for white. Somebody name Julian?

Hall: Julian. That was Peach daughter. That was Nick's sister. She is...she was- I mean you couldn't- I mean if they had, had the thing for fixed hair now, like they have now, she couldn't need that. If she got a prem, she couldn't need that. She had a head full of beautiful hair, but it all wasn't...all that silk out of it. It was straight, but you know, the texture ain't what it is. You could put a prem in it and you know, well enough Cracker Jones. You remember him?

Interviewer: I remember him.

Hall: He and Nick are half-brothers. Yeah, but he can pass anywhere.

Interviewer: He still living, ain't he?

Hall: Yeah. His mother, his mother looks like a white woman. She had all the appears of a white woman.

Interviewer: What was the relationship like with the law enforcement officers?

Hall: Now, that was terrible.

Interviewer: Did they come into the area much then?

Hall: Yeah, but we had the big bad policeman. Big Slim, you never did hear of him?

Interviewer: I never heard hear of him.

Hall: Barl Peacock...and then there was Cinemar. With Cinemar, I wouldn't say he was a big bad man, but he wouldn't dare to call you a nigga. He was getting around it.

Interviewer: Now, was Cinemar after Joyce?

Hall: No, he was before Joyce.

Interviewer: I know Cinemar was sort the overseer over the plantation where my mother grew up, Whaley Hill plantation. Whaley, out Meridian Rd. I guess that was one of their overseeing. One of his extra jobs.

Hall: Was it really him or was it- you know, most of those came around from Lint County (verify area). What that area around there? Fort Bryant school. Most of them was related to the sheriff, came from down in that area.

Interviewer: But you say he would use the word nigga a lot?

Hall: Yeah.

Interviewer: For no reason at all?

Hall: Yes and (don't catch this) and he don't care how or what the situation was called and he did it so so long and the other thing he did- I mean you never learn to accept it, but you expected when you went there. So, it wasn't any surprise to you when he called you that word. Other than that you could go to him and get favors out of him. If something went wrong or something and you needed to share, if you could call him, he would come and if you had a problem, even if it with a white person, you could go down to his office and tell him about it. He could straighten things out, but he was still going talking to you as a negro and that was just how it is.

Interviewer: When you got sick, did you ever have to use a doctor?

Hall: Yeah.

Interviewer: Way back, who did you go to?

Hall: Dr. Campbell.

Interviewer: What kind of doctor was he?

Hall: He was a very good doctor. Well, see Dr. Campbell came to Tallahassee, I understand-I wasn't...living there, but during the time of WWI, when the influenza was so bad, it was killing a lot of people. Those people down in Wakulla County, especially white people, and all poor and they don't have any money and those white doctors from Tallahassee wouldn't go down there to really treat them. When first came to town, he go down there and stay all night and stuff down there with them and they don't have any money to pay him, but they could give him chickens and pigs and...some of them would, I don't know, he got quite a bunch of land, too. I understand that some of them gave him land and, but even after that was over, he would even up the- he died

there were people from Wakulla County who would come to the doctor, but they wouldn't come to no other than Dr. Campbell.

Interviewer: It was so fortunate that he served the people, but those were the main. That-what I was said was they were, but whites was the sort of his downfall.

Hall: Well, I don't think that was something. Some might say that was his own doing. I mean because...I mean as long as I've ever known him, he was doing that.

Interviewer: Abortions?

Hall: Yeah, but I don't know he was involved with-he was more involved with them then he was with us doing that and...for a long time, it was accepted and then...Dr. Sip (verify name), he got to be-I don't know, he was from the Tallahassee area or what, but he got to be the...one of the...he was the President of the Doctors Association or something, but anyway they had the power movement enforcing ethic and principals. Doctors and they started getting on them about that and he was determined to make them stop it and one time, he had a real good case against it and they had the trial here in Leon County and he got everything throwed out and smoothed out, record clean. It wasn't, but six months before he was doing the same thing.

Interviewer: Dr. Sip was a white doctor?

Hall: Yeah and this time, this girl came up and said he did and he said he didn't. Said he was trying to fix up after she had bunched up or something like that, but that was his downfall, but his slate would've been wiped clean, if he hadn't never did that anymore. He would have died as Dr. Campbell.

Interviewer: They say he was a really good doctor.

Hall: He was a good doctor, but he just- I don't know if he was...what do you gain from something like that. Wish you knew if a person was holding something or you. Make you do it again. I don't know if that was the thing or not, but he didn't have to do that because he made a good little, honest living out of his practice, but I reckon once you start getting that easy money, you can still stumble.

Interviewer: Did Professor Riley did you ever just kind of see him...say walking through the community?

Hall: Yeah I saw him and I knew his son. What was the name? Emma. Yeah, I knew him and I saw his daddy several times before he died.

Interviewer: Did you ever have a conversation?

Hall: Naw, I usually (don't catch what was said). Young people don't converse with older people now like they do.

Interviewer: Because I understand for a while he used to walk from here over to Lincoln (verify name)?

(Clip changes)

Interviewer: Okay, what was that now?

Hall: You had a question you asked about the preachers coming to Frenchtown or not? Well, the doctors- I mean Reverend Sights (verify name) built a house there in-right in front of Frenchtown.

Interviewer: Where was his house?

Hall: Its on umm you know store that sold bikes.

Interviewer: Sbarro Shoe Shop. Now where was-that over up on Virginia St.

Hall: Yeah, just beyond the Deluxe care goods. Well the house, big house that was sitting next door, later years, they moved it back, but was (don't catch this).

Interviewer: And what was Reverend Sights (verify name) first name?

Hall: I don't even know.

Interviewer: Don't he have a- he passed away?

Hall: I think he was the pastor that founded the chapel one time. He was Methodist preacher after that. Yeah, his house right there and all of it. I mean-

Interviewer: And people back then, I mean just kind of all of us were in the same community. So, we came and went-

Hall: And if you was out there, you know, when they be saying you got to his house and cut the noise out. If not, he would come out and get all over you about that.

Interviewer: Now, where did you- can you remember any area where you saw Professor Riley?
(PT2 ends)

Hall: The last time I saw him, he was down in Frenchtown and he went in the barbershop and ws in the poolroom. He use to always visiting- coming to the poolroom. Then, he would come over here because him and Nims, they were good friends.

Interviewer: So, he was just going different places?

Hall: Yeah, he probably would go in and out of all them because he would- he know everybody by their first name right.

Interviewer: So, he was a short man?

Hall: Real short, light skin.

Interviewer: Light skin? Yeah, because most of the pictures we have his complexion is-

Hall: Now, Emory was a black man. He was about your complexion. There was another brother, wasn't it?

Interviewer: John?

Hall: Yeah.

Interviewer: And a sister, Marian.

Hall: What was John? John did...I know Emory been in the insurance business for a long time and he don't never do anything else after that. He gave that up.

Interviewer: Right. They really-when Professor Riley died in '54, according to the records, they- he had accumulated enough money and resources for them for them to live off of-

Hall: Yeah, they couldn't have, but when Old Henry (he is covering his mouth, so I cant understand what he is saying)

Interviewer: When was his-did he have a vice or something...Emma? Cause he was the last one-

Hall: I'm think he liked to gamble..., but umm and he drank, but he wasn't what you call a drink them, fall down drunk. He just drank all the time. I mean he didn't...you know people... alcohol didn't make a drunk idiot. He knew he was drinking, but he never was seen stumbling and falling.

Interviewer: Because as I mentioned most people know they lost everything.

Hall: And like I say he throw his away and turn around and married, Hadley was in pretty good shape, too, and he married her and throw all of that away, too.

Interviewer: Because its pretty obvious Professor Riley worked real hard-

Hall: Yeah.

Interviewer: Accumulated. Black people say that he was a very benevolent person, Professor Riley. Do you know of any benevolent-

Hall: What do you mean by benevolent?

Interviewer: They will give to people.

Hall: I really didn't know about that, but I know he had a bunch or rental property over in Barn and ummm...what I can understand, he never put nobody out doors just because they couldn't pay rent or wasn't able to pay it. It probably because they wouldn't pay it or something like that,

but, you know, for as having a woman having children and stuff like that and putting them out for rent, he don't do that. I understand he finance a lot of things around Tallahassee, too. He was a money loaner. He was...he was way before my time because Riley was so much older than I was. I could just remember about him being in the area all the time. I remember him.

Interviewer: People kind of looked up to him?

Hall: Emory or Professor Riley? Oh Professor Riley, because when they looked up to Emory, because of him being the son. So, as long as the Professor lived, I don't think Riley had it serviced like they did after he, like they did after he died. He couldn't kept a couple kids like him.

Interviewer: Did you know his second wife? Did you know either wife?

Hall: No. What it...what the umm...what he living on Boulevard St. when he died or something like that?

Interviewer: Who professor? I'm not sure.

Hall: No, no. That was Major. That is who I'm thinking about.

Interviewer: Oh, okay because all the record I have-

Hall: I'm thinking of Major Pattyfoot. Now, he had a second wife.

Interviewer: Where you around when the two police officers got shot on Dense St.? Duck St.?

Hall: When they were killed?

Interviewer: Yes.

Hall: It was Brevard St. Yeah, I was here.

Interviewer: That was a lady-is a lady on my steering committee, it was her uncle. One of the men, who did that. It was DEN, not Holiday Inn.

Hall: Holiday was the colored who did the killing. The colored who got killed was this Dify (verify name) fellow and other one. They went to the juke down on Brevard St. When it happened, it was a Sunday night.

Interviewer: I suppose with that happening back then, that was a big-

Hall: Yeah, but you know, he don't-I think he made about...maybe about 6 or 7 years and they was paroled and whatnot, but that fellow, Dify (verify name), was a- I think- you know, how a fellow come with all this here cursing, and broke stuff and doing all this to negros and doing this and they found out he assaulted a lot of white women and they don't do anything straight then

about it and it was almost like he was doing them a favor by getting rid of him. By killing him, I don't know. If you do something like that, that was automatically a lynching.

Interviewer: So, did you pretty much kind of low key lifestyle? You sort of lived a low-key lifetime in Frenchtown, don't you? I mean you went in there to work and converse with people.

Hall: Yeah, I know and nothing exciting. I mean just-everywhere you went-everybody just knew everybody. You could almost walk down the street and everybody you met all by their name. If you didn't know their name, you knew of them, or something like that.

Interviewer: Now wood job, Bill Johnson, that was back on Copeland?

Hall: Right and (don't catch what he was saying) then two hot heads went to ride on Dewey, and Dense st.

Interviewer: Did we miss any other?

Hall: Robert Ashville, he had a wood job, too.

Interviewer: Where was his wood job?

Hall: His wood job was on Dense St.

Interviewer: And Mr. Clifford Oneie (verify name), he had one as well?

Hall: Where was Clifford? He had one down on umm- well, he had it for a while in the Wind's backyard because you know he married, Miss Lucille was a Wind. Then, he moved it down on Dense St.

Interviewer: Where there any other pieces that you could mention about Mr. Riley in that area?

Hall: Well after the war, Franklin, Joe Franklin (There is audio interruption from 7:00-7:10)

Interviewer: Now, Leon Theater was always owned by white people.

Hall: It was always owned by white people and that was the first star, you know. It came along after the war and grew-

Interviewer: Right. On the corner of umm Carolina and-

Hall: The lobbied to be converted into Capital Theater and later, a grocery, a supermarket.

Interviewer: Capital Theater, oh okay.

Hall: Ms. Yellowhair's theater.

Interviewer: The Capital Theater, okay, but they later on move it to another corner?

Hall: After she died, and she ran it- I think she sold out to the organizations owned-Leon did and they tried running it for a while and did won't put any money into it. I think the idea of buying it

was getting out of black's hands and they just let it go. So, this big shack came along and they bought the building from them and converted it into a grocery store.

Interviewer: Cause there used to be a grocery store on the same side of the street where the pool hall was? On that corner?

Hall: Yeah. Well, that was two stores. A Tampa's (verify) store and a checkerboard store...produce out on the sidewalk somebody and somebody had a big dog and no sooner than they had struck the greens out, he come along and bites his leg (laughing).

Interviewer: And went on-

Hall: With the greens and then there was Dr. Bates. He had a office on South Adams Str. and-

Interviewer: Was a dentist?

Hall: Dr. Campbell was a dentist and Baker was the physician and there was Dr. Baker, too also was on Adams St.

Interviewer: Now, where the drugstore is now?

Hall: Up there where the Governors-where that big club is?

Interviewer: Governor Square?

Hall: Yeah, right there.

Interviewer: That's where Dr. Bate, Dr. Baker and Dr. Campbell-

Hall: Yeah. It was a dentist and two doctors.

Interviewer: They were in there together and were governor square is right now?

Hall: They were-there was a upstairs and a fish market and a white barbershop. Out of everything there was only three black people up there. Other than Dr. Campbell, he was downtown across-

Interviewer: Virginia.

Hall: No, he was up- he was on Adams Street too, but he was across the street where that, that wing...you know the First Baptist Church, across from the hotel.

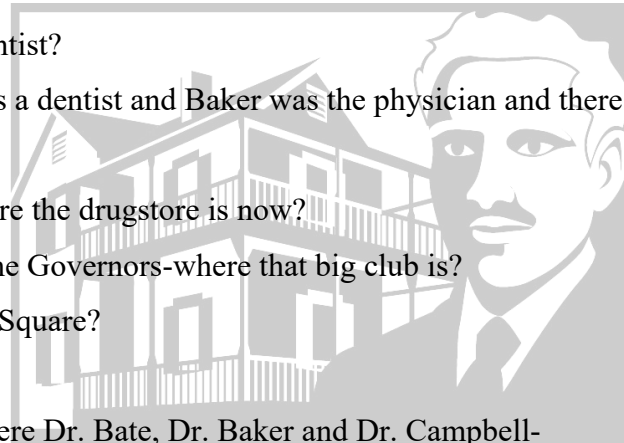
Interviewer: Across from what used to be Hilton?

Hall: Right. There was a filler station underneath and Dr. Campbell rented the whole upstairs. It must have consisted about...seven or eight rooms.

Interviewer: Now, this isn't the Campbell that did the abortion?

Hall: Yeah.

Interviewer: That same Campbell.



Hall: That was before he built this hospital over on-

Interviewer: Virginia.

Hall: He was- he was so well known, he could drive up...town, going to his office and if there was no parking space, he just get out and leave the car, with the key in it and (don't catch this) and the police would park it.

Interviewer: He was that well known?

Hall: Yeah. He was that well known.

Interviewer: So, his first office was uptown?

Hall: Yes.

Interviewer: Then, he built his hospital on Virginia St?

Hall: Yes, but his house was always on the corner there from the hospital, on the corner of Virginia and...Boulevard. His house was there and the Twines house was across the street from him. Booby Twine and Tim Twine.

Interviewer: And they were right, pretty much downtown?

Hall: Yeah and in that area, there were quite a few, big people in there. I think the Stewards owned a house or property around on the corner of Virginia St. and Bruno St. The one that you keep going south. Now, they were barbers. They traded to the white people and they had a shop uptown, too.

Interviewer: Do you remember something about a cigar factory being downtown?

Hall: Yeah. It kind of was over there on a...you remember before they built the Civic Center. Macomb St. came across Gaines St. and went down and made a right turn and went down in the dead on into Franklin St., where Jack's restaurant is now. You passed by a place that say McGuire Electric. That was the cigar bar.

Interviewer: Okay, who owned it?

Hall: I don't know. They said some priest or something out in Tampa.

Interviewer: But not black people?

Hall: No. It wasn't black people.

Interviewer: Did the Pot Stanley own anything?

Hall: Pot Stanley was a...what did Pot Stanley own? Pot Stanley owned quite a bit of real estate. They tell me the other one died. The one you said that used to teach at Lincoln.

Interviewer: I just came from the funeral about three weeks ago.

Hall: They bought him home or you went to Atlanta?

Interviewer: He umm it was the City Cemetery.

Hall: If I had known that, I would have gone.

Interviewer: Yeah, he died.

Hall: Yeah, his daddy want a- his uncle wasn't it? That was his uncle wasn't it?

Interviewer: Yes.

Hall: He owned quite a bit of real estate. I don't know he was in the real estate business for what, but every time I saw him he was always dressed in a collar and tie on, but now he-Emory always said he worked for white for a long time.

Interviewer: Okay. You have been very helpful.

(Clip ends with some small conversions)



JOHN G. RILEY

CENTER & MUSEUM