

**VOICES OF THE CAPE FEAR
SELF-INTERVIEW BY SAM BISSETTE**

AUGUST 17, 1995

INTRODUCTION

It is 6:00 in the morning on August 17, 1995. Hurricane Felix is sitting off the coast. I don't know whether it is coming here or where it's going. I woke up early and began to think about some of the people that I have been talking with recently. I have been making interviews of Wilmington residents over the last several weeks and that has stirred up a lot of memories of my own. I am going to try to record some of these little bits and pieces of things that I think that I can recall from the time I moved to Wilmington and see if in recording these, there would be preserved some humorous and significant little bits of life in Wilmington in the past.

My family moved from Goldsboro to Wilmington in September 1936. We lived at 107 South 7th Street with the Abelevitz family on one side and the Steins, Nathan and Leon, next door, on the other. The Abrams lived on the corner. Wilmington then was a very compact city with the streetcar line circling from Red Cross Street over to Castle Street and was divided mostly into the area from 17th Street down to the river and beyond where the nice residential neighborhoods of Brookwood, Forest Hills, and Oleander, which were in their beginning stages at that time, were located. So, the world of Wilmington was pretty well confined to what we now call an intercity area.

I was a junior in high school then and I was within seven blocks walking distance to high school. My dad was in the insurance business and had an office in the Murchison Building. We were within walking distance of that. We had joined the First Baptist Church and we were only three blocks away from the church, so it was very easy to get around in the neighborhood where everyone walked, road a bicycle, and of course, a lot of people had a car. We had a car too, but it was a very compact world as I recall it.

Some of my early recollections were connected with the high school. Having been in two high schools before, it was a change coming into a final high school for the last two years and I expected to be here until I would graduate. At that time, I had just turned 15 and all of us graduated after 11 years from high school, usually at the age of 16. You couldn't drive a car until you were 16. None of us had the money to buy automobiles anyway, so it was a different type of life than we have now.

Some of the early remembrances that I have of Wilmington, and the downtown area, are little bits and pieces. When I went downtown, it surprised me to see on the streets around Front and Market Streets, and Front and Dock Streets, little bits of white stuff. The first time or two, I didn't know what they were. I quickly found out that people went to the city market and bought a little bag of cooked shrimp and would stand on the corner and eat them like they would eat peanuts and leave the shrimp peelings on the sidewalk. That was a commonplace thing.

As I recall the downtown area in those days, and let's call the downtown area from 3rd Street down to Water Street, we had three movie houses; the Bijou on Front Street over near Chestnut next to the Bullock Hospital, the Royal which was across from the Post Office, and the nicest theater of all which was the Carolina on Market Street and 2nd next to Mr. Bannerman's Grocery Store. The Carolina was also marked for the fact that it had traveling vaudeville shows that came there in those days, but those were beginning to phase out. Up and down the river in the downtown area, was the commerce area. Water Street was the location of many of the wholesale businesses and building supply stores. North-Smith Coal Company was there and the wholesale grocery businesses. The Brooks grocery company was down there and of course, the groceries were used by the ships that came into the port. Also, downtown, you had the shipping companies that brought the ships into the port. I used to know Willie Pryde who ran the Pryde Forwarding Agency at

that time. The area downtown was also marked by the location of the financial center, the banks. You had Wilmington Savings and Trust Company at 110 Princess Street, the Peoples Bank and Trust Company on the corner of Front and Princess, and the old Security National Bank was in the Murchison building on the ground floor. Across the street was the Morris Plan Bank, which I understand, had been established about ten years before and was run by Emsley Laney. The Post Office was relatively new, having been built only two or three years before to replace a large building that had been built many, many years back. Efir's Department Store and Belk's Department Store were in the next block. One of the downtown restaurants was the Boot's Cafe over on Grace Street and it served a nice meal with meat, two vegetables, bread, desert, and drink for the total sum of 25 cents. If you went into Futrelle's Drugstore at lunchtime at the corner of Second and Princess, you would find a place full of people eating standing up or at the tables because Futrell's sandwiches were two sandwiches for 5 cents and a drink for 5 cents with no tip. This was where many of the people downtown got a bite to eat. Down the street was Pappy Gay ' s restaurant on Second Street with his particular little statement in the window, "Eats in his own cafe." That was his motto. There were two downtown restaurants. The Crystal restaurant on Front Street between Market and Princess Streets was one of the nicest places that you could go. The place that was frequented by many of us was over near the Cape Fear Hotel, the Friendly Restaurant and the Friendly Cafeteria. The Friendly Restaurant was a favorite place of mine, back in those days and the oval ceiling is still in the present store that is located there today. All in all, downtown was a busy place. It was the hub of Wilmington's business life. You had two hotels downtown, the Cape Fear and the Wilmington Hotel up at Front and Walnut Streets. The streetcars came and went and brought the people in and out on the circular round. At Front and Princess Streets was the location of Wilmington ' s end of the Wrightsville Beach car line and those were the very large beach cars that left on schedule to go down to Wrightsville Beach. Having lived there later, I can recall that after they left there, they went out to 17th Street, down to Castle Street, and then took a bend and went through Spofford Mills, and headed towards the beach. While I am thinking about it, I remember that the stops were: The first after you left Delgado was Audubon, Winter Park, Seagate, Macumber Station, Villa View, Wrightsville Sound, Harbor Island, then Wrightsville Beach Station I, Station II, Station III at the Ocean Terrace Hotel, Station IV, Station V, Station VI, and it ended up at the Lumina which was Station VII. I have gotten away from Wilmington, but I wanted to put that in there while I happened to be thinking about it.

I lived on South 7th Street for a while and then we moved to 511 Dock Street. The Dock Street area was a neighborhood where many people lived that I later came to know through life in Wilmington and became friends at later times. Across the street were Dr. Walter Crouch, Sr. and his two sons Walter Jr. and Auley. Walter Jr. later became my next-door neighbor here on South Live Oak Parkway for a number of years. I remember Auley because he played a musical instrument that bothered the neighbors at times. Alice Beahrends lived next door and Raymond Holland lived across the street. Alfred Lane lived on the corner of sixth and he operated the franchise for the Charlotte Observer. I had a childhood summertime job carrying a newspaper route for the Charlotte Observer all over the downtown area. I waited at the Post Office at 6:00 in the morning for the truck to come in from Charlotte that brought the papers, so we could deliver them. The area at Dock Street put me closer downtown. The place that we played and skated was the Fire Station. There was a paved area in the back and there was the old five story fire training tower. I don't know why they let us play in it, but we played up and down that thing and in and out of the windows. I know it must have been dangerous, but I have some early photographs of the Wilmington skyline that were taken when I bought my first camera. One or two of the pictures I have converted into paintings as I had the opportunity.

I don't remember many of the people who lived in and around that area except the Schnibbens who were connected with the Fire Department. Mary Catherine was one girl we skated with on that corner.

Then, time began to march on with high school and I finished up my junior year. I started my senior year, a very important year, at New Hanover High School. Seniors had privileges because we were getting ready to get out of school. The lower classmen couldn't go in and out of the front door of the high school because this was reserved for seniors. The seniors camped around and sat on the walls around the entrance and it was a social gathering place for us all. I was in room 208 with Frances Formy Duval as an English and homeroom teacher. I had a great affection for her. She taught us and drilled into us by memory some of the

great classics of the time and the phrase "...and departing leave behind us, footprints on the sands of time, lingers". I remember that and others that come back from those times. Those people in that homeroom were my friends and some of them still are friends. I can remember any number of them. That was a very close group because that was the very first place we went in the morning and exchanged what had happened to us during the daytime, the previous day, and much note passing occurred.

One thing that changed at the beginning of the year was the ROTC. That was the Reserve Officer's Training Corps junior unit and it was established at New Hanover High School. It was an immediate success and had a battalion of about 400. I was interested in this and I had one of the disappointments of my lifetime when they called about 15 of us to the high school to select the officers for the cadet corps. When the list was posted, everyone was on the list as an officer appointment except myself. I didn't know what happened, but I didn't rock the boat any, and I just went on in and became First Sergeant of Company A. At one of the inspections a month or two after things had gotten started, Colonel Ochs, said, "Sergeant, weren't you part of the group that were officers?" I said, "No, sir." He turned around to Sergeant Gruits and said, "Sergeant, why wasn't this man made an officer?" Gruits said, "Sir, I don't know, we must have overlooked that." Colonel Ochs said, "Sergeant, you are not going to be a sergeant anymore. As of right now, you are promoted to a Lieutenant and assigned to the battalion staff." He said, "I am sorry about that, but it was simply a clerical error or something like that." So, that is how I became an officer in the ROTC.

One instance that I remember that was serious at the time but humorous later in reflection, was a morning when the battalion assembled for the normal march over to the 13th and Ann Street parade ground for its Friday review. Ray Funderburk was the top officer as Major of the battalion staff. He and the other four or five other officers who were usually there were late. We got ready to move the battalion out and I was the only officer who showed up. Ray was nowhere near and the others hadn't shown up. Colonel Ochs was indignant, fuming, and ready to go but had no battalion staff. He said to me, "Lieutenant, it's going to be you today. March this battalion over to 13th and Ann Streets and I'll find out what happened to Major Funderburk". Fortunately, I knew the opening command, which was a call on company A squads to march right and I gave that command and started walking off with 400 people behind me. Then, here comes Ray Funderburk and some of the others who had been dilly-dallying around and came on the run. So, it was turned over to them, but I thought it was an interesting little incident that happened.

We had one of those unexplainable things that happens, and I don't remember just when it was. One or two of the students got sick, somebody fainted, somebody got hysterical, and the first thing you know people were fainting and dropping like flies everywhere. It was called the famous fainting incident at New Hanover High School.

If you took a girl to a dance at the high school, you took her on the streetcar, borrowed a car, or your parents would take you. Most of us walked. There were several dances that I took a girl to that we walked to the high school but never more than five to seven blocks. People nowadays really wouldn't appreciate that.

Well, let's get on into the beginnings of the war. After graduating from high school, things were in a bad sort of way. My mother had been quite ill and we had tremendous medical expenses. College was not in sight for me at that time and my parents thought it would be good to take a postgraduate business course at New Hanover High School, which was given then. It consisted of typing, bookkeeping, and shorthand. It was a regular semester course for nine months. So, I enrolled in the course and took a part-time job with the paper route in order to give me some spending money. I had the good fortune to have Mrs. George West who was my bookkeeping and typing teacher and Mary Elizabeth Hood who was my shorthand teacher. I finished the course and jobs were just not available. We were coming out of the depression in 1939, but I was able to get a temporary job at the Coast Line. I got laid off, and then I got a call from Mrs. West and she said that Peoples Building and Loan Association was looking for a bookkeeper. Mr. B. H. Marshall, Jr. had been bookkeeper and had been out sick for a number of months and it didn't look like he was coming back. Mr. William M. Hill, who ran the Foster Hill Realty Company and People's Building and Loan Association was looking for somebody to be an understudy for him since he did not have any children and I had the

bookkeeping training. They were looking for a bookkeeper, so I went in that morning and talked with Mr. Hill about five or ten minutes and he said, "Well, it looks like if you want a job, it looks like we've got one here. If you want to go to work, my wife has been keeping the books up for us." Sure enough, Clara Barton Hill had been keeping the books in the interim. Mr. Hill said, "Clara will show you what the work is and if you want the job, try it out and see." I asked, "When do you want me to go to work?" He said, "How about right now?" So, I had walked in and ten minutes later, had a job and was at work. I met Dorothy R. Forbes, who was the machine bookkeeper at Peoples and is still around. I have favorably known her fine business career and she ended up as head of the Wilmington Housing Authority. So, that is how I got a job at Peoples on November 17, 1939. I didn't know what I was going to make as a salary and was afraid to ask. On November 30th, when I got my first paycheck, I found I was making fifty dollars a month, which was not much, but it was in line with what salaries were at that time. Fifty years and thirteen days from November 17, 1939, I retired completely from Peoples Building and Loan Association as having managed it for a number of years and retired as board chairman, director and president. I retired as president early back in 1977. Mrs. West was responsible for me starting a career that ended up a lifetime work.

Getting back to those early days, my father and mother had moved to Harbor Island in the first part of 1939 and I went back and forth to classes for the postgraduate business course on the beach car. That was an interesting experience because every afternoon at 3:15 in the afternoon, the beach car left the high school and went to the beach and every morning, it took us all into town.

I went on to work for Peoples and worked there for 3 years up until October, 1942 when I enlisted in the U.S. Air Corps. That was an interesting time in and around Wilmington because the war had begun and we had problems of all kinds including gas rationing. I was an aircraft spotter along with Charlie Blake on top of the Cape Fear Hotel. Down at Wrightsville Beach, tankers were being blown up, up and down the coast, by German submarines. There were landings reported by the spotters of German saboteurs and spies off our coast. The tale circulated that one of the spies had been captured and he had tickets to the Bailey Theater, which was a new theater built about 1940 on Front Street. All kinds of stories circulated. I do remember a couple of personal instances. Billy Hill, Charlie Blake, and I took a boat up to Figure Eight Island and camped overnight. I was introduced to marsh mosquitoes for the first time and never realized that anything could be so penetrating. Trying to wrap oneself up with an army blanket was difficult and I believe they bit me right through the blanket. The only place we could get any relief was right on the edge of the surf. We walked up and down the surf most of the night right at the edge of the water. In the wee hours of the morning, all of a sudden from nowhere, we were faced with two soldiers at rifle point wanting to know who we were and why we were there. We had to do a lot of explaining, but I think our southern accents finally convinced the guys from Brooklyn that we were local residents and it was all right. It was not any fun to be standing with a rifle pointed at you by two soldiers and trying to explain your presence on the beach.

There was one other wartime experience that bothered me a little bit. I had been dating Ruby Raynor, who I later married in 1943. I walked back and forth from where I was living at 411 Dock Street as a single person and working downtown, went back and forth to the hospital to see her. Wilmington was beginning to have problems in town and we had some street assaults and some other things. As I was walking back from the hospital one night, I got to the corner of 10th and Market Streets and crossed 10th Street over to the south side of Market Street. I looked down about a block on the other side and there were two soldiers walking along. I was walking on the other side of the street and was walking fairly fast. When I got abreast of them, I kept my eye on them and all of a sudden, one nodded to the other one and they started crossing the street right in my direction. There was not another person on Market Street and I broke all the speed distance records when I sprinted from 10th and Market Streets all the way to 411 Dock Street. I outran those guys and I think they figured that I wasn't worth it, but I was frightened because that looked like a chance that I was going to get some rough treatment.

There were a lot of other things that happened then, but let's pass on to the war. I went on and enlisted in the Air Corps and left Wilmington with a group of people to become Air Corps mechanics. I had had a mechanical aptitude test and was going to be drafted in another couple of months but I didn't know where or

when I was going to end up drafted. I had a chance to enter the Air Corps and go to a mechanics school, or so I thought. A whole group of us left in a truck and went to Shaw Field in Sumter, South Carolina and then over to Fort Jackson, which was an entrance center for people being enlisted and drafted. We were processed there and sent over to Shaw Field for six of the roughest weeks you could ask for of infantry training, field work, and sleeping in tents. It was just rough, dirty work and work that I was not used to. I was very frail and had been accepted only for limited service. After I was there a few weeks, they found out I had three years of business experience and office work, so I didn't become an aircraft mechanic at all. I got assigned to the squadron headquarters as a clerk and from that point, I stayed there and made Sergeant the week before I got married in 1943. I came back to Wilmington for my wedding. Ruby and I were married at the First Baptist Church in an unattended wartime type ceremony and we had the biggest downpour of rain you could ever see. The only transportation that people had that was public were the buses, so Ruby and I took a bus after the wedding and went to the Ocean Forest Hotel in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina for a three day honeymoon. We then went on to Sumter, South Carolina where we got an apartment where she and I lived for nine months before I left to go on overseas duty with the Air Corps. Then, I was in Europe for about a year and a half, arriving back in Wilmington the day before Christmas, 1945 and that was a joyful day indeed. Ruby and I had a long absence where we did not see each other and it was pretty rough on us as it was with other people who were separated. I came back and found that they still wanted me to come back to my old job, so after a month's layoff, I came back to work at Peoples Building and Loan Association, February 1st, 1946. I worked there until about 1959 or 1960 when William M. Hill began to have some problems and it was necessary that he turn the institution over to someone else. I happened to be on the scene at about age 39 and I became the managing officer of the Building and Loan Association.

Let's go back for just a minute to the way Wilmington was in the 1950's. In downtown, Princess Street was known as "Robber's Row" and the reason for it was the location of all the real estate and legal offices that were lined up and down Princess Street from Front to 3rd Streets. The proximity of the courthouse, of course, was an attraction for both real estate and the lawyers. There were a bunch of characters on the scene in those days, who had distinct personalities. I can remember Quincy Snipes, Waddell Waters, Hooper Johnson and, Richard Shew. Woodus Kellum and Dudley Humphrey were a fine group of lawyers for the institution. Mr. George Rogers from Seagate was down at the courthouse every morning. His great entertainment in life was listening to the trials and he would come into town daily. The most public character of all was Jimmy Wade, whose name for everybody was "Hi, Buddy" and he was all over the place as a politician and a real estate person. He had a very visible presence in Wilmington. There were a number of others, but I want to mention Richard Shew because of an instance that happened. I decided to purchase a house over on Princess Street and the corner of Kenwood Avenue. It was right across the street from Foster Edwards and next door to Sim Sebrrell and Billy DeCover on the corner. The little brick house that we had was never going to be big enough for us because we had a family coming along. Sabra had been born and we decided we would try to locate in an area that had some future and decided on Richard Shew's development of Highland Hills. It was just beyond Magnolia Place and was bordered by Country Club Road on one side and South Live Oak Parkway on the other. I chose and bought a lot for \$1,800. Richard came by one day to leave me the deed and he put the deed down on the desk. I want to explain that Richard was a very explosive type of person, very excitable, and easily agitated. He was a very fine person, but that was just his nature. He said, "Sam, how do you like that neighborhood out there?" I said, "Well, I like the neighborhood fine, I like the lot fine, but I really don't like the name of the street." He said, "You don't like Golf Drive?" I said, "No, the name Golf Drive just doesn't appeal to me at all. He looked at me and said, "You don't like that? You know, damned if I like it either. I don't know why I ever named it Golf Drive. Fairway Drive, around the corner, that sounds better." I said, "Yes." He said, "Do you like the name Highland Hills?" I said, "I like the name Highland Hills fine." He said, "How about Highland Drive, how does that sound to you?" I said, "Highland Drive is fine." He said, "Highland Drive it is! I don't like Golf Drive, I'm going to get that changed!" and he stormed out of the office. He told me the next morning, "It's all been taken care of." To this day, that is how Highland Drive got its name.

Well, back in the 1950's at the Savings and Loan, one of the activities that I enjoyed was a necessary activity, going out with the directors as loan committees. Whenever a person filed an application for a loan, it

was necessary that the committee go and look at the real estate to find out if it was a worthy security for a loan. This was done by taking three of the directors and myself in an automobile and taking five to eight applications and going all over New Hanover County to look at the properties. We had some interesting experiences. Each director had his own personality and their own thing they were interested in. Mr. Woodus Kellum was always interested in the foundations of the houses and he would take his knife out and probe the sills. Mr. J.K. Bannerman, another director and grocer in Wilmington, was interested in the roof. He said, "If the roof isn't any good, then the rest of the house can go bad." It was my job, principally, to go in the houses and report on the inside condition. I went into a house one day on Mercer Avenue, and there was a man in a wheelchair on the porch. I told him I was with the Savings and Loan and was supposed to take a look in the house. He said to go on in and take a look around. I walked in and walked back to the kitchen and into the back hall bedroom. It was a two-bedroom house and I walked into the second bedroom, and low and behold, I walked right in on a lady who had just finished showering. She didn't have a stitch on and we looked at each other. I said, "I just came to see the house." She said, "That's not what you are looking at. Get out!" I left and went on out to the man on the porch and said, "What on earth?" He said, "Oh my gosh, I forgot to tell you my daughter was in there." I said, "Well, I couldn't have walked in at a worse time." Those sorts of things happened all the time.

We stopped at a house at 816 Wooster Street one day to take a look at it and from the outside appearance, it looked all right. The directors were telling jokes and weren't particularly interested in going in the house, so I got out and went up on the porch and walked to the door. The door was partly opened, so I tapped on the door and nobody answered. I pushed the door open and in the living room, there wasn't any furniture at all. It was just bare and I just walked in. Over in one corner was sitting a jukebox. I thought, "What on earth do we have here?" and then I realized that the door was open off the living room and the two bedrooms. There were women moving around and somebody was looking through the cracks at me. I got a little frightened and backed out the door when it suddenly occurred to me that the house was a house of prostitution in a black neighborhood. When I got back to the car and told Louis Moore, Woolus Kellum, and J.K. Bannerman that I thought the house was a house of prostitution, the loan was killed. With their solid backgrounds, they were not about to lend anybody money on what Wilmington would classify as a warehouse. We had a lot of instances like that. One day, I got stung 13 times by wasps while looking at a floor sill.

One of the fine ways that we got acquainted with our directors was the fact that we had two or three of the finest joke tellers that you will ever know. One of these was the very distinguished man, Harry Solomon, who ran the S&P Solomon Company downtown. He sold wholesale dry goods and later became the guiding light for the New Hanover Memorial Hospital. As a Jew, he loved to tell jokes on the Baptists and I am not going to tell you one, but I remember two or three that he told. That was something that we did between houses going from one place to another.

Back in the early days at the Savings and Loan, one of the things that we dreaded was for the examiners to come in. These were the people from the North Carolina State Insurance Department that came in to check on us. One of them was R.Y. Sasser and the other was M.A. Coble. Mr. Sasser was the loudest and most boisterous person you have ever seen and Mr. Coble never said a word. Back in the old building at Princess Street before the war, I was keeping books up front. If Mr. Sasser wanted me and he was only fifty feet away and way down the hallway, he would just yell, "Bissette, come here! What is all this about?" I would track back to his office and try to satisfy what had taken place.

We are getting into the 1950's when the largest hurricane that ever hit Wilmington came ashore. Hazel hit on October 15, 1954. I believe it was followed later by hurricanes Connie, Ione, and Diane. I had never been subjected to a hurricane before and I didn't know what to expect. Hurricane Hazel has been reputed to have winds from 135 to 150 miles an hour. It was a monstrous hurricane, and it only hit Wilmington and the beaches. I bundled the family up and we took the car downtown with some blankets and went to the brick building at the back part of the Savings and Loan. I knew it was protected by the Bailey Theater and was probably the safest place in Wilmington. We camped out overnight and when we got back

home, Wilmington had been bruised badly. Houses, roofs, and trees were down everywhere and down at Wrightsville Beach, there was a cabin cruiser sitting right in the middle of the highway. The Carolina Yacht Club was gone as well as many buildings. I remember people standing in lines out to the street in front of the insurance agencies waiting to file claims.

Well, time marched on and my son, David came on the scene, born in 1950. When David was 17 years or so, he got a temporary summer job with the City of Wilmington in the planning department. One day, he and Tim Woods, the city planner, were working on correcting duplicate street names. Tim said, "We have a problem with the alleyway that starts at 11th Street and goes to 13th Street between Market and Princess Streets. I have run out of names. Do you have any suggestions? What is your middle name?" David said, "I was named for my grandfather and it is Coye." Tim said, "That 's a good name. We 'll call that alley Coye Alley." To this day, there are 3 street signs with Coye Alley marked on them. David just happened to be there in person at the right time, so there is another street naming incident.

It became necessary after Mr. Hill was getting ready to leave, that we do something about separating Foster-Hill Realty Company and Peoples Building and Loan Association who had occupied the same building for years and years under the same ownership. D.R. Foster of Foster-Hill Realty Company was the manager until William M. Hill took over. Mr. Hill told me about Mr. Foster and said that things got so bad during the depression that they just couldn't make it. Mr. Foster was discouraged with it and told Billy, "Well, its up to you, I'm leaving. You take it over and do what you can." Mr. Foster turned around, walked out the back door, and never came back in the building. So, Mr. Hill took it over with the help of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, who saved the People ' s Building and Loan Association. Peoples was one of the survivors of the twenty-seven Building and Loan Associations that were started in Wilmington. It ended up in being Peoples Savings Bank. It was announced this week that People ' s is going out of existence and being purchased by the First Citizens Bank. That ends an era that I was associated with for a long time. I enjoyed the opportunity of building and designing the building at 4th and Market Streets. The Association also had the Winter Park branch on Oleander Drive. We had a lot of experiences in connection with that and one that I will mention was that Mrs. Morgan in the loan department, had a couple of men that wanted to borrow some money. They wanted to borrow \$200.00 to bury their mother. Their mother died and they needed funeral expenses. We couldn't make a real estate loan because they didn't have any real estate. Mrs. Morgan asked the men, "Where did your mother die?" One of the men said, "She died in Charleston." She asked, "What are you going to do about funeral arrangements? How are you going to handle it?" He said, "Oh, we can't afford a funeral director." She said, "Well, where is your mother?" He said, "She's out in the car in the parking lot." Sure enough, I went out and checked and there was a body in the back seat covered with a sheet. Their mother died in Charleston and they had brought the body back to Wilmington in the back seat of the car. The poor things were trying to find a means of getting her buried and we directed them to the proper agency in Wilmington and the matter was solved.

Well, I see the tape is about over for a forty-five minute tape. I had wanted to record some of these things and this was simply a spontaneous thing done on the spur of the moment. I hope it is humorous. It is now five minutes to 7:00 in the morning and I am going to leave this with the other tapes if I listen to it and it makes sense later.