

INTERVIEW II. LOUISE CAUDILL

Saturday, November 7, 1992. — At Dr. Caudill's home.

I. What were you like in school? What was your attitude toward learning and what were you like in high school?

L. Learning was important. Yes, I'd say I studied pretty much and I wanted to be the best in the class.

I. Were you?

L. Yes. I got to be Valedictorian. But, there was just nine of us.

I. Did you like all subjects?

L. Math was my favorite.

I. What else did you do in high school besides study?

L. Oh, I was in all the things. You know, in a little school— if you have a debate club or if you have a drama group, or whatever you had you had to be in all of it and so I was in all of it. I debated, I was in all the plays— can't say I was the star— but I was in most of 'em. One of them I had to sing in and that liked to kill me because I can't carry a tune. Oh, I played basketball, but Mother wouldn't let me. But, the coach thought I was pretty good, so we went to— this was a good experience— we went over to West Liberty (I think that's where we went) and, of course, I didn't have a uniform and so I couldn't play. The coach said, now, Louise if you were in there we could win this game. So I got a pair of knickers or something like that and put 'em on and played basketball.

I. Did your mother find out?

L. I told her. She didn't want... you see, you were supposed to be a lady and I wasn't.. So, she'd try to influence me to not want to do things like that. I just wanted to do them. It didn't make me want to do them any more or any less. Finally, she came around and decided I could do whatever I wanted to do. There was no real turmoil over it.

I. Were there parties and dances?

L. Yes, we had those things and I went to all of them. But, we didn't party too much. We didn't have any place to party unless you'd go to homes and we'd dance at this person's house this night and that person the next night and we did a lot of it at our house.

I. IF IT WAS A CLASS OF NINE, WERE YOU ALL CLOSE FRIENDS?

L. Oh, we had a big class in the beginning.

I. Was your social life centered around church?

L. No, I guess school as much as anything. We had a big class in the beginning-- not big in your numbers-- you see, the Morehead State Normal School came about the time I was in high school. The state University came from a normal school and, you see, you could go up there in high school so about the time I was a freshman in high school you could-- they said all the girls went up there to find new boys and all the boys went up there to find new girls so... so, the nine of us stayed put. The school was right there where the Department of Education is now-- Second Street. I could just run out my back door and be there after the last bell would ring.

S. They tore that building down.

I. If you had only nine students what did you have for teachers then?

L. Oh, we had, one, two, about four or five teachers. They were divided up, you know, like teachers of math, a language, English.

I. So, even though you liked to play sports, you liked to study also.

L. I always liked to play sports. I liked to play tennis, we went up on the tennis courts when I was just a kid, usually with friends, but I played some with my sister. Usually with friends-- Bob (Bishop) might have played some. I believe he did.

I. When you graduated from high school, what was in your mind to do?

L. Well, I thought I'd go to college, but I didn't have enough sense to know that you went to college to learn how to make a living. I didn't know that (laughing). My sister went through college before me and all she did was have fun-- Chicago, New York-- I just thought going to college was what you did to see what the world (I swear that sounds awful) was like before you got ready to settle down... I believe I must have believed that because-- well, you see-- I ALWAYS wanted to be a doctor. Always, always, since I first started going to school.

I. Had you known a family doctor that interested you, or read books, or?.....

L. No, I think that Bob was going to be a pharmacist and we were going to be a team-- and my mother had a friend that was a doctor-- a woman in Cincinnati, but I don't think I ever really met her, but I heard mother talk of her. I would guess six years-- at age six. Bob Bishop was the pharmacist. he was in my class. He was the one-- I had to beat him to be valedictorian and we went together and played together from the word 'go.' In fact, since first grade we were in dead heat to see who could be number one.

I. It strikes me odd that you, as the woman, were the one who would be the doctor.

L. No, his (Bob Bishop's) father was a pharmacist. So, he was going to take his father's place. So I was going to be the doctor and that was as good as anything. We didn't know anything about it— he didn't know anything more about being a pharmacist than I did about being a physician. We went through every grade together— never wavered... until I went to college and didn't know what I was supposed to do. I didn't know you went to college to get that, I thought you went to college to play and then you went to— I guess that's about the way. You know, I've tried to think about this since you said something the other day— and I can't imagine any college student being as ignorant as I was.

I. Maybe it was just being naive.

L. I hadn't any experience— I hadn't. I was just a snot-nosed girl who just sort of played and nothing made any difference, you just did whatever you wanted to do.

I. If you wanted to be a doctor— like Susie was saying— she was always dressing her dolls, taking care of them— did you play at doctor?

L. The way we played doctor, we got Castoria and gave out medicine— that's a laxative.

S. That's a good tasting laxative. they used to give it to children a lot— Fasters— ah, Castoria.

L. Later on I took a bullet out of a dog's leg. The dog got shot and the veterinarian was old and he 'didn't want to do that kind of stuff anymore' so Bud went down and he (the vet) gave him the stuff to shot in it and somethin' to get the bullet out with and, on the back porch I did it. I guess I was 14 or some number like that.

I. They must have— you must have had a reputation even then. Did your whole family know you wanted to be a doctor? Did they discourage you?— if they didn't want you to play basketball, didn't they...?

L. I don't think that, basically, my mother thought women worked. I mean, even though her mother was a milliner— and granny was— a plume or a feather and all that sort of stuff— mother didn't think that women were supposed to work, thought that— down in her insides. I feel sure that's true. BUT, she wouldn't tell you not to do it.

I. What about your father? Did he encourage you?

L. Daddy said, it's up to you, whatever you want to do. It didn't make any difference whether you were a woman or a man, if you wanted to do something, you could do it.

I. That was unusual then, wasn't it?

L. Well, I guess it was. But— well— an awful lot of women around here taught— I mean, you see, the Normal School when it came in it involved women as much as men... of course you know the story of Cora Wilson Stewart, but I don't think they considered her a professional. I don't know if I'm saying that right or not. But other than teaching I think that's about the story of women. I don't think there was anybody around here a nurse.

I. Who were the doctors here when you were young— what did people do when they got sick or broke a leg, or

L. We had quite a lot of doctors, we even had an ENT man. (Ears, Nose, and Throat) he and his brother did most of the medicine— Homer Nickel. And then we had a Dr. Blair (not the Blair that's Don's father)— but maybe his uncle or something like that... the we had, after that, we had Dr. Adkins and— oh, we always had pretty nice doctors. Nobody believes that (laughing) because everybody says that there weren't any doctors that wasn't basically true.

I. So, when you were a little girl— did you get sick and get taken to a doctor?

L. I had a leg ache when I was a little girl (laughter) Yeah, boy, and I think I complain about my legs now. We had Dr. Blair and he used to come see me— they came to the house— and he brought this little black bag— it was about like that— and it opened up and there pills on this side and pills on this side (demonstrating) all beautiful colors— pink, red, green, yellow, anything and he'd point and say, "Now, which color do you want?" Well, I'd choose pink or yellow and I'd take those pills and then next morning I'd be fine. Mother would say, "Oh, you can't go to school this morning, you don't feel like it." Oh, Mama, I'm perfectly well! And I'd be perfectly well and I'd go to school the next day. It was aspirin— in different colors— I didn't know that.

I. What happened if people got shot or cut or needed their appendix out?

L. You had to go to Lexington. Lexington is where we usually went. The funeral homes would take you— they usually had an ambulance and they took you. I can't remember much of that really. It took about two hours. Except if Allen was driving then you'd get there just about like you do now. (Evans) You remember I talked about Elene Sidney— last time— this was her brother. She was younger than I. June was exactly my age.

I. The one you made lemonade with?

L. Yes. And planted flowers— oh, we did all kinds of things. Well, we'd plant zinnias— I think we had zinnias— going down the street— Cary Avenue there— down toward the depot we planted them all along there one spring and had flowers. There was always a wide place, about a yard wide from the building to the street— and we just decided

that it would look pretty.

I. It sounds like you felt the town (Morehead) was yours when you were little— that the town was your playground.

L. Oh, we had a great big playhouse— a pretty good sized playhouse— and we'd go in there and cook and do things like that. But, seems like we'd always like to get outside—yeah, all of Morehead was a place to play. Yeah, we played anyplace. Well, we lived right in the middle of town. You knew everybody in town, and everybody knew you and would tell on you. You'd do something and they would call your mother... "Did you know that your children were doing such and such?" So, small town, there's some good and some bad.

I. Even now, to me, everybody knows what you do.

So, let's go to what next— you finished high school and then went right to where?

L. Actually, I finished high school in the middle of the year so I went up to the University (Morehead State) went to courses in algebra and chemistry and physics. I think that is all I took, those three courses. I don't know how I got out early, I just did every thing you were supposed to but I came out with enough hours at the end of the first semester.

I. So you knew you were going to medical school?

L. Well, yes, I sort of did. In the back of my mind I knew that's where I was headed for and then I went to Ohio State in Columbus. Cille was there the, my older sister was going there. She was studying music primarily. Music was really her field.

I. Was she going to teach....?

L. I don't think she ever planned to teach any more than I did. But, she did teach up here for a while.

I. Had you been out of Morehead when you were younger-- had you traveled?

L. Not a lot. Remember it was 1920 something before we had a road out of here. We went by train. Well, I think I told you the other day that Chatauqua's came through here — things like that. We had them as long as I can remember. They'd usually come for about a week. Oh, they came here for about as long as I can remember. Oh, and some had good mysteries and some good musicals, some comedies, some dramas. They were real good. See, as long as I can remember, we had a school here and I think the school brought in lots of people you wouldn't ordinarily have run into.

S. You did get on the train and go to Lexington now and then...

L. Oh, yeah, that was your shopping spree. The train would go down at 6 o'clock and at 10 o'clock and come back at 10 at night. So, usually, you took the 6 o'clock in the morning. Oh, we had a big time, we had breakfast on the train and everything and then you shopped. I always kidded mother that she went to Lexington and spent the day and came back with a tent shovel. That's what she called it. It wasn't the usual. She enjoyed it. Most of the time she bought lots of stuff.

I. Did you look forward to that— did you like to shop?

L. I didn't like to shop too well.

I. So, when you were in college, what was that like?

L. Well, that's when I found out how smart I was. I went to see Lucille in a play one night and this woman sitting next to me knew I was Cille's sister and she said "Do you act?" and I said, "No." She said, "Well, you must sing," I said, "No, I can't sing." So she said "Well, you can't do anything can you?" (Laughter)

Oh, college was fun. Of course, the first year we lived in the dorm and we had two girls in this room and two girls in that room and a bath in between and that's where I got into physical education. See, this girl in the other room was making a talk on 'how to serve a tennis ball' and she was a 'workin' and a 'workin' to serve a tennis ball and that's when I found out you could major in that in college! So, that's when I developed my major— serving a tennis ball.

I. What happened to your early idea about becoming a doctor?

L. After I threw, out, of school I threw all my books away— with school— I'd had it. That was on the 27th of June— (laughter) July the 4th I was going to New York to work on my Masters.

I. Well, what happened in that week?

L. Oh, everybody else was going to New York to go to school— Lucille was— she was going to Columbia— and then the Brown girls were going... and there were nine of us had an apartment in New York— on Riverside Drive and 116th. Did you ever hear of McCormick? Commissioner of Corrections? Well, he was Commissioner of Corrections of New York City and we got his apartment. Well, he wanted to rent it and his wife had gone up to Maine or something. Oh, that was a great experience. He sorta liked me and he was always making talks places and he'd take me along so he'd have somebody who'd know him so I heard him... heard him talk a lot of times. In fact, he'd bring some prisoners up to our apartment every now and then.

I. Prisoners?

L. He believed in probation and how to educate prisoners to do something... not just

lock them up. His library was still there— he had a great big library so he'd want to study a lot and he'd come to his library to get some things..

We rented his apartment— just looking around, he had this big place and there were nine of us.

Oh, and we went to this big show— Billy Rose. We'd been at the beach all day and, oh, I forget the dress I had on and he decided we'd go to the theatre that night and went in and got a table right inside— right in front of the stage and so we sat like we were somebody. Now, he wouldn't take all nine of us, usually about four of us.

I. A couple of girls from Morehead Kentucky and a couple prisoners sounds like an interesting evening...

L. La, we really did things different up there (I think?)

I. You said, 'I'll never forget the dress I wore'—why was that?

L. Well, it was fully, well I don't know why, but it was a slimy pink, green, yellow, white striped silk— yes, slimy. Well, I just thought I looked so terrible and here I was all over New York City. I liked the dress but I didn't like it in that situation.

I. So, you were in walking distance of Columbia?

L. Well, there was— Riverside Drive— at 116th was that park, that park back where so many people got killed— Morningside Park. That was right out our front door.

I. So, here's a little girl from Morehead in New York City— how did you do?

L. Well, did alright every place but in school. I did come out with a Masters... in physical education. I did alright. Evidently I was (or, was not??) very good on picking professors. I signed up for a very interesting course on Russian history and the lecturer was excellent. A lot of people knew him pretty well. Usually you wrote a term paper. One day someone said, "Well, let's not write a term paper" and so, ok, let's not write a term paper. A few days later somebody said, "Let's not have a final examination." He say, "OK, no final examination." So you could just go and listen without the effort of having to stress and strain yourself and to me that was a very fascinating course. Then, you know, I had to do some research in physical education. Found out what hadn't been done— you'd go through 50— eleven books and find out it was not there. A lot of that was a waste of time.

I. While you were in New York, did you miss Morehead— Kentucky? Did you get homesick or know you wanted to go back to Kentucky?

L. No, I was just taking in all I could take in. I don't know how long the summer sessions last but I went for three summers. I took all my sessions in summer school. I

taught up here while I was getting my Masters. See, I had one year on my Masters and went back and finished it after I started teaching.

I. How did you start teaching?

L. Well, they decided that needed on a P.E. teacher, I had a degree and I was asked about the.....

I. They hadn't had one before?

L. Yes, they had one... but they kind of needed help and they knew that I had my degree in that and they asked me if I'd like the job. The president then? I believe it was (Long?) It was a very small faculty then. When I started I think Ed Miller and Ellis Johnson... I believe they were there. And I think... and..... were there. They had good basketball.

I. For girls too?

L. No, men. It was just that time they were making all kinds of crazy things. Women's basketball was three courts. You couldn't run from one place to other all over the court, you had three courts-- you had certain people in the middle section and certain people on this end and then on that end. I don't know how they ever came up with such a thing. I don't really know why but I guess they didn't want girls to run that much. Run and stop-- like that was hard on their health. They decided-- Naismith-- they had rules and they decided.

They decided about girl's sports, didn't want girls to do too much. I think the primary philosophy was that stopping quickly was hard on women.

I. What did they think bearing a child was if that isn't hard on women!

L. No, it doesn't make sense at all.

I. Did you live with your parents then? And what did your mother think then, she didn't want you to even play basketball and there you are teaching P.E.

L. Well, she went along with it. Well, I'll tell you, the minute I came back from New York I knew I was going to med school. Yes, in fact, I was hired that first semester and I was also taking a course in physics at that time. I needed a course in physics-- a pre-requisite to go to med school. As a matter of fact, when I got ready to go to med school, that professor had cut my grades and gave me an audit for the course. I took the course not enrolled, so to get credit I paid the fee for the semester.

I. What got you truly serious about medical school?

L. Well, I came back home and thought, here you are and everybody else was doing

something and I wanted to do something too.

I. But you were teaching at the college.

L. Well, I was already taking physics. It (teaching) was perfectly satisfactory but I just didn't feel like I was doing what I was supposed to do. But, I loved teaching— ah, yes— just wasn't what I was supposed to do. I thought a very bad thing when I was teaching. I swore that people should not use teaching as a steppingstone to doing something else. Teaching should be done for teaching itself. I've preached that sermon many times... and here I was. For me it wasn't a stepping stone, it was just a deviation— a detour. And I was kind of scared.

I. Scared of what?

L. Just afraid— to really do it. I dreamed, oh, I dreamed about it... Like a big amphitheatre, you know, where (like the movies).

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Oh, I don't know, don't know— just a scared person. I'm just afraid, you know, and I couldn't do anything if Susie didn't lead the way...

S. But in med school I didn't even know you!

I. Well, that's what I wanted to ask— how Susie got to where she was and what brought your paths together?

L. Well, scared, maybe the challenge.

I. But your parents were behind you and you didn't have to worry about money.

L. Well, how ignorant I was there. I never thought about money. I never thought, well, where am I going to get the money or how am I going to get the money. That's how ignorant I was. I just wrote checks and that's what I'd always done.

I. So, you went to med school— when and where?

L. I went to med school in the Fall of 1943— in Louisville. It was the only one in the state and that was the logical one. At that time the Doctors in Morehead were from Ann Arbor, Cincinnati, and Boston. I talked to Dr. Blair a lot (Don's father). He told me not to go to med school, not come back to Morehead, and to do a special thing— don't do general medicine. So, I did everything he told me not to.

S. Everett Blair is her first cousin!

L. And he was trying to advise me right and I wouldn't be surprised if he wasn't.

I. Well, why do you think he told you that?

L. He didn't really think that women were the best for medicine— why did he think that? Because he was a man.

S. And he worked real hard. He worked hard. He did what we did.

L. Up in the hills and he'd wade in the mud and it was a hard life.

I. So it wasn't that he thought women weren't smart enough but that they weren't strong enough?

S. Especially his cousin. You know, you were Dan and Ett's daughter.

L. Delicate, my mother (Etta) was little, little and pretty. Daddy thought she was the prettiest woman there ever was. He said so— oh, he did it all the time. Reason he married her— he'd say that "She was the prettiest woman that I ever saw."

I. Could we back up now and get you and Susie caught up? I left Susie at fixing her dolls because she's a nurse.

S. Yep, I was always the nurse. Always.

I. Were you taken to doctors and saw nurses... or...

S. No, I had whooping cough when I was a child. At that time the public health nurse came to the house and they put a sign on the house and nobody could come in because at that time whooping cough was a fairly dangerous disease. My sister died of it— oh, she died of pneumonia, which follows that. She was two years old.

I. That must have scared you...

S. You know, no, I felt partially responsible. I was in school and I brought it home to all of them. But I thought she (the public health nurse) was an awfully nice woman. She had a daughter, she was my same age, and I just thought she was the nicest person. That may have been... she came, she had on a blue and white nurse outfit and she had some kind of a cap on. But— I went to elementary school in a big city— it was a Catholic School. I graduated from elementary and I went to the Ursuline Academy— an all girls school, and I took part in everything you were supposed to. I went to football games and there was a boys school not too far from there and we would go down there for sports and we played volleyball. I wasn't big on sports— but I liked to jump rope.

L. She's really good at that— I'll tell you. We've got one right here in this closet.

I. Is this a joke?

S. No, I really like to jump rope. I never had to worry about money either. I mean, we didn't have the money that Louise's family had— but we were well provided for. My father was in the oil business. My mother never worked outside the home in her life. She was frequently ill. I can remember when my mother died, she didn't even have a social security number.

L. My mother didn't have a social security number.

S. She probably had one— you see her father was a lawyer and so he...

L. Well, let's go back, when did social security start? About '50?

S. Oh, no, it started long before that... it was in the 30's, I'm pretty sure... Roosevelt came in around '34... anyway it was while Roosevelt was in, it may have been '36 or something like that. I can remember him. I was little child but I can remember him.

L. That was while I was in college.

I. In the Catholic School— there are so many orders dedicated to nursing, was that where you were influenced?

S. No, there was no influence there. Where I went into nursing, it was a different congregation. It was Nazareth and now it's Spaulding— that's Spaulding in Louisville. They have nursing and that's where I was accepted so that's where I went. Then, when I graduated from nursing, I went to Clay County— that's in the mountains, East, Manchester.

I. Why did you go there? Had you ever been in Eastern Kentucky?

S. No. My roommate and I— we went through high school together— and nursing together too, and we'd taken our State Boards and we hadn't gotten results on it and you couldn't work any place but you could work for the State Department of Health or in your home hospital. So, we chose to go with the State Department of Health and the hospital in Clay County was run by the State Department of Health. We went there on our own, we could either have not worked or we could have— well, there were several things you could do— visiting nurses— but we decided we'd like to go.

I. Was that nurses training very rigorous?

S. Oh, yes. You went straight all year round for three years.

I. Did you ever waver?

S. Oh, sure, I quit about a thousand times! I thought, well, I can't do this when I was

into chemistry— what? I said, there is no way I can learn this! I mean, science was not my field and I wondered how I got into it because I really liked history and things like that a lot better. But, there's a lot of nursing history too. It didn't take long to find there was a lot of hard work to it— it was all hard. I had to study hard.

I. And physical labor?

S. That wasn't it, it was mental labor.

I. Were you always such a little tiny person-- I just don't see you quite turning people over...

S. Me? No, I was overweight! I weighed 170 pounds at one time... well, I weighed that much one summer before I went into nursing school. I can remember the summer after I graduated from high school— I gained a lot of weight— I sure got fat. And I can remember my uncle who was six feet tall and he got on the scales and he weighed 170 and I got on the scales and I weighed 170 and that was the end of that, and I lost 20 pounds. Why I was 150 when I came here (Morehead) but then I lost it right away— on purpose.

L. I worked her then...

I. So, you left nursing school very optimistic about being a nurse?

S. Oh, yes, and I was a good student, I wasn't a straight "A" student but I studied. I could have studied harder but I had a hard time with the sciences, I really did— and the math and there's a lot of that.

I. Did you have any specialty in mind?

S. People back then didn't specialize like they do now and— the funny thing is that Louise— well, I met Louise up in Clay County— and well, I thought there wasn't anything I couldn't do. I was awfully smart at 21. I don't know how I got so smart so quick.

I. So, you and your friend went off to Eastern Kentucky and you had never been there.. ... was that a surprise?

S. Oh, was it ever. First of all— we went by bus and then we had to wait in Manchester for a long time until there was this one but that would take you to Oneida— a small area where we were. Well, we finally got there— it took us all day to get from Louisville— I can remember, we stopped at Richmond, Kentucky. That was a trip. And then we got on a different line that went to Manchester and after we got to Manchester, we had to wait for this one bus that went to Oneida— it's about five miles but we thought we'd never get there— five slow miles. Of course, neither one of us drove— back then people didn't drive— I didn't get my driver's license until I was 25. But, when we got there, we did have electricity, we didn't have fresh milk, it was powdered milk, and everything we

ate like meat, was frozen, we'd have to thaw it out the day before. We ate in the cafeteria of the hospital. The hospital was a maternity hospital only and it had a doctor there who was working— it was a lady doctor from Pennsylvania and she was going to take her Boards, was studying to take her boards, in OB-GYN and that's how Louise happened to come.

I. So, you get off the bus and were you standing there wondering— where am I?

S. Oh, the bus driver took us right to the hospital, they knew we were coming— they knew these two little new nurses were coming in. They needed help and it was a very small hospital— 25 beds, or 20— but it was a small hospital and everyone knew what everyone else was doing. There was a nurses house and then there was a doctor's house right next door and we were the only two nurses there. Then another one from our class came.

L. I can't remember her name (Hacken)— in anesthesiology.

S. We were there before they were— there was one doctor and eventually there were four nurses, but when we to there there was just us. So, we had a place to live, a nice house, and we went over to the hospital for our meals and they had a well qualified dietitian and this is where it all amazed me. See, a truck would go to town and bring back frozen foods, meat, everything was frozen and it just was a way of life I'd never seen before. The people were really nice. There is some coal mining there but lumber and farming were their main means to make a living.

L. I think mud was the main product!

S. Mud! Everywhere, there was. It was such a small town.

I. I suppose everyone was curious about you two. What was your friend's name?

S. Marie. Marie Nash. We only took care of maternity.

I. Where did everyone else go?

S. Oh, they went to Manchester— five miles down that road. Little kids or who got really bad hurt, they went to London.

I. What would your days be like?

S. Well, we worked shifts and with four of us it was pretty good, we alternated shifts of 8 hours. Of course, we were in charge and we had some aids who helped us and, you know, us just being out of school we didn't know a great deal of OB. That's one reason we went up there and you learned— quick— by observation.

I. And were you scared?

S. Yes, I was scared. Yeah, I just sat there all the time and, you know, I'd read as labor went along and well, I sat there with them and I felt like I was comforting and we didn't have that many in labor at one time. It wasn't like a big hospital. And then you'd have the babies to take care of. But, you learned to depend on yourself— a lot. Because, in that sort of thing, nature does most of it.

I. How many babies do you think you've seen born?

S. Oh, a lot... thousands. Louise has delivered 8,000 and I've been there for 7,900.
(laughter)

I. What year did you get to Clay County?

S. The end of 1947.¹

I. And that's where you two met? What was the name of the hospital?

S. Oneida Maternity Hospital.

I. So, how did you get to this little hospital?

L. I don't know how I heard about it— I think somebody told me about it. I didn't know— oh, I was scared to death too. I drove up there and I saw that little hospital and the lady— the doctor there— she seemed so nice and she helped me get on my feet so I wouldn't be afraid in OB and she was pretty good in gynecology so she was going to teach me how to use equipment and so forth.

L. Yes, I graduated in '46 and I'd done my internship (It was my first job) yes, I was petrified too but I had this security that she was going to help me, she was gonna make me feel free to do this... her name was Clark, she was from Pennsylvania.

I. How old was she at that time?

S. Oh, I thought she was pretty old— probably 40. She was there for the same reason we did— she wanted to get more experience.

L. I think I came there through the Public Health Department— to get some more training....

S. Because you realized that was going to be one of the things you were going to have to do.

L. You could tell, I'd been with Everett, my cousin you know, and it seemed like, gosh, every night at 3 o'clock you had to go out and have a baby. So, you felt like— you got to be sure you know what's going on.

I. Did you already know that eventually you would stay in Morehead?

L. Yes. And that's the kind of thing I thought I'd be doing here.

Well, I went there and talked with her. I didn't know whether I liked her or not, just scared to death but I felt it was a good source. So, I went to work almost immediately, because, I mean, because she wanted to study for her Boards. But, actually what she wanted was to get off... so actually I was to cover while she went. It turned out— well, that gave you a lot of responsibility quick.

I. So, did you drive then and how long was it down there from Morehead?

L. Oh, it must have been 7 or 8 hours. I remember coming back here for Christmas and the kids had already had their Christmas.

I. How long had you been there when she came?

S. Oh, about 3 months. We were settled in pretty good.

I. Do you remember the first time you saw each other?

S. Kind of, I remember. I knew there was a new doctor coming— and then when she came we said, gosh, she's pretty nice. My first impression? Well, Dr. Clark was a bigger woman, taller than I am, and Louise was so little.

L. I was 5'2".

S. She was never that tall. She came over to the nurses— in fact, she spent more time there than in the house next door.

L. Well, I just rattled around over there by myself. And, oh, I went to work immediately.

S. Well, I'll tell you what would happen. You know, you didn't call for the doctor until it was time for the baby or getting close to time. We also had clinics in the surrounding areas for prenatal care and, I guess, birth control...

L. And we went to Red Bird and we went to Manchester and other (places). And they had midwives out there too.

S. Yes, but not trained midwives. Most of them we saw at the clinic....But that was Mary Breckinridge and her nurses on horseback... (look this up). But they were not too far from there and they ran a clinic at Redbird.

L. They ran that? Well, what were we doing there?

S. Now, she said that you said you couldn't have done this without Susie— she had the sense and I say you don't really mean that...(?)

I. Did you find you could work together with ease right away? Or, how did it develop that you could work together so well?

S. I don't know that actually did— well, we all worked well together up there. I thought we did. We all did real well. I couldn't see that we worked better together than anyone else. I was the only one that would come to Morehead.

L. I had to have somebody that was willing to stay in a place like that.

S. Actually, Louise was trying to get anybody that would come to Morehead. And I decided I'd stay a year here, I didn't care what happened.

I. how long were you both in Clay County?

S. I was there for six months and Louise was there for three months.

I. Did you learn a lot?

L. Yes, I learned to be scared to death. Oh, I got better.

I. Do you think scared is the right word? Dealing with other people's lives you've got to be anxious in a way... no matter what you do, don't you have to wonder if you are good enough?

L. No, I think actually, I was pretty well satisfied with what we did up there. Like this one lady we were telling you about...

S. The lady with the retained placenta— the afterbirth. The nurses were sending her down from Redbird. So Louise got out her book and read everything and, oh, we had that delivery room set up when she got there. I gave the anesthesia and Louise was going to deliver this placenta, she knew exactly what to do. Before I even gave a drop of anesthesia, she put her hand on her abdomen and out came the placenta— just like that— magic.

L. magic and here we were all scared to death. Maybe the rough road jugged it loose.

I. You say you were scared but then you said that nature pretty well does it.

S. Just leave it...

I. Is it always a thrill— a miracle?

L. In the end it is, I mean, it is a great satisfaction. And when you look at 'em, they're

not doin' a thing. Then they jerk up (look up) and start that cryin'. Oh, why, I swear, there's nothin' like it.

I. And you don't get bored with it...

L. (Smiles and nods)

I. When was the last one?

S. It was 10 years ago-- I think December 6th-- it was 11 years this December.

L. Lord, those little old breeches.

I. Pants.

L. Oh, they're fun.

S. No, breeches.

L.. You know, they come bottom first. And you have to reach in and turn...

S. You know, people aren't taught how to do it anymore. You know, you used to... we were taught how to do it for breech, but as time went on people stopped doing that-- when they had C-sections.

I. Is that because it's easier on the doctor?

S. It's easier on all concerned. It just usually takes assistance.

L. And you have to wait. You have to wait, that's it. And you think, oh, laws, that's it but you can't get a hold of it.

S. You have to wait until it comes down far enough.

L. Then you just fit in there and slide it out. You watch it and then you get a hold of it and you slide it back in and slide it around. It's there doing nothing and then you slide it around and the butt just... raises up and you can see it then... get a hold of it and you just (making a motion) turn it around. Sometimes a foot is down or two feet are down-- sometimes it's a flat butt, but if it's just a flat butt you usually have to go up in there and turn a leg down and pull it down and hold it and go up and get the other one and pull it down and then you pull the two of 'em out together and then you twist it around to the shoulders and then get your hand in there and you pull down and you pull down that arm and then that arm and then twist and-- then-- there it is. Oh, that's really fun.

I. What do you feel, when you're the ones really watching what really happens... when you see it go on is it sort of a thrill or-- or relief or what do you feel?

L. For the patient?

I. No, for you.

L. Oh, la, it's a great thrill. Oh, yes. It's just like you hit a good clear high note.

S. It's not always the same, but it's most always pleasant-- most always.

I. What about those tong things you loaned for the play-- was that illegal?

L. No, no. We borrowed those. They're not illegal, they're use a lot. But, if you had an epidural, all babies are delivered by forceps.

S. Oh, you can't tell it if you don't know it.

L. It's very simple.

I. Did you do many deliveries in people's homes?

S. We did from '48 until 1957.

I. Oh, almost 10 years... you were talking about slogging through the mud.

S. Seems it was mud. Our roads weren't as good as they are now. Then we had a man from Elliott County-- road commission?-- and he built a lot of good roads around here.

I. I don't really want to wear you out today, but could we just get you to Morehead today-- how did that come about?

L. Oh, I'd already decided that's where I was going to start-- in January. I was going to be a GP (General Practitioner). Well, my daddy had a building that I could use-- and it was upstairs over the pool room. That building is still there. Upstairs is not anything-- downstairs is a fraternity house and next to it is a barber shop and on the opposite side is a restaurant (Babes?) The new cabinet shop-- Johnny's barbershop-- it's straight across from Western Auto.

I. So, you knew you were coming back to Morehead-- did you have to buy a lot of equipment to get started?

S. We picked it out up there (Clay County)-- we got an X-Ray machine and...

L.and ammonium chloride tablets...

S. And, oh yes, ammonium chloride-- which is a diuretic. Why we got enough to last

100 years. We didn't know any better. Used to be used as a diuretic. It's not used any more I don't believe. This was a pill you used to give it to people with heart failure— now you give them things like Lasix... no, we didn't have catalogs but the drug people came and talked to you. In those three months we did it all.

S. I guess by Christmas time I knew I was coming. Well, I'd been through Morehead on my way to Charleston once. That was it. And I knew that there was a school here and I was going to take classes.

L. To up your degree?

S. Oh, no, I was going to take art appreciation, things like that.

L. She was very good in art. Did a lot of drawing and things of that sort.

S. Well, I wasn't sure I would fit in this situation, but it was a LOT better than Oneida, let me tell you. They had a school there in Oneida and I went to high school basketball games— that was about it. Dances and things. That was our entertainment.

L. Well, they had square dances over in the dining room didn't they?

L. Morehead never has been uneducated.

S. Better than Clay County, let me tell you. Actually, I came to Morehead before Louise did. Louise was in New York when I got here. And this friend of hers from China was here. They'd gone to school together and she was going back to China...

L. She was gettin ready to go back— she had to leave...

S. No, I knew my way after that. Cause I knew her— she came back here and visited— stayed here a week or two.

L. Well, I can remember getting on that boat.

S. Anyway, you were up there with (?) doing post graduate work. Then, so, Louise's mother and I started to get the office ready. We painted. Oh, yes, when I first came there was snow— there was snow everywhere and I got off the train and Jane and Boone met me. Louise's brother and his wife and I went up to their house. And Jane had been on a sleigh ride the night before and their house was kind of a mess and there was ketchup on the fireplace and I thought, oh, my lord, what have I gotten into? But, she had a good meal and her house— well, she hadn't cleaned up around the fireplace yet. I guess it was about a week before Louise got back from New York, but anyway— the first day when Granny and I went down there to clean— oh, we cleaned and cleaned and scrubbed and painted.

L. My mother was a good scrubber...

S. She was. And Louise and I stayed at Louise's mother's house at first and we went to that office early, I remember, and I thought we never would have a next meal (lunch) and finally about three or four o'clock in the afternoon Louise's sister Patty, who was home from somewhere, brought us some tomato soup.

L. Susie couldn't get over not having three meals a day.

S. Yeah, where I came from you ate three meals a day and everybody sat down at a table...

L. Nothing was like that at our house.

I. This is that big white house on Wilson Street? That must be a big house.

L. There was the front room, and the main room and my room the blue room and the front room (and a downstairs nursery).

S. And then, when we started that practice, it didn't take long until we were real busy. The first week or two we didn't do much but every day it would get more.

I. Only a week or two? I've heard some doctors say it can be 6 months or a year.

S. But, we got there every day, every day and we were there until closing time, even when we weren't doing anything. We worked every day, six days with two afternoons off. And then for a while we had night office hours— but that didn't work out. People didn't come, so, we quit that.

I. Did you have someone to work in your office?

S. In the very beginning we didn't. Jane did it for a while and then Merle, her sister-in-law.

I. Do you remember your first patient?

S. Oh, it was Mildred— Bradley. First one in the door. She and her husband ran a florist's shop. Neither one of us knew her but Louise knew her husband but she was from California and she thought she was pregnant— and she was. So, she was our first patient.