

MATHESON MUSEUM, INC.
ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Interviewee: Lee Graham, Jr.
Interviewer: Robert E. Clayton
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May 11, 2004

C: My name is Bob Clayton, and I have the distinct honor and privilege of interviewing an expert, I might say, on Gainesville, Florida, Alachua County. It is my pleasure to be with Mr. Lee Graham, Jr., at his lovely place on Kingsley Lake. It is May 11, 2004.

Good morning, Lee.

G: How are you?

C: I am absolutely great. Were you born here in Gainesville?

G: I was born in Gainesville in the front bedroom at 772 E. Main Street, which is now 772 1st Avenue, N.E. It is the Art Center now. That was our home.

C: You were born at home, like many of us. That was what year?

G: 1920, the 2nd of August.

C: Were your parents originally from Gainesville?

G: Neither one. My father was born somewhere near Piedmont, West Virginia, and came down to Florida with his father.

C: You being a junior, what was your father's name?

G: Lee Graham.

C: Well, how about that!

G: I think he was about ten years old when they moved to Tacoma down toward Micanopy on the Wacahoota Road to raise oranges. That was about 1884. In 1886 the big freeze came and all the trees got killed, so then they moved to Gainesville.

C: That was in the late 1800's.

G: About 1886 or 1887. My grandparents, James Madison and Lydia Graham, lived out in the country before the University of Florida was there, between what used to be Washington Street and Roux Street, just north of University Avenue. The house was there until the last 25 years or so. That was in the country.

C: That's not where you were born though.

G: No. My parents, Lee and Marion Harris Graham, lived all their married life at 772 E. Main Street, North, where I was born.

C: Then they moved to where you were born.

G: My grandparents were divorced, and my grandmother moved back to Virginia.

C: Your mother was from where?

G: She was born in Haverhill, Massachusetts. Her father was from Macon, Georgia – Henry Harris, one of thirteen Harris's. He went up to Haverhill with his brother, who was in the shoe business. Haverhill was manufacturing shoes in those days. He met my grandmother, and they were married, and he lived there the rest of his life. Mother was born up there. She was the only daughter and was going with a boy from Lawrence, which is twelve miles away, and grandmother didn't want her to get interested in this boy and move to Lawrence, so she sent her to visit her uncle, Charles Harris, in Gainesville, Florida. There she met my father and they were married.

C: Charles Harris, was he connected with baseball?

G: Right. He was my great uncle and lived a block from us.

C: Was Harris Field named after him?

G: After Uncle Charles.

C: Is Fred Harris any kin to him?

G: No.

C: When your dad came to Gainesville after the freeze, what kind of business was he in?

G: He went to the East Florida Seminary, which is now the educational building of the First Methodist Church. The drill field is now the park. Dad was a day student and one hot spring day all of them decided that after they stacked arms during drill, they would all go down to Sweetwater Branch and go swimming. That was the plan. My dad headed down to Sweetwater Branch and looked back and there wasn't anybody following him. They said, "We've changed our minds." He said, "Well, I haven't." So he went swimming in Sweetwater Branch and got fired from the East Florida Seminary and went to a business college in Kentucky.

C: It didn't daunt him. He went ahead and got his education.

G: He had made up his mind what he was going to do and he did it.

C: Now, when you lived in Gainesville at an early age, who were some of your neighbors? Do you remember some of them?

G: Yes, there were two boys that lived on the same block: Bobby Hamilton, who went in the Marines and lives in California, and Charles Black. We were pretty close for quite a while.

C: Charles Black – was he the engineer?

G: Yes, water engineer.

C: I remember him. I think he eventually moved to Crystal River.

G: That's right.

C: Did you go to school here in Gainesville?

G: I went to the Eastside School. They didn't make much of my going to school. My older brother put me on the handlebars of his bicycle and took me to school.

C: Your older brother was?

G: Dr. Henry H. Graham. He was five years older. My teacher was Miss Ruth Peeler. She taught a lot of people in Gainesville.

C: Now, Eastside School – how far up did that go?

G: It went through the 6th grade. Then we went to what later was G.H.S. for the 7th and 8th grades and then I went to P.K. Yonge.

C: Was P.K. from the 9th on?

G: Right. P.K. was brand new, and we were the first class to go all the way through. They were experimenting with the curriculum. It was a demonstration school for the University of Florida College of Education.

C: Was Hart Stringfellow in that class?

G: No, Hart was younger than I, but I knew Hart. He and I were acolytes at church.

C: The Episcopal, no doubt?

G: Right. Holy Trinity Church.

C: He lives right by me. I thought he was one of the first classes at P.K., also.

- G: He may have been but not in high school.
- C: You say that the house you lived in is not there any more. Has the house been torn down and the Art Center put up?
- G: The house my grandfather lived in is no longer there. The house I grew up in is the Art Center. That's the original house. It's been there about a hundred years.
- C: Well, it might be on the registry by now. Miss Peeler taught you in what grade?
- G: The 1st grade.
- C: Who were some of your other teachers?
- G: Miss Taylor was my 2nd grade teacher, and Miss Adkins was our teacher for the 3rd grade. Miss Hemphill was kind of an old maid for 3rd grade. Miss McPherson was the meanest teacher in the school.
- C: Isn't that funny how you can remember all your teachers.
- G: Rodney Layton Bishop was the 6th grade.
- C: Yes, Rodney Bishop.
- G: She lived just half a block away.
- C: Some of the girls in your class – do you remember their names?
- G: Claire Tillman, Olive Dell, and Eloise Smith, who married my cousin, James Graham Haile.
- C: And the guys in your class. Who were some of them?
- G: Charles Black, Bobby Hamilton, Frankie Helikey. I don't know what happened to Frankie, but those four of us – they dressed us up in the first grade, I think, in tuxedos and made us sing. We were known as the Tadpole Quartet. I still have pictures of it.
- C: You do have pictures of it?
- G: Yes. My dad came back from business school and I think went into a number of businesses. He didn't want to go in the bank. My grandfather, James Madison Graham, was founder of the First National Bank, but grandfather had a stroke.
- C: Your grandfather was your dad's dad?

- G: James Madison Graham. My dad had to go in the bank, and Uncle Pat was in the bank, too. William Sandy Graham. He was known as Uncle Pat in the family. Dad's only advice was, "Don't go into the banking business." He felt the responsibility of everybody's money.
- C: As an aside to you, I recently interviewed Ernest Haufler, who is 92 years old, and has done very well, particularly in his real estate, and he said, "I would not have done anything if it hadn't been for Mr. Lee Graham." He said one time, "If the bank won't lend you money on it, I will." Of course, the bank loaned him the money. Anyway, he spoke very, very highly of your dad as a banker and as a friend.
- G: During the Second World War, I was in India and I was a Lieutenant in the Infantry and met a major in the Engineering Corp. We got to talking, and he said he was stationed at Camp Blanding. Well, when you're in India and you're talking with a man who has been to Camp Blanding, you feel like you're first cousins.
- C: You're talking to a home person.
- G: Right. I said, "I'm from Gainesville. Did you ever go to Gainesville?" He said, "Yes, I lived in Gainesville." But he didn't sound very enthusiastic. I said, "Well, there's not a lot there except the university and a lot of fine people." He took issue with that. He said, "I didn't really feel that they were all that fine because they wouldn't cash our checks at the grocery store." He said in the bank there was a little bald-headed man that sits there on the right of the door. "That's the hardest man to do business with I ever met." I said, "You're certainly right. He certainly is a hard man to do business with. That's my dad." It is a small world. Two years later we came back on the same ship and he was still apologizing. Every time he would bring it up I would laugh and say, "You're right. You were right. He was a hard man to do business with."
- C: Well, he certainly has a good reputation. It outlived him, I'll tell you that.
- G: Because he felt the pressure of the banking business, he went fishing every weekend. On Friday afternoon he would load up his boat. When I was young, I went with him. We would camp out at lakes and rivers.
- C: Where did you go fishing?
- G: Waccasassa River and Wekiva River down by Gulf Town, now Gulf Hammock. Suwannee River. Lakes – I don't even remember where they were now.
- C: Was Kingsley one of them?
- G: No, we didn't fish out here.

C: A lot of people growing up around here fished the Santa Fe and there's still some fish there.

G: We fished at Orange and Lochloosa, I remember.

C: When you were in school, did they have sports then?

G: Oh yes.

C: Did you engage in any of them?

G: The park was just three blocks away.

C: Was that the one behind the Methodist Church?

G: Right. That was our baseball field and our football field, and all the kids in the neighborhood used to play hockey. I think it was Bay Street that was the second street over from Main Street, in front of Wade and Mae Hampton's house. We would just block up the whole street. There was a lot of bamboo growing in the park, and we would dig up bamboo elbows for hockey sticks. We just had lots of fun. We lived on skates. Lots of games of tag in the park and that sort of thing. That was where we did our athletics.

C: As far as the school goes, P.K. Yonge did have sport teams then?

G: We just had phys ed. We played games, but no competition. No school teams.

C: They had football and basketball when I was at G.H.S., but no baseball team.

G: That's because it would have been in the summer.

C: P.K. didn't have a football team?

G: No.

C: Did G.H.S.?

G: Yes.

C: Do you remember any of the athletes there at G.H.S. at the time?

G: No, because I wasn't in G.H.S.

- C: I didn't know whether you might remember some of your friends or not. Now, tell me something about your family and your wife and where she is from. I want to know about that.
- G: My wife was Betty Thomas, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. W.C. Thomas. I guess we really met in the 9th grade at P.K. Yonge when we were seated at the same desk.
- C: That's personal.
- G: Then we went steady for about three years in high school. We were voted the most dependable couple in high school.
- C: Consider that a compliment, I guess.
- G: Not the most attractive but the most dependable.
- C: Was she from Gainesville?
- G: Yes. Her father was Dr. W.C. Thomas.
- C: And she's Billy's sister?
- G: Billy's sister. They had one other sister, Virginia, who married Grover Alison.
- C: Who is the brother of John R. Alison?
- G: Right. Well, we were going together steady and then came the war. I was stationed at Fort Walters, Texas. Camp Walters it was then. I got orders to go overseas and didn't want to get married before I went overseas, but I did want to get married afterwards so I proposed to Betty on the telephone.
- C: While you were out there?
- G: Yes. I left within a week for overseas duty and were stationed in China for two and a half years.
- C: Well, you skipped the important part. What did she say?
- G: She said, "Yes."
- C: And you went to China.
- G: Yes, and I got back on about a Wednesday and we were married the next Wednesday. We didn't have time to send out invitations. We just put a notice in the paper that we were going to get married at 5:00 o'clock at the Episcopal Church and all our friends were welcome. It was a real hurried-up wedding.

C: Well, it got the job done.

G: Yes. That was 59 years ago.

C: 59. A long time, but it doesn't seem that way, does it?

G: Well, we've come a long way.

C: We're 54 and I don't know where it's gone. The war experiences – did you get involved in that? Did somebody not like you enough to shoot at you?

G: I was with a special group working for General "Vinegar Joe" Stilwell training Chinese troops to use American weapons and then to go with them into combat and assist, provide air support and that sort of thing. I got bombed some. Nobody shot at me with a rifle.

C: I don't think I would want to be shot at either.

G: I did duck.

C: Your experiences in Gainesville growing up. I guess you think, like most people do and like I do, that it was the best place in the world to grow up.

G: I think it was for me.

C: Back then there wasn't that much competition like there is today.

G: Well, it was safe. You could go anywhere in town, even in the black neighborhood. We had a wonderful Negro cook, Lavinia Bell, who practically raised me. She was there before I was born and was still there when I went off to war.

C: A member of the family.

G: She was a member of the family. You know, on a bicycle or skates you could go anywhere in town. One of my earlier remembrances was at the old Baird Theater upstairs. I wasn't in school yet and could not read the captions. That was before sound movies. I went with my cousin, Bill Graham, and he really resented it. He had to tell me what the words were saying.

C: He was interviewed in '98. I had just read his interview. Mary Ann did it, and it was most interesting. You're prominent in there, I might add. He did not indicate about the theater.

G: You know life was different in Gainesville. There was no air-conditioning, and everybody slept on a sleeping porch if you had one. I slept on a sleeping porch until I went away to the army at age 21. In the summertime people sat on the front screened porch, and everybody would walk by and you visited with them, so you knew everybody in the neighborhood and kept up with them.

C: That was a bit of Americana.

G: It was. That's how we got to know each other. One of my early remembrances was on Sunday afternoons when I was young; our family always packed a lunch and went off to some spring to go swimming. Uncle Pat's family usually went along and two or three other families, so we had a sort of a family gathering every Sunday afternoon.

C: Where did you go? Ichetucknee?

G: That was too far away. We went to Worthington Springs and Columbia Springs. Uncle Pat taught me how to swim at Poe Springs. We went to Fanning Springs, Magnesia Springs, and Glen Springs. That's where you could find a shark's tooth in the creek.

C: At Glen Springs?

G: That's where you'd find shark's teeth.

C: Well, this is great. Let's reminisce about old Gainesville. That's what this is all about. I just love – and the people that are going to read this a hundred years from now are going to love to hear about this. I hope they are reading it a hundred years from now.

G: The boys knew where all the fruit trees in the neighborhood were. I forget where the mulberry tree was. The elderberry bushes we would hollow out and got a hickory wagon spoke and made a plunger and we could shoot chinaberries. Oh, that was great.

My next to the next-door neighbor was from Massachusetts, and they weren't there in the spring, and we used to raid their Japanese plum trees. I was picking an orange behind the Thomas Hotel when Major Thomas walked up and caught me, and that was the end of my picking oranges.

C: I notice that you call them like I do – Japanese plums. I think they call them now – loquats? I wonder where they got that name, but they're still Japanese plums.

G: Miss Dorothy Smith was my math teacher in junior high. She was a great teacher. The Smith's had a kumquat tree, so we knew where to go to get kumquats. Quite a long time after I was ordained and was invited to come back to Holy Trinity

- Church to preach, as I got up in the pulpit I looked down and saw Miss Dorothy Smith sitting there and I knew that she knew that I had been stealing her kumquats. It was a very sobering moment.
- C: I can imagine.
- G: But there was a lot of grace, you know. It was all right for kids to be kids.
- C: You were advised not to go into banking. What did you do?
- G: My older brother always knew he wanted to be a doctor, and he was.
- C: What was his name?
- G: Henry Harris Graham. He was named after my grandfather. So I thought I would become a doctor and took premed at the University of Florida. But Pearl Harbor came in December of my senior year, and I wasn't that sure that I wanted to go into medicine so I just went into the Army. I had an ROTC commission. While I was in the Army, I had a feeling of being called to the ministry so I decided I would try that. I was separated from the service on a Thursday at Camp Polk, Louisiana, and started seminary the next Monday in Alexandria, Virginia. We were married by then.
- C: So you went to the seminary in Alexandria. What year was that?
- G: 1945.
- C: When did you get ordained?
- G: 1948 in Gainesville at Holy Trinity Church.
- C: You were assigned to Holy Trinity?
- G: No. I was assigned to the church in Panama City for the summer until their resident came, and then I was at Port St. Joe for three years. Then I went to St. Luke's Church in Birmingham, Alabama for thirteen years and then to St. John's Church in Tallahassee for twenty years.
- C: So you have a lot of memories about the Episcopal Church.
- G: I really do.
- C: Did you retire?
- G: I had been at St. John's twenty years and felt like they had had enough of me. I thought it was about time to retire and I wanted to live in Tallahassee, so I got a

job at a downtown church in Memphis, Tennessee – Calvary Episcopal Church, a great parish – just to get out of Tallahassee for five years. We came back in '91 and have been living in Tallahassee ever since.

C: Seminole territory.

G: I'm married to a Seminole!

C: She went to FSCW, didn't she?

G: She did. Those were the days. If you wanted to date, you had to go to Tallahassee. That's right. You could hitchhike if you had a "rat" cap. It was easy to hitchhike back and forth. They were only boys when I started at the University of Florida, but half way through, girls could enroll in the pharmacy school.

C: That's where I met my wife.

G: That made a difference.

C: Yes. It got me in all that trouble! It was a different world when the girls came to the University. I really enjoyed it when it was all guys.

G: I did, too.

C: Being from Gainesville and knowing the girls here, it wasn't that much of a problem, but for a guy coming into Gainesville from out of town and leaving all of his friends it was an experience. I am trying to think if there is anything that we need to talk about that is not in the guide sheet, things that you would like to impart. I know that you still live in Tallahassee, but growing up in Gainesville like you have, I know that you notice a lot of the changes.

G: I feel lost in Gainesville. I do know where the courthouse is.

C: Even though they tore down "the" courthouse, the old courthouse. Oh lord, they tore that down in the 60's.

G: That's right. My granddaughter was going to take us into Gainesville for dinner, and we ended up at a sidewalk restaurant on the south side of the square, right in front of what used to be Smith & Hooper's Department Store, and I thought, "We've come a long way."

C: Yes. They do have sidewalk bistros there now, I guess.

G: It was very pleasant.

C: On the corner where Cox Furniture was in now Harry's.

G: That's a good place to eat.

C: When you go into Gainesville now, what do you think of the biggest emphasis of change? As a person that lives in Tallahassee, coming into Gainesville, what do you think has affected Gainesville more than any other thing?

G: The thing that has impressed me most is the way they have developed downtown. People live downtown. It's active. Things go on downtown. Every town has grown, like Gainesville and Tallahassee, but downtown Gainesville seems to me is a neat place to be. There are people there. It seems safe. I remember when they first installed traffic lights around the square. I can't remember when that was, but anyway, my cousin, Helen Bodiford, went down to try them out and she was complaining because all she got was green lights and she wasn't able to stop.

C: Talking about downtown, they had some movie houses downtown. You mentioned the Baird Theater.

G: Then the Lyric was down near what used to be the post office.

C: Which is now the Hippodrome.

G: Yes, next to the firehouse. There was a mentally handicapped boy named Dummy, who sort of hung out around the firehouse. Everybody knew who he was and accepted him and he was part of the community.

Later on, we had the Florida Theater. The manager used to allow all the students to come down free at night.

C: Is that right? Pretty good deal.

G: They would have pajama parades down University Avenue. Were they still doing that when you were there?

C: Yes, particularly if we beat Georgia. "Rats" could take their caps off and they would have a pajama parade.

G: They're not still using "rat" caps, are they?

C: No. It would hurt somebody's psyche if they used that today. Later on, they had the State Theater, which was down just past the Seagle Building.

G: Right.

C: Do you remember when the Seagle Building was being built?

G: Yes. As a matter of fact, in high school it was incomplete and they weren't working on it, and frequently we would go down at night and climb up to the top. I don't know how we got in, but we did and would climb up to the top and look around. That was kind of a lark.

C: What was it designed to be?

G: A hotel.

C: I guess the bust came or whatever it was and they changed their plans.

G: It was given to the University of Florida. Mr. Seagle was in the furniture business over on Masonic Street, and I guess Georgia Seagle was his daughter. I'm not quite sure. She was interested in the University.

C: That Georgia Seagle Hall is named for her, but it used to have the football players living there. I remember we lived for a while close to that. Walter Mayberry and Peanuts Hull and Mush Batista and all of those football players used to live there. I figured it had to be some connection to the Seagle Building, but I didn't know what the connection was. She was probably Mr. Seagle's daughter.

G: She could have been. My dad was on the County Commission for a while. That was when the hospital was built.

C: Alachua General?

G: Yes. I remember going with him down to Ocala to interview the first administrator, Miss Overstreet. She did come up and was the administrator for years.

C: I wonder how it was financed. The county financed it, didn't they? Did they own it?

G: Yes.

C: And they sold it for \$1.00 to Shands.

G: And there are still people talking about that. I remember when the Duck Pond was built. That was controversial. I forget who was in favor of building it and who was against it, but there were quite a few snide remarks about building the Duck Pond.

C: Is that Sweetwater Branch?

G: Yes. It was a great addition. You could sail boats down there and the ducks were there.

C: And the ducks were very prolific, I might add. There are a lot of ducks there now. They have spent untold thousands of dollars upgrading it right now.

G: I'll have to go look.

C: It's amazing what they've done. They've really cemented everything now so that it will hold some water. It's going to be very nice. They're building a dam at one end of it. They've spent enough water, and it does look pretty good although they're not through yet. They took some of the ducks and parceled them out at other places.

G: When I was growing up, Main Street ended at Boundary Street, which is now 8th Avenue.

C: At Alabama.

G: It became Alabama, didn't it? You could go west and get to Alabama Street and there were a few houses in Highlands, but not many. Mary Ann Harn lived in Highlands. Behind those houses on Boundary Street was the headwaters of Sweetwater Branch. It wasn't woods; it was sort of a brushy area. That's where we would go to make hideouts in the woods and that sort of thing. It was just a block from where I lived. It wasn't a big town.

C: No, it wasn't when I was growing up here. My daddy always said, "When the town gets so big that it would rain on one side of town and not rain on the other, it's too big." And it's been that way for quite a while.

G: In the summer, before my sister Marion was born – she was seven years younger than I – we went to the beach at New Hampshire every summer. I was told we went on a ship from Jacksonville to Boston. Later we would go by train and we'd have to change in Washington. One of my earliest remembrances as a living being was eating oatmeal in the Washington terminal. We would have to change trains there and sometimes we would go out and spend the day and a night with my grandmother, who lived in Virginia, and then come back and take the train to Boston. She was still living when I went to seminary. She was in her 90's and was not too sharp mentally. I went to see her. My cousin took me up to see her. I was still in uniform because I hadn't been separated from the service before I was in seminary. A comment was made that I was in uniform and my grandmother asked, "Which uniform is it?" There was a long quiet and then she said, "Must be Mr. Lee's uniform," meaning Gen. Lee. I assume that's how it's my father got his name. Grandfather fought in the Civil War under Gen. Robert E. Lee.

- C: Is that right? So he was named for the general. You mentioned your sister Marion. She was in the 8th grade at P.K. when I was in the 8th grade at G.H.S., and she won the American Legion Medal over there when I won it at G.H.S., so we had the same medal.
- G: She is coming up here Friday for a few days.
- C: Please tell her I said hello.
- G: She lives in Orlando in a retirement home.
- C: Monte died, didn't he?
- G: Yes, Monte died and my sister, Marion, has not been well.
- C: That's too bad, but please remember me to her.
- G: In 1934 my father built that house next door at Kingsley Lake, so we grew up from the time I was 14 out here at Kingsley Lake every summer. We came the day after school was out and stayed until the day before school started.
- C: You know Kingsley Lake.
- G: This is my 70th year here. We have five children, so when we came down from Alabama, everybody had to go home. We had a chance to buy this place, which was the old Weeks place. Mrs. Sam Dell was a Weeks, and her sister owned it and didn't have any children, so she sold it to me and we've been here ever since.
- C: You mentioned something we haven't touched on. You mentioned you have five children, and you haven't talked about them. What about them?
- G: Well, I have a daughter named Marion, named for my mother. She is not married and is presently a missionary in Romania. I have a son named William Clark Thomas Graham, and then I have another son named Lee III. He lives in Atlanta and is in the computer business and doesn't have any children. I have one named James, named for my grandfather and Betty's grandfather. He is a CPA in Tallahassee. He has three children. My youngest is Robert and he lives in Charlottesville, Virginia. We ran out of family names with Robert so we just picked up Robert Andrew. They will all be here Memorial Day weekend.
- C: Wow!
- G: That and Thanksgiving are when we generally get together.
- C: Your five children. You'll have a houseful. Do you use both houses?

- G: Not any more. We can get them all in here.
- C: You get them all in this house?
- G: It's pretty close living, but we're all related, you know.
- C: That's true. Bill and Helen Graham are two houses down?
- G: Right. Next to Bill and Helen are the Parrishes. They built those five houses. M.M. Parrish, Walter Parrish, Phil Parrish.
- C: H.H.?
- G: H.H. was his son.
- C: M.M.'s brother.
- G: Actually, H.H. and M.M. and Walter built those houses. Judge Larkin Carter lived in one of them, and the Byrd Fryar's lived in another.
- C: I don't remember the Fryar's.
- G: Helen recently died. Byrd's wife. She was a Gibbs.
- C: I remember John Gibbs, that lived on Masonic.
- G: Different family. I remember Finley Cannon had a horse.
- C: Finley was something.
- G: I remember when he lost his eye. He and Will Rawls were fighting with knives in the kitchen.
- C: Now, you've got to tell me about that because he used to make over that eye. He would swear his wife hid it.
- G: They were just kids, and one afternoon they were having a duel, I think in the kitchen, when something happened and Finley got the knife in the eye. He was in bed for quite a while, I remember, because I went over to see him. He was a great guy.
- C: Yes. You said he had a horse?
- G: He had a horse and he used to take the horse down to the blacksmith's shop, which was south of University Avenue, just west of Sweetwater Branch. It was near the old jail. The other thing I remember was the library. It was a great

- library, the Carnegie Library down by the Sweetwater Branch, and Miss Sweeney was the librarian. G: It was a great library, the Carnegie Library down by the Sweetwater Branch, and Miss Sweeney was the librarian. In order to encourage reading, Miss Sweeney put on a contest after I had gotten out of the 1st grade – who could read the most number of books? William Norman won, but I was second. So that got us reading. We read all the Hardy Boy books, but Miss Sweeney always encouraged me to read other stuff that was more sophisticated.
- C: William Norman. Would he have been related to Dean Norman?
- G: His son.
- C: I remember Bill Graham mentioned Francis Norman.
- G: Bill, Francis and Sarah were the three Norman's. Bill died during the last three years in Tallahassee.
- C: Sarah taught me at G.H.S. She was a teacher, and she taught me biology – or tried to teach me biology. Ballard Simmons was the principal at P.K. Yonge. His daughter, Evelyn, was a couple years younger than me, but I knew her. In fact, I dated her a couple of times. Ballard, her older brother, was in the Boy Scouts with me. He was a good-looking blonde-headed kid. Evelyn married Phil Constans, Jr. Phil Constans, Sr., worked at the University in the Speech Department.
- G: Dr. Alfred Crago was the school psychologist at P.K. Yonge. Broward Culpepper was our civics teacher in the 9th grade.
- C: Oh, was he now? I didn't know that. I didn't know he taught at P.K.
- G: He did. Later on he went to Tallahassee as Principal of Leon High and I forget what he did next.
- C: He was State Insurance Commissioner.
- G: A great teacher!
- C: The names that you bring up are names that I remember from way back there. I haven't thought about some of them in years.
- When I had just gotten in the Boy Scouts, the older boys were Ballard Simmons and Lawrence Brasington.
- G: What troop were you in?
- C: Troop 2 at the Methodist Church. Bert Ames.

G: Okay, I remember him. I was in Troop 1.

C: You were in the Episcopal Church.

G: Yes.

C: Chigger Brown was your Scoutmaster?

G: He wasn't mine. He was before me. When I was there, the rector, who was Bill Stoney, was the Scoutmaster. I'll tell you who was in that troop. William Norman was in it. In fact, he broke his leg one night at a troop meeting. He jumped out of a window. Ralph Turlington was in it. I got to know Ralph in Tallahassee until fairly recently.

C: He's still with us, isn't he?

G: He's living in North Carolina.

C: So he's still alive.

G: Yes. We went a lot of places with Scouts, and our young people at the church went a lot of places. The minister had charge of about six little churches out in little towns. He used to take the young people with him Sunday afternoon to be the choir while he had the service, so we had trips to Cedar Key. I was an acolyte at Starke when I was twelve years old and have been going there ever since. That was our way of getting out of town when I was little. I would join the Scouts or the young people.

C: Was this porch always here?

G: No, the original house that the Weeks built in 1905 out of second-hand lumber was just one room about 15x20 with a 10-foot porch around it. We slept on the west side. The living room was on the northeast corner. The dining room was right here, and the kitchen was on the south porch. Originally we didn't have electricity or plumbing, so we had a pitcher pump on the back porch, a privy out back, and kerosene lamps. When we got electricity and water, we put in a little bathroom here that was so narrow you had to go in sideways to get in. After Betty and I bought the house, in a few years we built the kitchen and we kept this the way the original house looked. This must be the longest porch in the county.

C: I think it must be, and it is just lovely. It is.

G: I've enclosed some of it so you can still sit on the porch in rainy weather. Then we added this about fifteen years ago.

C: Complete with rocking chairs. You can't beat that! A nice evening with the waves lapping.

G: And air-conditioning, too.

C: And heat. Yes. Well, I'll tell you. This has been a real experience for me. Being out here has been great, and talking with you has made it absolutely perfect, Lee. I have thoroughly enjoyed this, and I appreciate it very much. Is anything else you think we need to know for posterity? Anything at all that you want to talk about? We have pretty much covered the waterfront, but now anything else is just icing on the cake. You've been so cooperative.

G: It has been a pleasure.

C: If not, we can wrap it up. I want to thank you very, very kindly. It has been our pleasure.

G: Thank you.