

Wild Caught  
Marvin Everett Oral History  
Date of Interview: Unknown  
Location: Sneads Ferry, North Carolina  
Length of Interview: 1:07:05  
Interviewer: MB – Matthew Barr  
Transcriber: NCC

Matthew Barr: Okay. We are rolling. We just appreciate you're doing this. As we talked about before, this is a documentary about Sneads Ferry. You travel around the world. So, is there anything special about Sneads Ferry in your mind? What are some of your feelings about this town for you? What's it been like living here?

Marvin Everett: I grew up here, and I suppose that's one thing. But I have never been so far away that I didn't want to come back home. Again, I'm just a country boy. See, I lived in Chicago, but see, I wanted to come back. So, I brought her down here 48 years ago. It's been a long time.

MB: Forty-eight years.

ME: Forty-eight years ago, yes.

MB: So, in two years, you're going to have your – is that the golden?

ME: Golden.

MB: Well, congratulations. That's a long time.

ME: Long time.

MB: That's a wonderful achievement. So, what was it like growing up here?

ME: Well, you knew everybody, for one thing. I knew every family that lived in Sneads Ferry when I was growing up. I knew them by name. White and Black, I knew them by name, everybody. As they become – well, normally, like [inaudible] in here, [inaudible] came in here. I learned them as they came in state, like Bernice Guthrie. They came in [19]49. And I learned all their families. It's just you – it was simply that you knew everybody here, and everybody got along. That's the whole thing.

MB: Well, talking about the words, there's always been an African American community in this town.

ME: Oh, yes.

MB: It's very important for the film to show that, the words. Well, talk a little bit about your family. Talk about your father, what he did. Well, he was involved in fishing and so forth.

ME: When he was a young boy – my father was a big man, 6-foot, 260 pounds. He – when I was a boy or even before then, they always – there's been a country phrase, there would always be a sawmill, a ground sawmill coming in, and they'd cut logs and cut timber and then take it to Wilmington or to Jacksonville. They were dressed out, like two fours, two sixes, and all like that. They dressed them out for building purposes.

Of course, he tried farming after that. He couldn't – he just couldn't make a go of it. He went into business. He had a grocery store. He had a grocery store down at Fulcher's Landing right

where all the White folks lived. He had a grocery store down there. Of course, they – you know how they had a grocery store back then? It wasn't packaged things. We call it weigh things out. You weighed out [inaudible]. You weighed out lard. You weighed out flour and all that thing. You scoop it out and weigh it on a scale and then set there like that. We sold soft drinks, cigarettes, and all types of groceries.

MB: When he was doing farm, what kind of stuff was he raising? What was he growing?

ME: He was growing mostly beans and cotton, stuff like that. He just said it wasn't for him. Then he started commercial fishing in what we call [inaudible], taking them to – take them further into the country at Maple Hill, Belleville, Kingsville, Chinkapin, Pinckneyville, places like that. You're going into four corners, peddling fish.

MB: So, he would take the fish and let them sell it.

ME: Not buy the boxes, he'd get boxes, and he'd sell them retail. Fishman, fishman, bring your dishpan, something like that. They bring the dishpan out. Then he'd sell them some products.

MB: It's kind of amazing, thinking back to all that period, because it's all – well, like everything, it all changes.

ME: That's right.

MB: What you just said, "Fishman –" what was that line?

ME: Fishman, fishman, bring your dishpan. He'd let them bring the dishpan, and he'd put the fish in. He'd weigh the fish up and sell them that.

MB: So, he'd go door to door, or they'd come. He'd drive a truck.

ME: He'd drive – Davis, the place, he would go down there, Davis. The guy, Theo, the guy who owned the place, worked with him. He had a truck, and he'd hauled them. My dad would do the selling. He would do the hauling. Fitted together, I suppose.

MB: Oh, that's interesting. So, you mean, the part of the Davis family or –

ME: Yes.

MB: Buddy Davis's father?

ME: Buddy Davis's father, yes.

MB: Who is now in his 90s.

ME: Yes.

MB: I have met him, but I heard he's not feeling well right now.

ME: He's not feeling well.

MB: So, let's talk a little bit about, so would your father go out and would he fish in the river?

ME: He'd fish in the river. They fish on the beach in the fall of the year. They'd do what they called seine netting. They go there and fishing kits, big mullets, and take the fish egg out – the roe out of them and sell them to – they mostly do it in the [inaudible] river in here. He fished there. He'd get three or four boxes, put them in the truck, take them to the [inaudible], and sell them. Like, trout, I think, if he got about 15 cents a pound, for me, he's doing good. Spot croaker, maybe 10 cents a pound. He'd pay maybe 3 or 4 cents a pound for [inaudible]. He didn't make too much money, but he made some, yes, made a living.

MB: Well, I guess it's always been a hard way to make a living, being a fisherman.

ME: Yes.

MB: Just like farming is a hard thing to do too.

ME: Oh, yes.

MB: Especially these days, how expensive it is to – engines and –

ME: My father was sort of a speculating guy, like he'd be – Sneads Ferry used to have a whole lot of stores around here, grocery store type. Now, we don't have but one. But we used to have a whole lot of grocery stores. He'd go down there, and people sit around talking about what they need. He had a gasoline booth. He would – he'd hear that they'd need like rolls of paper towel to go on the on the (bonds?) or tin to go on the top. He'd ego – he and Jim talked about it. He'd take him – his boat and go, "[inaudible] we'll pick it up," and bring it back. Then he doesn't know he had it. He'd set it like that. That's what he did.

MB: You make a little money.

ME: Make a little money, did all kinds of things, he did.

MB: So how long was he a fisherman?

ME: Well, my father died in 1938. He was 50 years old when he died. See, he's married 27 years. He didn't live too long. Now, I'm 74. He didn't live too long.

MB: Wow. He died young. When he was only 50?

ME: Yes, 50.

MB: That's how old I am.

ME: Well, as a matter of fact, he died Monday was Labor Day. Had he lived that Saturday, he would have been 50. He didn't quite make it.

MB: Wow. So, going back to your childhood, growing up, how many brothers and sisters do you have, or do you have?

ME: Well, I had a twin brother. He's [inaudible]. We were identical twins. I had one older brother that died when he was a baby, 4 years old, could walk, talk, do anything, crawl. Then I had another brother who was born 1918. He lives in Chicago now. But I have one sister. She lives in Chicago.

MB: Oh, I see. So, there's a strong Chicago connection here. It's a long ways to Chicago from Sneads Ferry.

ME: Sneads Ferry, yes. Well, see, I came back home from the Army in 1946. [19]47, I went to New York, around then. They were all in Chicago too. Everywhere I go, I see somebody from Sneads Ferry. "Hey, man, when did you get you in?" I said, "I'm leaving here, man. I don't want to stay. I might as well be home if I'm [inaudible] [laughter] Sneads Ferry. So, I went on to Chicago.

MB: You mean you bumped into somebody from Sneads Ferry in New York City?

ME: Yes.

MB: That's crazy [laughter].

ME: Well, my uncle lived there for – he was drafted in World War One there. Then people love – there were – there has never been – when you count other people – there has never been a tremendous amount of Black folks living in this area. But as they grew up, they left. From Virginia on up, guess where they went. Boston, of all of them places.

MB: I want to kind of trace your life from, okay, so, you – actually you literally grew up right near where we are right now?

ME: Right here.

MB: So, they had separate schools for –

ME: Oh, sure, separate schools, separate everything.

MB: Separate everything.

ME: Water fountains, you name it.

MB: It's kind of hard to imagine what that was like, but it's not really that long ago when you

think about it.

ME: No, not long ago. But you'd get used to it. It was the law. What could you do? The law, you just obeyed the law. You got on the bus; you got in the back of the bus. See, I was always the type of person that's kind of hot headed. So, when I got on the bus, I got on the very back seat. Because I didn't want them to tell me to get up. He's not going to tell me to get up out of the backseat. So, I'd sit right on the very, very backseat. I wasn't looking for anybody can me to get up.

But then we had a lot of – I've had – well, I don't want to bring that up.

MB: That's okay.

ME: What I was saying was, we have a lot of folks here – now my wife, you see what she looks like. But she – when I brought her here, this guy came up to her and started hugging her. She started backing away. She didn't want this white guy hugging her. He did – like his wife. I'm sorry, what I was saying. But he's blond, blue-eyed, tall, just like you, but he – we used to get on the bus with me. And the bus driver will tell him, "All right, get up here." He says, "I'm not going up there. I belong back here." He'd have time telling them where he belonged because he was White. But he – see, what he was what – what really was – his mother was a Mulatto. His father was a White man. That made him a Quadroon. See. The majority of people see a light-complected White person – Black person, and they think he's a Mulatto. But that's not true. Dictionarily, that's not true.

MB: I see. Well, it's unbelievable. I started thinking about all this stuff. Well, that's a whole other thing. But it is part of the story.

ME: Part of the story.

MB: Any story, I think.

ME: That's right.

MB: Whether we're making a film about Chicago or Sneads Ferry.

ME: Yes [laughter].

MB: Okay. But going back to your childhood, so everything was separate, separate school, separate bus or back of the bus, and all that. Well, how would you characterize the relations between races, growing up? What was it like, from your perspective?

ME: You played together. You did everything together but go to school and church together. There was always – I'm still moving my hand. There was always somebody or whatever that's like – the only thing about it was we owned our house. It wasn't [inaudible]. It wasn't – nothing elaborate. It was, we owned what we owned. They'd be written – or they lived over there. It was a [inaudible] house, but it was written [inaudible]. But we always got along. We borrowed

from one – from each other, you know, sugar, salt, whatever. We always got along. Got along. They eat over here. We eat over there. We always got along.

MB: Well, that's good.

ME: Well, they always had a bit of Southern hospitality and is good [inaudible] that. You had this thing in the North, de facto. Here, it was a law. You knew where you stood. So, you didn't even break that law. You understand what I'm saying?

MB: Right.

ME: So, no one bothered me. We got along. We all played together. We always got along.

MB: So, was Sneads Ferry a poor town back then?

ME: Yes, it was a poor town. It was poor.

MB: Were you here during the Depression?

ME: Yes. When I was born, I was born before the Depression. I came before the Depression.

MB: So, what was that like?

ME: Well, I could always hear my mother say, "You do not waste food. The Depression is on." The word depression means a lot of things. But she'd say, "Don't waste food." My mother, what we did – my hands, I can't help it. My mother –

MB: It's fine down there. It's just when you're up here [inaudible] a little bit.

ME: Oh, okay.

MB: Yes.

ME: My mother would bake biscuits in the morning, and she cooked cornbread in the evening for supper. She cooked it on a bone or cook it on a kickback. We always ate like that. She told us, "Don't waste this stuff." My daddy loved fish. He could eat them every meal. My mother hated cooking them, but she would cook them because he loved them. I could see him take a whole fish, put it in his mouth, and blow [inaudible] [laughter] at one side. [inaudible]

MB: So, he could put the whole fish in there.

ME: He'd put the whole fish in his mouth, and he just [inaudible]

MB: But I guess one thing I've heard from other people talking about, like the Depression, for example, was at least in a town like here, you could probably eat because –

ME: That's the next thing I want to say. People are coming in. They say, "If we could – if you could get bread, you could eat." In other words, because there was fish. And then see, there was no law on that thing. You've got to wait out here if it's in the summertime, catch crabs, oysters, clams, all that kind of stuff. Take your hook, catch some fish, and then you eat. But you go – there's always something to eat. Then being natural, there's a lot of stuff that grew around here we learned to eat, just grew in the wild. You know what I'm saying? Grew in the wild. All kinds of berries, it grew.

MB: So, you weren't going to starve here.

ME: You weren't going to starve.

MB: You could starve in Chicago.

ME: That's exactly right. But you aren't going to starve here.

MB: That's an advantage.

ME: That's right.

MB: Well, tell me about what happened, kind of trace back your life. So, you grew up here and then take me through –

ME: I went in the Army. Well, see, let me explain something. Camp Davis, down here at Holly Ridge, was an Army camp. That's how it all started. Then it started in the late – about [19]39, started cutting down, then [19]40s, and then Camp Lejeune started in Jacksonville. So, that just changed the whole prospect – changed the whole thing in Sneads Ferry area. As a matter of fact, the whole Onslow County, changed the whole thing. See? Now, my sister married a soldier from Camp Davis. He's from Chicago. That's how we get into the Chicago area thing. She'd been living there for – I don't know how long, ever since [19]41, somewhere along n there. But –

MB: So, how old were you when you went in the Army?

ME: I was 18 when I went in the Army.

MB: What year was that?

ME: [19]44.

MB: [19]44. So, did you go to Europe?

ME: No. I went to Asia.

MB: Oh, you went to Asia. So, were you in combat in Asia?



ME: No. I was a war late. So, we didn't have any combat.

MB: So, what was the Army like?

ME: There was a lot of training. We trained all the time. I was in the infantry. We trained, trained, trained. We walked 10 miles just to have one class instead and sat down for 10 minutes and walk another 10 miles to have another class. MacArthur said he didn't want more guys that were, like, overtrained. I was in Alabama, Fort McClellan, Alabama, bottom of the hills, the place. They were [inaudible] training.

MB: So, how long were you in the army?

ME: Two years.

MB: Two years.

ME: [affirmative] I came out [19]46.

MB: Then what happened in [19]46?

ME: [19]47, I went to Chicago. I came out late – the last [19]46. [19]47, I went to Chicago. Met that girl when she was 15 [laughter]. She [inaudible] talked to me [laughter], at 15. I think I must have been 21 or something like that. Later on, when I got to know her, we ended up dating and finally got married.

MB: So, did you live in Chicago for a while?

ME: For a while, not too long. Not too long in New York either. I like Upstate New York. I don't care about the city.

MB: You mean upstate like?

ME: Like – well, not even Buffalo – Albany is not too big for me. I just don't like big – larger cities. Being here and going to Wilmington, Wilmington was big enough for me. Wilmington, at that time, was about the largest city we had in North Carolina. It's a big city. It had a lot of industry then, shipyard and all that kind of stuff, shipyard and the railroad.

MB: So, when did you come back here?

ME: When did I come back –

MB: To Sneads Ferry.

ME: Sneads Ferry, I came back, well, [19]48, [19]49.

MB: Oh, so you've been here since [19]49?

ME: [affirmative]

MB: That's a big period of time. That's like fifty-one years. So, the last fifty-one years, you've been here.

ME: [affirmative] I worked on the base, Camp Lejeune. I retired from Camp Lejeune. I was an equipment inspector for (Fulmont?). I retired – I didn't start out at that. I started out as a laborer, worked [inaudible] on up.

MB: Oh, so you worked at Camp Lejeune for – how many years were you at Camp Lejeune?

ME: Forty-two years, I had forty-two years total. I worked at, before – time at Camp Davis too.

MB: So, you worked for forty-two years for the government.

ME: The government, yes.

MB: That's a long –

ME: Well, forty-two years and that's not including non-appropriated fun activities, non-appropriated fun activities like PX, stuff like that. I was at PX, three years. That's not included. It's government, but it's not included into that type of thing.

MB: So, what was it like working at the base all those years? You started as a laborer, and then you moved your way up?

ME: [affirmative] Well, it was – I don't know. Well, one thing about the base was – oh, I helped build that base too. I helped build Camp Davis for that matter. When you work – at the time we were working, we were building the base mostly as laborer, as Black folk labor. Truck driver was a special thing, would get a nickel more in the hour. It wasn't too many – like your trades and crafts. Black folks were restricted mostly to the mud trades, brick masonry, cement finishing, plaster, and stuff like that. Then – when they're building the base. The same thing happened when the government took over the base. It was under the contractors. When the government took over, it was the same thing. Then later on – I progressed into that thing. I became chairman of Equal Employment Opportunity Committee over there. We – same from where it used to be – my hand's going again.

MB: [laughter] That's all right. Don't worry about it.

ME: Where it used to be, all the trades and crafts, you had Blacks in there.

MB: I see. Did things gradually get better –

ME: Gradually got better, yes.

MB: – say, at the base, in terms of opportunities?

ME: Yes, yes. Well, when I first started working in the base, you had separate everything, they would add to, separate toilets and all that kind of – separate water fountains. But then later on, they just – they knocked that off. Truman, with one stroke of the pen, said, "Okay. This segregated stuff isn't going to work." He integrated the military, I think, in 1948. I was in the segregated Army. In 1948 was when he integrated everything by one stroke of the pen, an executive order. I can't remember what it was. But anyways, that's what happened. After that, it – people progressed more. The general schedule ratings, what we called GS, you didn't have many Black folks in that, not at that time. Later on, they had some – if you had them in there, they'd be 1 – GS1 to 2 and 3s. Later on, they became up to 12s. Over a long time, they didn't have any – two or three 13s over there, but not that many. 15s, had one or two, and they were scientists. But then finally, initially before I started working, they had GS12s over there, Blacks, I'm talking about. [inaudible]

MB: So, I guess, what happened at the base obviously mirrored what happened in society in general as things are integrated.

ME: Sure. That's true.

MB: So, then through the [19]50s and then in the [19]60s. [19]60s then of course the whole Civil Rights Movement.

ME: Yes.

MB: How was that played out here in terms of Martin Luther King and –

ME: Well, the civil rights – they still – it was just like it was in Alabama and any place else. But – Alabama, Georgia, all the places. It started getting better. Let's see, if – [19]50s, I think, [19]50s and [19]60s, it started getting better.

MB: When you were growing up, did you ever think about being a fisherman or a farmer yourself?

ME: No. I hated it.

MB: You hated it?

ME: Yes, I hated it.

MB: How come?

ME: I mean, it's hard work. I didn't want to do that kind of work [laughter]. It was hard work. I didn't want to do it.

MB: Well, I mean, there were African American farmers and fishermen. I would imagine there

were African American fishermen who did nothing but fish.

ME: That's right. They liked it. A lot of them, they liked it. Yes. You know, this is a funny place here, see, very funny. I even see like my name, Everett, well, you've got Everetts down at – oh, here I go again with my hand. You've got Everetts down [inaudible]. Those Everetts are not related to us. They – I know of – read of – when I say know but read of – one person around here, one White person around here, he was an (Enip?). They had slaves. So, you got – you can travel from Pamlico County, all the way around the coast, on back to Wilmington, and you'll find names like Guthries, (Porges?), Midgett, Edens, Lewises. You'll find those names. But then around here, right here, you don't see. You don't see them. You don't see them Black folks with those names. See what I'm saying? I don't know if people ever thought about that. But you just don't see them, the name. Now, my folks came from what we call down on the sound, further down. They were Everetts. Like they came here as Everetts. You know what I'm saying? So, from what I can observe here, Everett and myself, [inaudible] talk about. We talk about it all the time. We look right all these other folks around here with these different names, and we just don't have them. Black folks just don't have those names. So, it tells us one thing. They want that – the White folks around here well not wealthy. See what I'm saying? They were not wealthy. To have slaves here, you had to be [laughter] wealthy, either big farmers or something. Not many.

MB: I wonder what percentage of Sneads Ferry is African American or was when you grew up. 20 percent?

ME: Maybe 20 percent, something like that. But see, my great granddaddy came back from the Civil War. John Everett, he's in the archives of [inaudible]. I think he – wherever he was living before he came here, his mistress taught him how to read. See. When he went into the war and came out, [inaudible] learned something because he started teaching people how to read here, taught school. So, he founded a church, founded a Methodist Church, and then some bishop came around here and something. I don't know what happened. But then he went over there and found that Baptist church over there. See. That was my great grandfather, my patrilineal great grandfather. My matrilineal grandfather came out of the Civil War, and he could read and write. He was Grant's orderly. Yes, he was Grant's orderly during the Civil War. He could tell you – I was studying history in school. I got and talked with him about the war. He can tell you more about it than that history book.

MB: I bet.

ME: Yes. Now, he came from (Swanburg?) – not Swanburg, back creek down there. He says he was out in the field plowing. He was born in slavery. He's out in the field plowing when the Yankees got him. They said – he'd always say, "(Halt?) Sam. He did what they told him. Hold Sam. He – I threw up my hand. They took him, see. "You're going with us." They took him. He was only 15 years old, took him. Never did see his parents anymore.

MB: Pretty amazing.

ME: Yes.

MB: Well, so back in [19]49, you began working at Camp Lejeune, at the Marine base. You helped build the base.

ME: The base before, yes.

MB: That's a huge base.

ME: It is.

MB: Well, speaking about all that, it seems like Camp Lejeune didn't exist. This was probably pretty different.

ME: It would be zero. It would be nothing in here. Maybe be fishing – there would be wild fishing around here. One thing about what happens now is like fishermen shrimping, these people on the base, these workers on the base – I don't how they do it, but they work on the base and as soon as the shrimping season comes open, they've got a little skiff, a little boat near the area out there and just interfere with the commercial fishermen who have been doing it all the time for a livelihood, see. First day out, they catch all the shrimps [laughter]. There's nothing left for these people doing this commercial-wise. There's nothing they could do about it, but I – you see it all the time.

MB: Well, since we're talking about that stuff, I mean, I've been filming for the last – well, I spent six weeks here filming, mainly going out on boats and people like Davises and Mac (Lieberman?) and Johnny Wayne Midgett – he's a crabber – and Dolphus Thompson. These are commercial fishermen.

ME: Yes.

MB: I guess part of the thing I'm trying to look at in the film is it's a generational life, one generation, father to son, and all that. It seems like it's dangerous work too. You go out on the water. It's always dangerous.

ME: It's always dangerous, yes.

MB: Do you think it'll be able to continue? What do you think of the words?

ME: Well, I don't know. One time, there's talk about taking – what are you going to do, Rob Jones?

MB: I don't know yet.

ME: Well, now, he was born on other side of the [inaudible]. They were talking – when they took their place, they were talking about taking Sneads Ferry. They didn't do it. He kept on talking. He's pretty – [inaudible]. One time, he was going to do it and take it. But then I don't know. Now, we hear about North Topsail beach taking over.

MB: One good thing about having the base here is all the work and jobs and all that. It's kept that whole area from being developed into condominiums.

ME: Yes.

MB: Because otherwise, like Wilmington going up, you could end up not having anything – all being built up too much.

ME: That's right. That's true.

MB: Which will make people around all that – then makes it hard for regular people. Tax rate goes up.

ME: That's right.

MB: I just hope that the fishing can continue.

ME: Yes.

MB: I guess a lot of people here will make their living not in fishing then, in Sneads Ferry.

ME: Well, most of those people who were not fishing were working on that base or working down in Wilmington, GE, somewhere down there. Now, you've got a lot of people from down here working on GE or some other place down in Wilmington. My son travels everyday down there. My daughter travels from Wilmington, back to Onslow County, teaches school out to Dixon. See. He goes down to work, and she comes back here to work.

MB: Well, talk about your children then and when they were born. Tell us about your family a little bit.

Well, my children were born, they were under the same situation that I was under. We had one high school here in the county for Blacks. That's Georgetown, Jacksonville. My kids went to Georgetown school, where they – we had feeder schools out here. But the feeder schools closed down. It wasn't profitable for them, keeping them up. So, they all went to Georgetown. Then when the schools integrated, they went to Dixon out here. See. Well, Georgetown was an accredited school. Georgetown was an accredited school on the Southern Association of Schools and Colleges. They were accredited. It meant that if they finished here, they could be going to any college they could go. But Dixon was not an accredited high school. But most of these kids that had finished Dixon went to college. I mean, Black folks, I'm talking about, Black kids. All my – all four of my kids went to college.

MB: Can you name your kids and how old they are and what they're doing now?

ME: Yes. My oldest daughter is 47 years old. She's a GS9 on the base. She's gone on – she's on a different job now, but possibly 11, engineer technician. My oldest son works at a

community college down in Cape Fear Mountain as a counselor. My next is a daughter, works – this one here. What is it, Dixon school, teaching. My youngest son, last child, he works in Houston, Texas. He's working at (Scarlett?). There's a school at that – I mean, not school, hospital that – this great comedian, Bob Hope, he's going to all the time. I can't think of the name of – it's a big, big, big hospital. But now he's going into business for himself, some kind of – I can't recall what it is he's going in – somebody finally talked him into it. But if he can get going, he'll do something – and they pay him good. He's made a good salary out of them. He finished three or four years at Greenville. What's the name of that school?

MB: East Carolina.

ME: East Carolina. He didn't graduate, but he graduated from Houston University – University of Houston, Texas. I went to his graduation. I graduated from there. He did other work in school. So, he's not doing too bad. My oldest son went to ECU, and he graduated from New York, some school in New York. My oldest daughter went to ECU. She went to ECU for a while. She didn't like it and came back [laughter]. She may go to community college. I like that. She went to USCW for a while. [inaudible] all around.

MB: So, you have grandkids.

ME: Oh, yes.

MB: Tell us about your grandkids.

ME: My grandkids.

MB: I see a football player over there.

ME: Yes.

MB: So, who are these guys?

ME: Grandkids. I've got two. One's 20 and one 19. The one who's 20 is in state. The one 19 is in – he goes to school in Raleigh, a private school. See. This is my granddaughter in Houston. She finished her high school this year. She'd to school in – somewhere. He was trying to get it in a Rice, but he knew a guy who had a 3 point something, 3.9, and he couldn't get in there. Rice is – you don't get – you just don't get in there any kind of way.

MB: So, how many grandkids do you have?

ME: Five, one grandson, another grandson that – he's eighth grade this year. He's 13. He's eighth grade.

MB: Sounds like you're a close-knit family.

ME: Yes, very close, very close-knit.

MB: So, do you get together here?

ME: Get together here. They come – if anything happens, well, they really call here. They don't call their parents. They call here to their grandmother or me.

MB: I forgot to bring a release form. Could you just say on tape your name, and you agreed to do this interview?

ME: Yes. I sure will. My name is Marvin Everett, and I agreed to – what am I agreeing to?

MB: Well, to [laughter] let Matthew Barr interview you.

ME: To let Matthew Barr interview me.

MB: Okay. Thanks. That's probably completely illegal what we just did. Because [laughter] I told you what to say. But obviously, you're doing it.

ME: Yes.

MB: I always tell students to do this. I'm a little sloppy myself about doing it. But obviously, it's understood that you're doing this freely and all that.

ME: Sure.

MB: I was telling your wife that, unfortunately, in a way, we can use little bits and pieces. Because you do a huge amount that it ends up this amount.

ME: This amount, yes.

MB: This is like a funnel, and it has to tie together and tell a story.

Female Speaker: [inaudible] You're telling a story.

MB: You're trying to tell a whole story of a whole way of life in 56 minutes and 40 seconds.

ME: [inaudible]

MB: But I think on the other hand, this is something I'm getting very excited about. We were talking about this before is that from an archival point of view, that these tapes will be part of the Southern History Collection at Chapel Hill University, North Carolina. Therefore, other people can utilize them. Because it's important history. Okay. So, we're talking about your children and your grandkids. They're all very good-looking people.

ME: Thank you.



MB: So, now, your daughter teaches at the Dixon, did you say?

ME: She's a librarian there.

MB: Oh, a librarian. Does she live here in town?

ME: No. She lives in Wilmington.

MB: In Wilmington.

ME: But her husband got a job in New Bern. So, they'd be moving in New Bern, athletic – what is that, athletic director or something? I never can –

FS: Parks and Rec.

ME: Parks and Rec. They went and moved around. When they got married, they moved here. They got this job in New Bern. So, he left. They didn't like that. But they were paying him more. He's at the money.

MB: Well, now let me ask you this in terms of, we're talking about the family, close-knit family. So, when Thanksgiving came, did you have a big dinner?

ME: All of them, yes, every year.

MB: So, talk about that. How many people did you have?

ME: My oldest daughter and her two kids, my youngest daughter and her two kids, and I didn't have my youngest son.

FS: Her husband.

ME: Her husband, yes. My son texted. He'd be here Christmas. He's got one child. But then my oldest daughter's husband, they divorced, and he married again. He has triplets. They call me grandpa and their grandma. He must adopt them.

MB: Oh, I see.

ME: He's a judge.

MB: He's a judge.

ME: He's a district court judge, and he's hoping to get Superior Court judge.

MB: Where is he a judge? That's great.

ME: In fourth district which embraces Onslow, Duplin, Jones – Onslow, Jones, Duplin, and

Sampson County.

MB: That's a lot of territory.

ME: A lot of territory. Maybe the same thing when he gets to be – gets promoted to Superior Country judge. See, the Superior Court – the governor has to appoint a Superior Court – it's a vacancy now. Maybe he'll have to run late – on the next term, he'll have to run for it. But what I'm saying when I say run for it, it's a personal appointment situation now. He can appoint him.

MB: Send him down to Florida, figure out all this mess.

ME: [laughter] Boy, that's something.

MB: Oh, man. So, when did you retire from the Marine Corps or the Marines?

ME: I retired in [19]88 then. [19]88, I retired [inaudible] a couple of years ago.

FS: [inaudible]

MB: So, have you enjoyed being retired?

ME: Yes. I had a lot of good work, and I don't have to worry about it, well, except being sick. I guess you have one – I can't articulate – like I said, my voices – I've had strokes. I had a heart attack, cancer, colon cancer. I have angina, and I've had angioplasty, all that kind of stuff. I've had a lot of things happen to me. But I'm still hanging in there.

MB: Well, that's good.

ME: Maybe get me now.

MB: Both my parents are 83. They're out in California. My father has had prostate cancer. My mom's had – she has heart fibrillation. She had that thing where they kind of zapped – but they're both hanging in there.

ME: My brother's 82. I have a prostate problem. My prostate pressed against my bladder, and I can't hold water.

MB: So, the medical care, do you go to the base, or do they have –

ME: No.

MB: Do you have to go to the –

ME: I'm under Medicare and also Blue Cross Blue Shield.

MB: Well, that's good.

ME: But they don't seem to be able to be doing anything for me. Like I say, I've got this computerology [laughter] guy – I notice every doctor you go to, and he just sits at that computer and then doob-doob-doob-doob, very seldom he examines you. He's a GP, general practitioner. But I go to a lot of specialists too, like my regular doctor is a cardiologist. He wants to get me under (good guy?) that can work with me. I go to a urologist. I go to a neurologist too. [inaudible] I go to a podiatrist [laughter]. [inaudible]

MB: A lot of different doctors.

ME: Yes.

MB: Well, let me ask you this. You've been here a really good part of your life in this town. So, you mentioned before that it was a close-knit town, growing up, that everybody knew everybody, could borrow sugar or whatever. That's a nice thing. I guess, when you go to the Food Lion now, is it still like that?

ME: Well, let me – there's a lot of people in here that you don't know. But they treat you nice. You can't be nothing but nice to them. You know what I mean? The people that we knew, like I said, [inaudible] we knew growing up, I mean, we personally knew them. You could call them all by name. Each family, you could call them by name. Then we had this thing. This is a clannish-type town. You want to call it a town. When I say clannish, I mean in the sense that you bother one, go to bother the other one. You know what I mean? The Marines come over here. If they get a White man, then the Blacks ago and help the White man. We help one another, that's what I'm saying, and they do and vice versa. We fight for one another is what I'm saying.

MB: So, is it still a close-knit town, do you think?

ME: Not as close as it used to be. There's too many people in here now. I mean, people – as close as it used to be. Everybody was poor. Back then, nobody didn't have anything in the sense of the word. So, you got along okay.

MB: So, it's not as close knit as it used to be.

ME: Not as close knit as it used to be.

MB: For different reasons.

ME: For different reasons.

MB: But I don't know if any place is as close knit as it used to be.

ME: No, not really. Not really.

MB: Maybe people have watched too much television or whatever.

ME: That's right.

MB: It separates people.

ME: That's true.

MB: I think it does.

ME: It does.

MB: Everybody's all –

ME: It does.

MB: They're watching their telly then you don't have that sense of community because everybody –

ME: That's right.

MB: I think. Here I am teaching television, and I'm saying it's not something – you know. I don't think it's such a great thing all the time.

ME: Yes.

MB: But it's a strong community, I guess, in terms of church.

ME: Church, yes. Then they have one other – this church out here, Methodist Church, White Methodist Church, is some kind of [inaudible]. It's a – what is it?

FS: Antique.

ME: Antique thing, okay? Well, when that church burned down, our church, Black Methodist, gave some money, and a Baptist church, a Black Baptist church had given some money.

MB: So, what do you think the future is going to be for this town? What do you see 20 years from now? What do you think it's going to be like here?

ME: I think it'd be a town that isn't a town, nothing cooperating. That's another thing we have a problem with, trying to incorporate this place. Some people don't want it, and they fight against it. We would get police protection. We would get fire. We have volunteer Fire Department doing that. But sanitation, we get that, but we had to pay for it. You know what I'm saying? It would be different if it was – Jacksonville don't want it to get – would be a town because it just – it would take from them. You see, Swansboro is an incorporated town. Richlands is a town. Holly Ridge is a town. See. They take from Jacksonville.

MB: What do you think is going to be the future for the fishermen around here? Do you think they'll be able to survive in the future?

ME: I believe they will. They will always fish around, and I believe they will always. You have too many people – too many people haven't left the industry. In other words, they – where I didn't like it, see, because my – all these other kids down there, we called them river rats. That's what they – if they finished seventh grade, they'd do good because they grew on that [inaudible]. They say, "Why in the world should I go to school when I know all I'm going to do is fish? Why do I have to go to school to learn how to fish?" So, they just fish. I think you'll always have that like father like son thing.

MB: Yes. I've been on some of the boats where [laughter] at least the kids, yes, that's what they were saying [laughter]. They're saying, "I hate school," is what kids are [laughter] –

ME: Right.

MB: You could tell that he couldn't wait to get on the boat –

ME: That's right.

MB: – all the time. But that's a hard way to make a living, I tell you.

ME: Hard way to make living. Some children go down the river, worked down at GE, and they've got good jobs down there, in Wilmington and GE.

MB: Well, Wilmington has grown quite a bit over the years.

ME: Wilmington has grown but see, Wilmington, when the railroad left there and the shipyard left, see, Wilmington went down. But Wilmington was – well, during the war, World War Two, Wilmington was a hot town, let me tell you. Did you live in Wilmington during that time?

FS: No. I've only been there two years.

ME: Two years? Well, during that time, Wilmington was a town. I mean, it was – everything was going on and money to be made. Shipyard has been building ships like [inaudible]. The railroad was there. Then you've got GE. I think [inaudible] came in. Two, 3 more big industries came in there.

MB: I guess tourism is big down there.

ME: That's true.

MB: I wanted to tour Wilmington to Moncada, keep going up north towards here, spread up.

ME: Well, if you pass [inaudible] motel.

MB: Yes.

ME: Going back in there, there's nothing but some houses back [inaudible]. Have you ever been [inaudible]. You don't see it from the road. But the houses back there are beautiful [inaudible]. It's a lot of people retired done in this area now. See.

MB: You mean like near the golf course?

ME: The golf course, right.

MB: Yes. I interviewed – he's a local. He used to be the high school principal.

ME: [inaudible]

MB: Yes. We drove way back on this road to his house which is a beautiful house right on the water. I guess he grew up here. His dad is here.

ME: He grew up here. That's what I'm saying. See, he was an Everett, but during the time he was growing up, they didn't have none. He had some land. All of a sudden, the land on that area down there became valuable property. They sold a lot of property, and they became wealthy. I tell you that, but that's what happened.

MB: Yes. He found big, old, 50-foot alligator, right [laughter]?

ME: Yes. That's right.

MB: That'd be interesting. I found a few gators right by one of the Oyster House grants, right there by the dock, looking at me [laughter] right there. So, that's kind of interesting. A lot of people don't even know there are alligators up in North Carolina.

ME: When they first built that bridge, (Clive?) and I [inaudible]. I said, "Let's go on this way." She said, "I [inaudible] what it looks down in there." There was a baby alligator, right, like that. "Get me out of here. Get me out of here." I said, "Okay." Now that one missed him because it was small. He said, "Give me out of here. I want to come back in the boat. I want to come back."

MB: Well, see, even a baby gator have sharp teeth.?

ME: Yes.

MB: [laughter]

ME: Baby alligators are something.

MB: Well, is there anything else that you'd like to add or that we – I think we've covered a lot of

stuff here, about growing up here, and you enjoy growing up here, it sounds like.

ME: Well, let me see, [inaudible], I don't know if you had a way to do it that – here, there was a time – okay, we had Domino's, (Avalon?), Sensations, and Wings. That was a 10-cent secret rule commercial secret 10 cent, paying your tax time, okay? Then we had Camels, Lucky's Chesterfield logo, and cooled. That was a 15 cent-cigarette. So, you could buy one of those sensations, Domino's, at Avalon, you could buy two for a penny, two cigarettes for a penny. See. You know what I'm saying? Then on the last one, you paid that extra tax . They always had a penny tax on the whole pack. Then the other one, then they'd sell – their 15 cent, they'll sell them for – then they'd get 20 cents a pack on, but they were 15 cents when you sold them in retail back then. Way back then you just really did – mostly, I've got to find a penny, go get me a cig [laughter].

MB: That's pretty cheap.

ME: That's pretty cheap, yes.

MB: Okay. So, is there anything else you'd like to add about – so, do you think your father enjoyed it when he was a fisherman and a farmer? He did all kinds of things, I bet.

ME: He did all kinds of things. He enjoyed it.

MB: Okay. Great. Well, thanks so much.

ME: Yes. Thank you. Thank you to –

MB: Well, let me –

[end of transcript]