

Esther Pringle Weldon

DINO ROBINSON: This is Dino Robinson on May 12, 2005 at the home of Mrs. Pringle. I'll put this right here. OK, if I can ask you, if you could tell me your full name? Your full name?

ESTHER PRINGLE: My full name? Esther Pringle Weldon.

DR: When did you come to Evanston?

EPW: I was born here in 1922, the first hospital baby at Lauren County Hospital and brought home.

DR: What was your father and mother's name?

EPW: My father was Charles George Pringle. And my mother, Carrie Watt Pringle.

DR: Where did they come from?

EPW: Level Land, South Carolina.

DR: Where is that close by? Is that close to Abbeville?

EPW: That is, they always say Abbeville, South Carolina.

DR: But it's in --

EPW: (inaudible) my brother was born in Level Land. But they always, the first time I (inaudible) it's always been Abbeville.

DR: They call it Level Ville?

EPW: Level Land.

DR: Level Land.

EPW: South Carolina.

DR: Why did your parents come to Evanston?

EPW: Well, they came for a better life in Evanston. They were on their way to California.

DR: Really?

EPW: And stopped in Evanston to visit friends and work was plentiful and got a job and they just stayed, settled here.

DR: What year was that when they came to Evanston?

EPW: Huh?

DR: What year was it when they came to Evanston?

EPW: 1913.

DR: 1913, OK. What did both your mother and father do for a living?

EPW: Well, my father was a laborer and he -- a bricklayer. And he also worked for the railroads, what is it, furnace -- he fed the furnace, shoveled coal to stoke the furnaces.

DR: In the actual train engines, or at the railroad yards?

EPW: No, the engines.

DR: Engines, OK. So he pretty much rode the trains and kept on stoking engines.

EPW: Yeah, well, that was before my time. I'm not quite sure on that.

DR: OK, what did your mom do?

EPW: Well, my mother, she was taking care of babies and a homemaker until my father passed.

DR: And then after your father passed, what did she do?

EPW: Oh, I had all of it wrote out. Well, she was a laundress. And she paid someone to care for her last five children. We were young. And so she was a laundress. And my father had wanted her to go back south when he knew that he was going to get any better. And she said, she just stepped out on faith and stayed. She was only 37 when he passed, and he was 39. With seven small children, with the youngest being two months old. He died in 1924. We had no family here, so he wanted her to return to the south. But she stepped out on faith and stayed. And he said he kept her promise. His promise, he built her a home, and a piano. We always had a piano, which was played all the time. My mother played it. The neighborhood kids would come in and play and my sisters played. My mother sang and played the piano. [05:00] And the neighborhood knew about the Pringle's piano. We were noted for the piano. Children that were taking lessons would come over and practice. My brother played the "Boogie Woogie."

DR: OK. What did your mother -- what kind of music did your mother play?

EPW: I'm sorry?

DR: What kind of music did your mother play?

EPW: Mostly church songs.

DR: Church songs, OK.

EPW: She sang and played. And other children would come in and practice their lessons on it. As I said, my brother played the "Boogie Woogie."

DR: Which brother? Which brother?

EPW: Charles. And my sister took lessons and she played for New Hope Church and she often had singers and practiced different ones here at the church. Here at the home, rather. And my daughter started lessons on it and she had to -- the piano teacher said that we needed a more up-to-date piano.

DR: Now when you say -- the piano that -- you said your father kept his promise and built a home and he purchased a piano or? OK.

EPW: Yeah.

DR: Is that the piano there?

EPW: No, no, no.

DR: That's a different one.

EPW: In fact, I'm getting ready to get rid of that one. No, we had a new piano and my sister Dorothy left the house because she didn't want to see it taken away.

DR: Oh, really?

EPW: Yeah. So.

DR: It's too bad you didn't have -- too bad you didn't keep the piano.

EPW: Yeah. It'd been there so long. So anyway, she -- she didn't want to see it go away.

DR: OK. I can understand why because it's been in the family for a long time and it became part of the family.

EPW: Yeah! So we always had a piano sitting there. So then I bought a new piano for my daughter. And she took that -- I sent that piano to her. And I thought my grandchildren were going to play so I got this one and they play drums and some kind of horn, play horn.

DR: OK. Of your brothers and sisters, you said you had seven -- you're one of seven brothers and sisters?

EPW: Well, there were nine of us.

DR: Nine total, OK.

EPW: But those two sisters, Thelma and Ruby, died before I was born even.

DR: OK. So what are the names of all your brothers and sisters? Thelma, Ruby, who else?

EPW: Jay -- James, Spurgeon, Thelma, Ruby, Charles, Dorothy, Patricia, Howard -- no Patricia, me -- Esther, then Howard. He's last.

DR: OK. My dad is one of nine children. So I know what it's like from the family reunions. So growing up in Evanston, you were born here in Evanston. Did you always live on this street?

EPW: Yeah, we lived here. My old two brothers had to quit school to help my mother. The two older boys.

DR: Growing up in Evanston, what did you do for fun as a kid?

EPW: Well, we went to the show a whole lot, the movies.

DR: The movies?

EPW: Uh-huh.

DR: The movie theater in Evanston or did you go into Chicago for that?

EPW: Oh, no, in Evanston, the Varsity and the Valencia theaters. And of course they talked about it being segregated but we just went up into the balcony. We didn't really at that time that it was so we were segregated. But my brother Spurgeon and one of his friends went on the first floor, the main. And they said my brother is the cause of them desegregating the Varsity Theater because I think it was one of the ushers tried to put him out. And whoever – once he put his hands on him, that was it, a fight. They had a fight. But it was brought to the attention [10:00] of the officials in Evanston and that's what broke down the segregation at Varsity Theater. They put him in jail and

everything. So my mother -- but my mother got him out and then she sued the judge because he said he was going to send him away. And she sued and got her money back. But she said he was -- he didn't bother anybody and he was the one helping her with her bills and whatnot.

DR: Which brother was that? That was Spurgeon?

EPW: Spurgeon. S-P-U-R-G-E-O-N. The boys also took correspondence courses. They finished high school taking - - they read everything. They were well-informed. They were the smartest of all of us. Cause they had -- they wanted to do it. We was in school because we had to go.

DR: To just kind of go back over, you said you were born in 1923?

EPW: Two.

DR: 'Twenty-two. And you were the second to the youngest.

EPW: Yeah.

DR: So, and your youngest was born in 1920?

EPW: Four.

DR: Four. The oldest, when was the oldest born?

EPW: Nineteen oh nine.

DR: Nineteen oh nine, cool.

EPW: I have everybody (inaudible) but Spurgeon, I'm not quite sure when he was born, so I've got to call his son and ask him. If I get it wrong, then they're going to be -- hit

the ceiling. I have it here somewhere, but I don't know. I can't remember.

DR: If you don't mind, if I could borrow those and make copies of them and bring them back?

EPW: Hmm?

DR: Can I borrow those to make copies of and bring back?

EPW: Yeah, sure.

DR: I want to make sure I get everything right, too.

EPW: That's all right. That was one of the things that I said no, I was just looking at the wrong -- I wasn't looking at it right. That's OK.

DR: And growing up and in Evanston and what your family was involved in, what churches were your family involved in?

EPW: Well, my parents helped organize the New Hope Church. But we also went to Mount Zion. And we were baptized at Mount Zion. And then New Hope moved out here on Grey and we were attending New -- very active in the New Hope. And also we were active in -- we went to all the churches, cause that was where the main events were. So whatever was going on Ebenezer Second Baptist, we always had friends going. Getting back to my work, I participated in the activities at the Foster Playground, where they had drama and all types of things, and also at Mason. Of course, we played baseball and hopscotch. We could just play in the streets.

There was nothing to bother us. We played baseball a lot. And as I said, we went to the theaters. And then we used to have circuses come to town and we'd visit. We had a lot of parades and whatnot. And we didn't know what -- we went to the beach a lot. And you walked everywhere. There was no such thing as somebody picking you up. So, we walked everywhere. Then they had the ice creams man used to come around and sell different things from the trucks. And we also had -- went on picnics. Springfield had -- would gather all the children and whatnot and we went on a truck, hanging on the seat at the back of the truck, with grownups sitting in chairs, and we went down to Washington Park for a picnic. That was a big deal. And we had hayrides. We had a lot of fun. Just natural. We didn't have all these toys and things. You made your fun, activities and whatnot. As I say -- and oh, we had sleigh rides and things like that. Which you can't have -- these kids can't enjoy today.

DR: When the circus came in town, where'd they have the circus? Where'd they set up tents?

EPW: Oh, on the Dempster and Fowler. They would come down Church Street with the elephants and all different -- and they were uh-huh.

DR: OK. When the ice cream man came around, was it someone in the neighborhood that everybody knew or was it from some company elsewhere?

EPW: What's that again?

DR: The ice cream truck, when it used to come around, was that somebody people knew in the community? Or --

EPW: Yeah, it was Mr. [15:00] Bang, B-A-N-G, I think. BANGS, or something. Or I may have his name wrong. He had a little (inaudible) place over on Emerson, across from where the bus, they used to drive the busses. Bangs. I can't remember if it was Bangs or Bang. Bangs, we called it. I don't know. So anyway, he would come around with sandwiches and whatnot. Then we used to go Mason Park for the games and there was a truck selling -- not him, but another truck -- and we'd just buy different stuff over there. And what else?

DR: The beach that you went to, was there a particular beach you went to in Evanston or would you to any of the beaches in Evanston?

EPW: We just went to the Church Street beach. As I said, my brother was a lifeguard, after he grew up. My brother Howard.

DR: OK. What schools did you go to in Evanston?

EPW: What school? Foster. Oh, my first two brothers, James and Spurgeon, let's see. They attended Dewey School and Boltwood Junior High School. And then my brother Jay was a crossing guard over at Dewey School, at the corner, at Lake Street and Asbury for 14 years.

DR: OK, he was a crossing guard there 14 years, for Dewey School?

EPW: Hmm?

DR: For Dewey School he was a crossing guard for Dewey School?

EPW: He was that corner, and they always, uh-huh.

DR: Was that Lincoln? At that corner, Lincoln and whatchamalit? Or was that Church and Leslie?

EPW: Lake and Asbury.

DR: Lake and Asbury, OK. Tell me a little bit about each of your siblings. We'll probably go over some of them again. But what did they do in their lives? What did Thelma do in her life?

EPW: Well. Well, my brother Jay, of course, you've got most of the stuff down there. He was the -- his first job was at the Evanston Hotel.

DR: OK.

EPW: He was a Pullman porter for 37 -- I've got to get this right cause my sister will get me. Well, you're going to be reading it anyway. He was a Pullman porter for 37

years. Then he was a crossing guard later after, for his retirement.

DR: How about, who do you have next?

EPW: Huh?

DR: Who do you have next?

EPW: Oh, I don't know. Do you know what he played? He's the one, the basketball player, one of those for the end of the street YMCA basketball team. And he was an avid golf player and bowler.

DR: OK.

EPW: First, they also both caddied on the North Shore. That was their first job.

DR: How about -- who do you have next there?

EPW: Well, I have Charles Pringle.

DR: Charles, OK.

EPW: He's ahead down here, Abbeville, South Carolina. That's what most of them went. And he was a cook at the YMCA [20:00] in Chicago.

DR: Was that the Wabash Y, or was that a different why?

EPW: Hmm?

DR: Which Y? Do you know which YMCA?

EPW: No, I don't remember. One of the Y's, I don't know. A lot of his activity, of course, was at the old Emerson Street YMCA. And he was a junior (inaudible). His hobby was

fishing. And he was an avid swimmer. Oh, he loved to fish, too. He would often take the kids fishing. That's all I know about him.

DR: OK.

EPW: Let's see what else. Which one is that? Oh, Dorothy is the next. I think you've got all the stuff on her.

DR: Yeah, I do have a lot on her. She was very active, especially in the church and the choir at New Hope.

EPW: Yeah. Yeah, sort of her thing, yeah. Oh, too, I forgot, my mother took classes, the WTA classes or whatever they call it, during the way. And she took voice lessons and (inaudible) and she, when she came to school, the teachers thought always she didn't sound like she came from the south. She didn't talk like she came from the south. She worked on the polls and was a Republican until FDR came in, and she's a Democrat. She read and sang to us a lot.

DR: OK.

EPW: And told us she wanted us to do better than she, then she must have. What was that Charles was the last one?

DR: Yeah, Charles was the last one you did.

EPW: Patricia, I guess.

DR: OK.

EPW: Mm-hmm. She was born on February 17, 1920, in the house here.

DR: OK.

EPW: Where do I have her? Dorothy. She was more or less the homemaker. She kept our home running smoothly. She loved to cook. And she loved to have the family gatherings in the house here, I mean.

DR: OK.

EPW: She was the caregiver for my mother. She loved movies. She knew all about the movie stars. And she loved the roller skirt -- roller derbies and wrestling. She would go (inaudible).

DR: That's where she got her action from, huh?

EPW: She worked part-time. Well, she worked for Lomar's Grocery Store. There was no pharmacist. What was that over there?

DR: Where was it located?

EPW: Across the street from the post office, that little corner store, going south. It was a pharmacist.

DR: I think it was a pharmacist.

EPW: That was the main thing and then they had other things, so she worked for them.

DR: Lomar?

EPW: Lomar.

DR: Lomar, OK. That was part-time, right.

EPW: Beg pardon?

DR: Was that part-time that she worked there?

EPW: Yeah, she was working part-time.

DR: How about Ruby?

EPW: Ruby and Thelma?

DR: Yeah, what did Ruby do?

EPW: Ruby and Thelma passed before we were born. They were children.

DR: They were children?

EPW: They were. One was 18 months [25:00] old and one was about three or four. They passed away (inaudible). I just had -- just found their graves, my father and Thelma's grave, really. They're buried in Rose Hill. That was before Sunset.

DR: So Thelma is buried at Rose Hill, your father's buried at Rose Hill. And Ruby's buried at Rose Hill, or is she buried at --

EPW: No, Ruby's buried at Rose Hill. And Thelma's buried somewhere in the south. My mother went home. She was pregnant with Charles. And Ruby died there. And she took one baby and brought back another child. And my mother always hated that. She never went back south anymore. Because, of course, then my father had died and we didn't have any money. He wanted her to go back where his brothers were but she just stuck it out.

DR: Yeah. And your mother was buried at Rose Hill as well?

EPW: No, she's buried at Sunset.

DR: Sunset, OK. OK. And Howard was also -- what did Howard do?

I know he was a lifeguard.

EPW: He was a baker.

DR: Baker.

EPW: Yeah. You know, that's -- yeah.

DR: That's here. OK. He was also on the basketball team at the YMCA? Was he also on the basketball team at the YMCA?

EPW: No, no, he was more of a swimmer. He was the one that his neck broken when he was small and he couldn't, you know. But he used to deliver papers, magazines. And I got my fingers frozen helping him with it, frostbitten, rather. And he also had his own bakery in Chicago in the Rosenwald Building.

DR: What year was that about, when he has his bakery in the Rosenwald Building? What year was that about?

EPW: Well, he was five. And he was born in 1924.

DR: When did he have his bakery, though? His own bakery, when did he have his own bakery?

EPW: Oh, that's what you're asking me! I'd have to ask him. He's there my himself right now but I'll check that and give it to you.

DR: OK. Spurgeon. That's what I was missing. I knew I was missing somebody. What did Spurgeon do for a living?

EPW: Same as the other, he -- they both worked at the Evanston Hotel and they both were Pullman porters but he wasn't as long as my brother Jay. And I've got to find out from my nephew exactly how long. I had his obituary but I've -- it's here somewhere. As you see, I've got papers strewn -- oh, yeah, he worked -- he passed before he retired, before he reached his retirement age. I don't have his -- all his data right here before me.

DR: All your other siblings who also passed are buried at Rose Hill?

EPW: Mm-hmm (meaning yes). No, no. Not Rose, Sunset.

DR: Sunset, I mean.

EPW: Uh-huh (meaning yes).

DR: It's a big family.

EPW: And my brothers all -- we all lived within six blocks of each other. We could walk to each other's house. It wasn't too far. My brothers had their own homes. Those were the good old days.

DR: I assume that some activities you did as a teenager, were those the same as a kid? Movies, plays, church?

EPW: What?

DR: Some of the fun activities you did as a teenager [30:00] were pretty much the same as a young, pre-teen, like churches, plays, movies, activities like that?

EPW: Yeah. Parks, you know.

DR: I noticed with the stuff you let me borrow before, you were very active with the Junior League.

EPW: Junior League and Girl Reserves.

DR: And the Girl Reserves, OK.

EPW: And I was president of both of those. That was a high school group of Girl Reserves. And we used to go have over to -- they used to let us -- they used to meet at Saint Andrews. That was the high school, Saint Andrews. I wasn't president of that. We all hung out over there for a lot of activities in the high school years.

DR: I noticed that for one of the -- in the Junior League, one of the fundraisers you did were plays?

EPW: Yeah, mostly plays.

DR: It was mostly plays?

EPW: That was the biggest event. You have stuff like rummage sales, and like that. But the biggest was the plays that we had.

DR: Were these plays that were well known or were these plays that you made up, that the organization made up?

EPW: No. We would get them, already made. No, we didn't have any talent like that.

DR: But it was fun, though.

EPW: Uh-huh (meaning yes).

DR: And you played roles in the play?

EPW: What?

DR: Did you play any roles in the plays?

EPW: Oh, yeah, I was always in the play. I was mostly the villain.

DR: How long were you involved in the Junior League? Was that all through high school?

EPW: No, that was after high school.

DR: After high school, OK.

EPW: It was mostly college age. And most of us in there were -- some of 'em were in sororities, but it was more of a business girls club. There were a few that were in a sorority but most of us were working, business.

DR: How long were you involved in the Junior League, about eight years?

EPW: At least. Maybe longer, but I'll say about eight.

DR: For the Girls Reserve, was that a function of the YMCA or something? Was that associated with that or was it through something else?

EPW: I don't know. I don't know how we got -- no, it was a white group. I have it on one of those pictures.

DR: I saw it.

EPW: Whatever's on that.

DR: I'm looking at it and there's three blacks and four whites. So was it a mixed group? The Girl's Reserve was it a mixed group or was it black and white?

EPW: No, blacks and whites. And then we had things together sometimes, but.

DR: When the Girls Reserve met, your group met, where did you usually meet? Did you meet at somebody's house?

EPW: Yes. We met at our sponsor's home mostly, Mrs. Sweat. Over on Brown Avenue. And that -- and Mrs. Morse, Jack Morse's wife. He used to be the pharmacist here in Emerson. They were the sponsors.

DR: Dr. Morse, and he has pharmacy over on Lyons, is that where it was, or was it downtown Evanston?

EPW: It was right there at Church Street and Dodge.

DR: Church and Dodge, OK. What was your first job?

EPW: My first what?

DR: Your first job.

EPW: Well, let's see. I did a lot of babysitting, of course. We all had to take -- help take care -- use the money for ourselves, too. Honestly, what in the world did I do? Well, I started in the nursery. Cause I was taking care of, babysitting a lot, so I [35:00] went to -- I went in the factory first. We were making pins for the guns for the war. And I was waiting to be called to the Chicago

Nursery School there that you saw, [Motivation Vocations?] for Chicago. And then I came back here with Miss Payne's daycare.

DR: At Bethel Church?

EPW: Mm-hmm (meaning yes).

DR: OK. How long did you do that for?

EPW: Oh, let me see, I guess I was there about three years.

DR: When you worked at the factory making the pins, how long did you do that for?

EPW: Not too long.

DR: Didn't like it?

EPW: So I guess I was there maybe about 9 months to a year actually, if that long, cause I was waiting for my assignment. We had been so close, getting in the factory was altogether different from the type of people that I was used to -- I was raring to get out of there. And they would always say -- they would swear and folks would say oh, excuse me. She's not like us. Anyway, but, I mean, I didn't have any problem with it, but it was just an environment that wasn't for me.

DR: Got you. Where was it? Was the factory in Chicago?

EPW: Yeah, in Rogers Park.

DR: When did you get married?

EPW: Well, I don't like to talk about that. I'll leave him alone.

DR: OK, we'll leave that alone.

EPW: Yeah, let's leave that out, cause.

DR: OK, it's out.

EPW: It didn't last long, and it was a -- it wasn't pleasant.

DR: Is that why you prefer to go by Miss Pringle.

EPW: Mm?

DR: Is that why you prefer to go by Miss Pringle?

EPW: Yeah, I mean everybody knows me as -- but I still -- I'm Weldon. But since I've been here so long most people call me Miss Pringle. I don't stop them. But I always use Pringle Weldon.

DR: OK.

EPW: Oh, and that's another thing I wanted to ask you about. Denise Gilbo, is her husband dead or is she -- the Martins.

DR: No, Joe Martin? You mean Joe Martin?

EPW: Huh?

DR: Joe Martin, is he dead.

EPW: He's her husband, isn't he?

DR: Yeah, that's her husband. No, he's still alive.

EPW: Well, then she's divorced. I saw in the thing -- it had Martin-Gilbo.

DR: I wonder if she just wanted to make a connection with Gilbo.

EPW: I don't know but that's what caught my eye, because she's along with my daughter. And I know she married a Martin and then that little booklet you showed me had Martin-Gilbo.

DR: Well, last time I talked -- I don't think they're divorced because I just talked to her earlier this week and she referred to him as her husband.

EPW: OK. I just is she divorced? Cause she got married and he -- Joe Martin was her high school sweetheart. And she went and married somebody else, and divorced him and married Martin. That's why I was wondering if she divorced. Yeah, she's -- her mother's and I we were all in the Junior League and all that stuff together. What was the other group we were in together? (inaudible). I can't think of it right now, but anyway. For the group of young children. Julia Ward. Anyway, I can't think of it right off.

DR: It'll come up. After these different jobs that you had here, babysitting, working in the nursery and the factory, were there any small jobs before that before you started working with Northwestern?

EPW: No, I don't -- well, I was home a while [40:00].

DR: OK.

EPW: I think that was about it for that. Then Northwestern for some years.

DR: So at Northwestern, where did you work at Northwestern?

EPW: I started over at, where was it, at Tech Building in administration over there. And what did I do? Here that is.

DR: So you worked at the Tech Library?

EPW: Yeah. I worked in the -- then I transferred from there, yeah, went to the library. And was a library clerk for the Northwestern University Library. And then in 1981 I worked in the (inaudible) room section as supervisor.

DR: And you retired in what, '91? You retired in Northwestern in '91?

EPW: When I retired?

DR: Yes.

EPW: It says '90 here. Yeah. I attended Roosevelt University. it's funny how you forget all this stuff.

DR: That's one of the reasons why Shorefront's here.

EPW: Huh?

DR: That's one of the reasons why Shorefront's here, to make people remember. So I know you have a daughter. Do you have just one child or do you have more than one?

EPW: My daughter Elena, what about her?

DR: You have one child, right?

EPW: One daughter.

DR: One daughter. And she was, I guess, a gifted musician.

EPW: Well, she started out as a musician, yeah.

DR: On the piano?

EPW: Piano.

DR: Of course.

EPW: She played four instruments, but her main instrument was the piano.

DR: When she played, when she first started learning how to play piano, she played on the original piano that your father bought, right?

EPW: Mm-hmm (meaning yes).

DR: She played in several competitions. Has she ever been recorded, or has she done any large-scale performances?

EPW: No, she was only in the school orchestra. She played violin in the orchestra. But she also played -- no, she played viola in the orchestra, I'm sorry. But she played violin. And she played sometimes on the organ. But the main one was the piano and viola.

DR: She attended Northwestern? What school did she attend? What university did she attend?

EPW: She -- [Phil?] was her private teacher. Miss Fisher was her beginning teacher. And in high school, they assigned her, she's a teacher on the staff over there. And she went

to some teacher for the viola and they were much more advanced on their instrument than she was on the viola, because that was her second instrument. But she knew how to keep time, so that's why she was placed there. These children were studying to be professionals. And so Miss Fisher said she knows how to keep time. A lot of times you're on a dance floor and everything and you miss a step and a lot of times, it isn't your fault. It's the musician. So she put her in there to keep -- and some of 'em had problems. And one of them was keeping time so she was placed in the group and she really had to work on the viola. But she -- and they were on exhibitions and whatnot. As I said, they were more advanced on their [45:00] instrument than she. But they did -- she did play for a soloist and what not at the high school. She had first chair. But then other ones had to play also. She wanted to stay in the orchestra the whole time, so she took the viola.

DR: OK, got you. And then she went on to do something; after she graduated she went on to do other things?

EPW: Well, she decided -- what did she -- she got her Masters in urban and regional planning. And the last one, she has an MBA.

DR: What does she do now?

EPW: I gave you the card.

DR: Yeah, I have it. I just want you to say it for the recording.

EPW: In fact, she's getting ready to transfer, to move on to North Carolina because she's on a plateau. She can't -- and nothing else. And two of her children are out. That's why she stayed there as long as she did. But now she's looking for something else and centering on North Carolina.

DR: OK.

EPW: In fact, she's been interviewed I think once for Duke and once for North Carolina State something about in development. Anyway, she stays on the move.

DR: OK. As you were growing up in Evanston, what was the social climate like as far as race relations?

EPW: Well, as I say, we was over here on the West Side, where most of the blacks were centered. But my sister-in-law grew up in South Evanston where there were a whole lot of folks -- well, see, we didn't know them. You stayed in your own corner. Now they said the food, the stores, the dime stores and whatnot were segregated. But of course, we didn't have money. We didn't eat. So we didn't even go. We didn't go in there because we didn't have -- we couldn't just go in and buy something. We didn't think anything too much about it. But now in the high school, you had black

seat partners. We had black seat partners. And we were off -- the teachers drew off the fact that you came from Foster School. And I was in what they called the X classes, which is the [Soldier's Lore?] and I fought to get out of them. I was very unhappy because it was just a struggle trying, you know, being placed where I could go on to higher education. All they would tell you is that take the domestic courses, sewing. And my -- so as I said, we didn't -- we personally didn't run into too much because we didn't --

DR: You weren't -- you didn't put yourself into it --

EPW: (inaudible) are people segregated? You just went upstairs, because that's where all the kids were. You just went up there where they were and with your friends. But my brother, I think it was crowded that day or something. They were down on the first floor and that's when they tried to throw him out. And so he popped the guy. His nose was bleeding and everything. So they put him in jail.

DR: That was Spurgeon that did that, right?

EPW: Hmm?

DR: That was Spurgeon that did that?

EPW: Spurgeon? Yeah.

DR: OK.

EPW: And everybody so when my sister-in-law, when she got married, she said they told her, well, you'll be well-protected, cause he don't take nothing. You'll be well-protected.

DR: Was that at the Varsity when he did that?

EPW: The varsity. And they told my mother she had to raise \$100 to get him out. And his boss from the Evanston Hotel came. He said he's a good boy. And so, he put up whatever it was they needed at that time. And then my mother sued. She got the money back. But she said they were ready to send him away. They got him out. [50:00] Then she went back -- I mean to her (inaudible) she was up to date on a lot of things. She was smart, you know.

DR: So she wasn't -- it was like the system was taking advantage of them and she no, no. I know what my rights are. That's good. Had your parents every talked about struggles they had in Evanston or growing up?

EPW: Did they what?

DR: Have your parents ever talked to you about the struggles they've gone through?

EPW: No. No, they never said too much. As I said, it was just my mother. She didn't do too much talking about it. Of course, they all had Victory Gardens and whatnot. My mother was a praying woman. She stepped out on faith and

every time we did something, well, let's pray about it. So everybody had Victory Gardens and they was in need of rain, so they came to get my mother to pray. So they all went over into the fields there and prayed together. So it did rain. But she read a lot and taught us a lot, told us a lot, your actions -- told us our actions reflect your home training. That was the main thing. Everybody said your brothers are so mannered. I said yeah, she instilled that.

DR: OK, the last question I have for you is in general, what would you like to leave behind for the younger generation to learn from about yours and your family's experiences here in Evanston?

EPW: Well, I have to think about that one. Maybe you have to get that on the next try. I can't think of it, but I will. Well, let me see. I can't think.

DR: You had a few life lessons in here, what we talked about today. There's some things I remember that you said that are good life lessons about when growing up, you made your own fun and not relied on electronic equipment.

EPW: You have to speak a little louder.

DR: That you made your own fun while growing in Evanston. You created fun. You created activities to do. You -- your social outlet was your community and sharing a lot within the community along -- whether it's different clubs,

different churches and outings and things of that nature. Those are some pretty valuable lessons there. And work ethics, all your family members who did different things. I could pull some life lessons out of that. I hope that I can relay that in the article that I write, to help usher that through. I do want to thank you for your time and sharing your family history. I think it was very valuable. I know when I was doing a research, there's not a time where I did not see the Pringle name. So, I feel very fortunate that I have had a chance to talk with you and that you're sharing your history with Shorefront and basically with the general community with that. I thank you very much. And with that, I'm going to stop the tape recorder.

END OF AUDIO FILE