

Sonya Ramsey: —the neighborhood where you grew up as a child?

Eva Gibbs Adams: Well, I grew up in the same neighborhood in which I'm living now. This is my birth home. When my mother was married in 1897, she was married on Eubank Street, which is near here, and my father had built this house and brought her here for the reception.

Sonya Ramsey: Oh, that's nice.

Eva Gibbs Adams: Before you go I'm going to show you an invitation to that wedding and reception, and I'm going to show you my mother's wedding dress.

Sonya Ramsey: Oh. Oh.

Eva Gibbs Adams: My mother had nine children, only five lived. I am the ninth child. I grew up in this neighborhood during, my childhood life it was a pleasure to live here. You could go off, leave the doors open. Neighbors were neighbors. They would come to your house, you'd go to their house. And at nights, of course, naturally there were no lights up here. So a group of the people, my family being somewhat musical, the people would gather on my porch and we would have family sings.

Sonya Ramsey: Oh, what kind of songs did you—

Eva Gibbs Adams: And the kids would participate sometimes, and sometimes they were playing hide and seek and whatnot. But it was a pleasure to live here. But now the only reason that I live here is because it's dear to me. It's my birthplace.

Eva Gibbs Adams: Now, as years went on, different people moved into the neighborhood while the older ones died out. It was all together different. It's all together different now. Now to tell the truth on this street, I have only two houses which I feel comfortable visiting. That's the lady who's just been carried to Greenville with a stroke, and Elena Adams who lives over there.

Eva Gibbs Adams: Now the others are friendly. Gangs park over on the right side of me. They used to drinking. Back on my fence there used to be men who stayed out there all night, winter or whatever. They would build fires, which frightened me away. Had cans that they would put the fire in, but they all would tell me, "Ms. Adams, we're going to look out for you."

Eva Gibbs Adams: That's the one thing, they all respected me, but you don't ever know when that one drug addict is going to tell him, you can do what you want to do. Ms. Adams lives by herself. She was a teacher and we can prey on her. But so for that reason, I started staying out nights. But now since the police have been patrolling this area quite frequently, I don't have the men standing around all night like that. But so far

as my childhood days, they were good.

Sonya Ramsey: I wanted to ask, was your neighborhood when you were growing up, was this neighborhood segregated?

Eva Gibbs Adams: Hmm?

Sonya Ramsey: Was this neighborhood segregated when you were growing up?

Eva Gibbs Adams: Oh, yes. It's always been segregated. Of course, these recent years there's a lot of White girls live up here with Black boys. But it's always been segregated. And there's been segregation downtown at a certain point. And of course, naturally the restaurants, we could not go in the front door even the back door.

Eva Gibbs Adams: A case that I know of, the mother is very fair. You could say she's White, but she isn't White. The son is a brown skin, maybe your complexion. The mother went to get some barbecue once, she walked in the front door. There was some other customers in there, White, and naturally she had to wait a while to be waited on. And of course, the son was out in the car. So he came in the front door and the first senior clerk says, "We don't serve the Blacks in here. You have to go around to the side."

Eva Gibbs Adams: So he says, "That's my mother." And of course, the White girl almost dropped down because she thought her mother was White. But I'm telling you just how it was. Even though she was Black, they not knowing she was Black, but knowing that the boy was Black, she's going to send him out. So see, that's some segregation there.

Eva Gibbs Adams: And during our [indistinct 00:05:17] downtown and sections like that, when they had the restaurant had first started having food served in five and ten store, the Blacks were not allowed to go to the counters. So when Easter season, the Blacks got together and they decided they were to boycott the stores.

Sonya Ramsey: What time period was this?

Eva Gibbs Adams: Hmm?

Sonya Ramsey: What time period was this? I'm sorry. Okay. What time period was this?

Eva Gibbs Adams: That was in—when did Martin Luther King get in there?

Sonya Ramsey: '60's then? In the '60's?

Eva Gibbs Adams: In the '60's. That was in the '60's. And of course they demonstrated. They got put in jail. They came out, but the stores lost so much because of the fact they did it purposely. Because if your money's good on one side of the store, then it should be good on the other.

Eva Gibbs Adams: Now downtown, I went to a drug store on the corners of Broad and Middle Street. It's not there anymore, but I bought some medicine on one side of the drug store, and I felt like I wanted some ice cream from the other side. So I went over and asked for the ice cream. And in fact, I didn't get a chance to ask, because a girl just waited on everybody else who came in before, after I did.

Eva Gibbs Adams: So I took the things that I had purchased from the other side of the drugstore back, and the man said, "What's wrong with them?" I said, "Nothing's wrong with them." I said, "Something's wrong with this store." I said, "Now if my money's good over on this side of the store and it's not good on that side, I don't want it."

Eva Gibbs Adams: So naturally he wanted the money, which I had paid him. So he went across and said something to the girl. So she immediately fixed this ice cream cone. Well, I had my medicine. So when I finished talking with the man, I came around near the front, and as I was going out of the door, the girl says, "Here's your ice cream." I said, "Well, eat it."

Eva Gibbs Adams: And of course, we have to break down the segregation in manners like that. And in boycott when they had supplied the stores with things for Easter and Christmas and like that.

Sonya Ramsey: How old were you?

Eva Gibbs Adams: Hmm?

Sonya Ramsey: How old were you when you did that with the ice cream?

Eva Gibbs Adams: How old?

Sonya Ramsey: Mm-hmm.

Eva Gibbs Adams: Well, I'm 80 now.

Sonya Ramsey: Oh, okay.

Eva Gibbs Adams: I'm a good old ripe 80 years old, but I don't feel 80. Oh, let's see. That's about 30 years. About 50. 45 or 50 or something of that nature.

Sonya Ramsey: I wanted to go back and ask you about your parents. Did they ever tell you anything about segregation or about how to act in front of Whites when you were little?

Eva Gibbs Adams: Well, not as such. I don't know whether they were entangled with that phase of life. It just so happens that my family, as far as I know, had no—well, I'm sure my great great-grands had difficulty, but I can't recall anything that they have said that was too bad. In fact, I don't remember them saying anything

about—

Sonya Ramsey: How did the children learn how to act around Whites and how to act in segregated places?

Eva Gibbs Adams: How did they act?

Sonya Ramsey: Yeah. How did they learn how to act that way?

Eva Gibbs Adams: In segregated places?

Sonya Ramsey: Mm-hmm.

Eva Gibbs Adams: You mean like say for instance, if they go out?

Sonya Ramsey: Yeah.

Eva Gibbs Adams: If they go—they acted all right. The ones that I know of, they weren't loud or rude or—

Sonya Ramsey: Oh, no. I mean how did they learn to go, not to go to the White water fountain and things like that?

Eva Gibbs Adams: Well, I guess parents told them. Said, "Now this water's for Whites and this is for Blacks." Well, naturally, some of them were going to try that White water, which was the same as the Black fountain. So that's the way they learned to do. They learned that the Whites didn't respect them. They'd go in a store, Post Office or something, if a White's in front of you and let the door slam if you right there.

Eva Gibbs Adams: And those things just grew up to a certain point when the Blacks got together and decided that we'd taken enough. And of course, we're still not getting everything that we need. But in New Bern, since integration, I don't think we had a problem, not too big a problem, not even the turnover of the schools, even though we had a few, who were, in fact, one incident where they burned a cross in front of one of the Black girl's homes. But that was about the biggest thing.

Eva Gibbs Adams: And of course, we only had one big high school here for New Bern City, and they pulled a Black principal from a Black high school and placed them in the White high school, because seemingly that White principal was not able to maintain the order with Blacks going over, not all White is in this school term. Then, the next term the Blacks are coming in.

Eva Gibbs Adams: Well, naturally, some the kids, some of these kids, the White kids were going to have their fun with the Blacks. When I say fun, I mean teasing them, calling them niggers and whatnot and like that. So they found out that the Black children were not going to take it. And of course, they retaliated, but not to an extent that it drew public attention, not too much attention. But they have done pretty good here.

Eva Gibbs Adams: You go downtown now and sometimes back if you coming up the steps at the Post Office, this is a person, lady or a man who's at the door and think you're going to be there before they go in. They'll hold the door for you. They'll push the door for you. But—

Sonya Ramsey: I wanted to go back and ask you, I guess, questions before integration and everything. So I guess I wanted to ask you, when you were growing up, what were some of the games that you and your friends played for fun?

Eva Gibbs Adams: For fun?

Sonya Ramsey: Mm-hmm.

Eva Gibbs Adams: Oh, we on the street. We'd draw hop scotch and we jumped rope and we played hide and seek and played ring games. And what else did we do? We just played cook—kids were interested in cooking, playing house and everything. I remember the back of this yellow house way back, there were two big cherry trees there. And I remember the lady's girl that lived over there, and some of the others would go to the back of the field and have our little kitchen.

Eva Gibbs Adams: And of course, the Black people mainly work for the mills, and people had to take the dinners to them. So when we got our little cooking done, we'd come out here on this street, supposed to be taking our meal. So that's another one of the games we played. And let's see, what else did we do? I don't know.

Eva Gibbs Adams: But that was an incident that Whites didn't want Blacks to have anything equal to their or having, they're sharing. So anyway, we knew they didn't want us to succeed. So it was said that someone took the food to a man at the mill, and of course the man was eating and the White man came up and said, "Ooh, you have a good appetite."

Eva Gibbs Adams: And no. The man said, "Well, see, I got a good appetite. The reason I have so much food." And the White man said, "I sure wish I had that appetite." So the Black man said, "You want everything we have, now you want my appetite." I mean little things like that. But frankly speaking, I have had had no, what I would call trouble with the Whites as such.

Eva Gibbs Adams: Now when we—I guess I'm going back and forward, but when the schools were being, going to be integrated, they had workshops with the Black teachers and the White. In fact, it was really just a discussion period. They had it several days. We poured out what we felt was right. They poured out what they felt was right.

Eva Gibbs Adams: Well, sometimes we'd almost get in arguments because some statements were made that had the slaves, the slave owners not been intimate with the Blacks, we all would have been Black. But the White man interfered, we were good enough for that, but not good enough for anything else.

Eva Gibbs Adams: We told the teachers sat down there and I said, I told—I didn't tell them that another teacher did. But I told them, I said, "Now, up where I live, nights, particular, I'd see White men riding through the Black area looking to pick up some Black girls." I said, "If they're good enough to pick up at night, why they're not good enough to pick up in the daytime?"

Eva Gibbs Adams: I said, "That's why we are multi-colored because of your race." And of course, we did fine. I went on into the integrated school, and of course we held our own. I knew as much as the next one did over there in my field. So I let nobody push me over. I let nobody push me over.

Eva Gibbs Adams: And it was to the point that those White teachers who were very friendly—in fact, I'm just a person that people become friends with and I taught, and what we had at that time pods, P-O-D-S and I think it was at a P-A-R-D-S one. But anyway, I taught with three other teachers and there was one teacher that I knew was racist because one of the other White teachers told me, she said, "But don't let her know I told you." She taught language arts and so did I. And she just thought she was way up. She wanted to be first in everything. If we went to the assembly in our party, she had to be the first one out, even though she was nearest to the door, the exit.

Eva Gibbs Adams: So I was having a program one day, and I told her and told the others that I wanted my children to go first so I could seat them so that I could watch them. That particular day, she got her children up and took them out first. So I immediately told her, "You", when I got in the auditorium before everybody was seated, I said, "I asked you to let my class go first because I was having the program." I said, "No." And I said it right in front of the children. I said, "You had to hop up and be the first one in there." She cried.

Eva Gibbs Adams: So anyway, for lunch was the same thing, in our pods, she wanted to be first because she's next to the door. So I put an end to that in this way. I said—now I met with the three others. I said, "This is the way we are going to work this thing in this pod by going to lunch." I said, "If you go first, one at the door, you go first this week, I'm going first next week. And the man across the hall is going first the next, and the other one, the first, it'll come back to you and there'll be no trouble."

Eva Gibbs Adams: So honey, everybody, the people agreed to it. And that's the way we worked it and it worked out beautifully. Worked out beautifully. So I had no trouble during the integrating of faculty members, not at all. The principal, if anybody would get in, a young teacher would get in and she was having difficulty, even with the discipline or her subject matter, he referred the people to me. And of course, I thought that was something. And of course, that's the way it's been.

Sonya Ramsey: Okay. I just wanted to ask you—I'm sorry, I keep going back. I wanted to ask you, what kind of occupations did the people have in your, the adults have in your neighborhood when you were growing up?

Eva Gibbs Adams: Well, now my daddy and several, most of them was the mills, lumber mills.

Sonya Ramsey: Is it lumber mills?

Eva Gibbs Adams: Yes. And my daddy was contracting tanner, roofer. My mother didn't work out in service until my daddy had a stroke. Then, she went to work out in the service.

Sonya Ramsey: Okay. I wanted ask—

Eva Gibbs Adams: And let see what else. They called my daddy a tinsmith too, because after he had his stroke, he couldn't go up on the tops. So he did things like mending, utility, or I meant to say utensils and stoves and little lighthouses. And of course, now before my day, they had a horse and I think he was paying about \$5 a month on that. And then, I do remember when they had a cow, but we never had a farm. We've had a garden.

Eva Gibbs Adams: And of course, my mother didn't work out until he had the stroke. She was a house lady. And of course, that's it. What else you want to know?

Sonya Ramsey: I wanted to ask, do you have any remembrances of your grandparents?

Eva Gibbs Adams: Do I have any what?

Sonya Ramsey: Remembrances of your grandparents?

Eva Gibbs Adams: I remember my grandmother on my daddy's side and on my mother's side.

Sonya Ramsey: Okay.

Eva Gibbs Adams: Now I don't remember too much about my daddy's mother, but I never knew her to work out. She owned a lot that's next to me. She owned that. And my mother's mother, I didn't know her father because he had passed. Okay. But I think she said she lived in the rural district growing up outside of New Bern. And of course, naturally I'm sure they had a farm. But coming into town, I don't know. I had an uncle, my daddy's brother, who was an artist, but he died before I was born.

Sonya Ramsey: You said you remembered your grandmother. What was she like?

Eva Gibbs Adams: My grandmother?

Sonya Ramsey: Mm-hmm.

Eva Gibbs Adams: Well, I told you I never knew her to work out. She was real tall, real lovable, everybody up—this is a [indistinct 00:22:51] section they call it. And of course, she just stayed in the house and worked. Now my granddaddy, not my granddaddy, great-granddaddy, last name was Bartlett. They own from that lot all this block all around.

Sonya Ramsey: Wow.

Eva Gibbs Adams: And not until I guess the '40's, the street in the back of me, which now is G Street, was Bartlett Street, my great-great-granddaddy's name.

Sonya Ramsey: Do you know how he came to own that land?

Eva Gibbs Adams: No. I really don't. I can't tell you, but I guess it was in the '50's when they just changed the name.

Sonya Ramsey: Did they keep his land or is it still owned by them?

Eva Gibbs Adams: Now, that land over there now, which he owned. That is mine. The grandchildren signed it over to me. My granddad and grandmother on my daddy's side gave us, my daddy, this piece of land on which this house is built. He sold just enough space between his lot and the one he gave my daddy to go up in this alley for a cart and horse, horse and cart.

Eva Gibbs Adams: That was the width of the alley he sold. And then, some White person bought the land back of this house, but not over there. But recent, well, not recently, the city has taken some of the width from the lot over there and made a bigger alley, because they had four houses down there, which are not there now. So that made the lot over there not as wide, but it is as deep.

Eva Gibbs Adams: And of course, excuse me, I don't know why they change the names of the street so much. I grew up with this street all the way up to the railroad as Myrtle Avenue.

Sonya Ramsey: Oh, okay.

Eva Gibbs Adams: They changed it once to Craven Avenue, because we got a Craven Street downtown. Now the block in which I live from K Street to this corner is H Street. And across the corner, which is just as straight as this, is Myrtle Avenue. But we played, and now some of the people that lived around here then would go, trucks would come by for our hands to go out and pick cotton and they'd go out and pick beans and I guess they did tobacco too, but that's the way a lot of the people around here did. Particularly the female group. They take their children and spend the day, take their lunches and whatnot and go in the cotton field or whatever the type of farm products they were raising.

Eva Gibbs Adams: And that's what a lot of them did. Many of them worked out in service. White people used to have servants all the time, but now they've gotten to the point where they eat out and the Blacks don't get as much. So the people then that's just about what they did. They worked in fields and things of that type and went to church.

Eva Gibbs Adams: We got too many churches in New Bern for the people who attend. We got enough church—in fact, there's enough who don't go to church that will fill up all of the churches, but they rather

just hang around.

Eva Gibbs Adams: I can see this point, the young men back in my early days were anxious to work. The type worker that I've described to you, the mill, the fields, cotton, tobacco, and corn, and whatnot. They were ancestor work. They got very little for their work, but they were ancestor work. But now I don't believe these guys want to work.

Eva Gibbs Adams: They stand around as if they don't have a place to stay. If you can get a quarter and I can get a quarter and he can get a quarter, we get 75 cent bottle of wine and you sip off once, just pass it around. The most sharing people I've ever seen, they said, "[indistinct 00:27:53] don't die." But anyway that's just about what I know.

Sonya Ramsey: Okay. I wanted to ask you, what type of values did your parents try to instill in you?

Eva Gibbs Adams: Hmm?

Sonya Ramsey: What type of values did your parents try to instill in you when you were growing up?

Eva Gibbs Adams: Into children?

Sonya Ramsey: Yeah.

Eva Gibbs Adams: That's one thing, they really wanted the best values the one in my neighborhood. They wanted you to respect them as parents, respect the neighbors. If a neighbor would see me doing something that they knew my mother didn't approve of, that person could correct me and come and tell my mother, and I probably would get something from her.

Eva Gibbs Adams: There was not the anger which people have now. Kids went to school. Naturally, it was segregated school. They were much better off really to tell you the truth in a segregated school than they are in this integrated situation. Because back there, the Black teachers were interested in the children, trying to teach them how to get ahead, the ways of life, how to attain it and whatnot.

Eva Gibbs Adams: And of course, now if you go into the schools now, which is basically White teachers, they're pushing us back now. So we got a good [indistinct 00:27:58] here and we try to, NAACP, try to keep some in, but the Whites don't particularly care. Some of them do.

Eva Gibbs Adams: Now I will say that I work with some dedicated White teachers as well as Black ones in the integration situation. But in a segregated, you were going to learn before you were promoted. They didn't have this progressive promotion. Go through the grade knowing nothing and leave knowing nothing. And that's what handled a lot of our Black children back.

Eva Gibbs Adams: They brought the books home. Parents saw that they studied, most of the parents. Now

we are always going to have a few who won't care anyway. But the kids brought their books home. Most of them knew because the parents wanted the kids to rise above themselves, because they hadn't had the opportunity and they wanted the children to.

Eva Gibbs Adams: So nine cases out of ten, when a kid ain't came from school, before you went out to play, you had homework. That's in a segregated situation. And you got your homework, whether it was right or wrong, you went through the process. So I think the Black parents put more value on how the children succeeded or developed than they do now, because we are having too many young mothers now. I can sit on my porch for days and almost cry to see all these 16-year-old kids with baby carriages. Not one, but two and everything.

Sonya Ramsey: I wanted to ask you about, do you have any remembrances of your elementary school and what were some of your teachers like?

Eva Gibbs Adams: I became a teacher because I was so impressed with my 4th grade teacher that I said, "If I grew up, I'm going to be a teacher just like she is." Now kids and I looked up to our teachers as a role model, whereas now they don't care how you, teacher or no teacher. But we did. We respected them. And I remember I had a friend we'd go to visit them like weekends, go and stay a little while with them.

Eva Gibbs Adams: And they don't look up the teachers now, but we did. We thought the teacher, the preacher, the parents, the preacher, and the teachers were the people that we were supposed to live up to their standards, but it's different now.

Sonya Ramsey: I wanted to ask you, I guess I know your high school years. Did you participate in any activities like the—

Eva Gibbs Adams: In high school?

Sonya Ramsey: Mm-hmm.

Eva Gibbs Adams: In high school I was in the Glee club. I was on the basketball team.

Sonya Ramsey: Oh, okay.

Eva Gibbs Adams: And I was in the French club and oh, the drama. I did drama.

Sonya Ramsey: Did you have—

Eva Gibbs Adams: Hmm?

Sonya Ramsey: Go on. I'm sorry.

Eva Gibbs Adams: No. I was just fixing to say, I started doing acting in high school in the Drama Department. And when I became old enough, they have what they call the Women's Federated Club, this national thing around here.

Sonya Ramsey: I wanted to ask, when you played basketball, did you ever get to travel to different cities?

Eva Gibbs Adams: Yeah. Well, we just went locally, you know what I mean? Outside about 10, 15 miles like that. But now, when I became a teacher here, it was segregated. Before they had certified physical-ed teachers, I did the high school girls physical-ed for four years, and each day they would send a high school teacher in the afternoon down to my 8th grade, and I did the physical-ed for four years. And we did travel a little bit with basketball, but some of the kids now will say something about it, even now, those that I taught.

Eva Gibbs Adams: And of course, I've always loved to dance. So when I went to college, of course, I was taking elementary education and I remembered all the little dances that we learned and I brought it here. And then, of course, I figured if I were going to teach the physical-ed for a while, that I would go to Hampton, Virginia and take nothing but health and physical-ed. So I went for 12-week sessions and took nothing but physical-ed and dancing.

Sonya Ramsey: What type of things did you teach women in physical education? Did they learn exercises or play games, or what kind of things did they do?

Eva Gibbs Adams: When I had them?

Sonya Ramsey: Mm-hmm.

Eva Gibbs Adams: We played softball. We played badminton. We played—we didn't play soccer at that time. But we had little ring games, little—well, I have to go back. After I finished Hampton's four years, then I went to New York University and I was taking health, health education. And of course, I came back and we'd have regular exercises and we had no gym, but we would always go through the routines of some type of exercises before we entered into our games.

Eva Gibbs Adams: And of course, when I was in New—oh, New York U, I was taking health. I went two summers at Columbia and went into the folk dancing under Michael Hermann, who was a folk dance specialist. And I did that over at Columbia in the International House. And of course, I learned things like the Jewish [indistinct 00:36:16] and Black Hawk Waltz, which was a New England waltz. And I did minor just tapping to a certain extent, ballet and loads of folk dances.

Eva Gibbs Adams: So I had charged, let me see. We had the one high school and we had two, three elementary schools. And I had to do the Mayday activities. We used to have Maydays, and this is the way we approached it. If there were four 1st grades, then I'd find a dance that was suitable for those children and I'd teach it to the teachers. They had to come to be taught.

Eva Gibbs Adams: And then, in order to get all of it done and all kids participate, it was like a full ring, if there were four classes, a full ring circles. So this 1st grade is doing just with the other one so you won't have to be doing one of these things. 2nd grade, the same thing. All 2nd grade teachers learn the same dance and taught it right on through.

Eva Gibbs Adams: Well, I did it for the whole city, the Black schools. And I was pregnant.

Sonya Ramsey: Oh my.

Eva Gibbs Adams: But I enjoyed it. I enjoyed my teaching. And I think after having taught 40 years, I only lost what I call lost, and I found out recently, it's not really lost. One student and that student has moved in my neighborhood around the corner. She wouldn't speak to me. I was interested to the point that I wanted to help her, her mother had tried to help her. Her mother was anxious for her to succeed.

Eva Gibbs Adams: So she was a pretty girl. Very lazy, very stubborn, very mean and I don't say that often about kids, but she was downright mean. So I gave her extra work to bring in so that I could give her a D. She didn't want to do it, but she did do it. She had three White teachers and she had me.

Eva Gibbs Adams: All right. When time came for promotion, the three White teachers gave her a straight F, and I gave her a D because of the extra work I had made her do. All right. I'm her home teacher, and the other teachers are the three White teachers. But before we could retain a student, we would have to get all of the teachers that had taught the child and the principal and discuss the child from a disciplinary angle to academic, whether the child showed interest, rude or whatnot, before we would—

Eva Gibbs Adams: So anyway, she was failed. That meant she had to repeat 8th grade. But her mother got on the telephone after the child took the card back, I had to write the card and transferred her marks. Oh, she didn't give me one piece out on that telephone. And I imagined the kid was in the room with her.

Eva Gibbs Adams: Well, she talked all she wanted to. I said, "You ought to be praising me. I'm the one that gave her just the passing mark because of the work. I wouldn't have just given it to her if she hadn't brought the work in." I said, "I'm the one that gave her the D." "Well, you might have changed some marks of the teacher, White teachers." I said, "Go over and ask her."

Eva Gibbs Adams: So anyway, the mother didn't bother about speaking to me for a long, long time. The child could have run right over me and wouldn't have spoken. So one day I was at the laundromat and somebody knew that I had taught, and I said they wanted to know something about my teaching. So I told them, I didn't know it was the girl's grandparents. I told them about this one child that would not speak to me and this and that. I said, and I was trying to help her.

Eva Gibbs Adams: I said, evidently the mother must have talked in front of her when she was piecing me out, because the kid wouldn't speak to me. Well, after that—Well, during the time we were talking, I found out it

was the child's grandparents, and evidently they went and told the mother what I said. The next time I saw the mother, she almost ran to me to hug me and kiss me and everything. I said nothing but accepted her.

Eva Gibbs Adams: And of course, whenever she'd have this daughter that was in concern, she would pass, put her head up like this, wouldn't ever say anything. I speak to her, but she wouldn't answer. So anyway, I call myself, and then now I don't call myself. I did at that time call myself losing one student out of 40 years. But she's in the neighborhood and the other day they had fun day for the people up here, and she was there.

Eva Gibbs Adams: And I heard her say, "Hi, Ms. Adams." So I said, well, I guess she realizes that she was wrong and the mother was wrong, but other than that—

Sonya Ramsey: Okay. Well, I wanted to go back to when you were in high school. I wanted to ask what was the social life like and what was dating like during your high school years?

Eva Gibbs Adams: In high school?

Sonya Ramsey: Yeah.

Eva Gibbs Adams: We, dating was something you almost had to slip to do until you were a certain age. But now so far as these children having parties, during my years of high school, we had chaperone. Teachers would have to be at the parties or the dances. And of course, we had a good time with them, but kids did not have the cars to go off after the party. They had to go home. They had to walk home.

Eva Gibbs Adams: And a bunch of us would get together sometimes if one friend had a car, we'd couple off and just not go out of town. Just ride around the streets. And of course, when it came to the time for your boyfriend to come to see you, he would come to the house. If we were going out, you'd get permission from the mother, the parents, and you'd go on out. But you did have to have permission.

Sonya Ramsey: I wanted to ask, what college did you attend undergraduate years?

Eva Gibbs Adams: Hmm?

Sonya Ramsey: What college did you attend your undergraduate years?

Eva Gibbs Adams: Well, I went to Winston-Salem College.

Sonya Ramsey: Why did you select that college to attend?

Eva Gibbs Adams: I did. I know exactly why I selected it. At first, I wanted to be an elementary teacher, school teacher. And secondly, I knew that my sister was the only one that was going to—well, the main one. She was working in New York that was going to pay for my education, because my mother did not work out.

Eva Gibbs Adams: And I selected a school in Winston-Salem, because you could get a two-year normal with a B certificate and come out and teach. I didn't know how long her job was going to last. And so, I said, "I'll pick something that if it doesn't, it won't be a hardship on the family." So that's why I picked Winston-Salem.

Eva Gibbs Adams: I did the two years. I came out, but I did not stop going summer school. I finished my B.S degree through the summers. I'd work in the winter.

Sonya Ramsey: Okay. I wanted to ask you, what was Winston-Salem like as compared to New Bern?

Eva Gibbs Adams: Winston-Salem?

Sonya Ramsey: Mm-hmm.

Eva Gibbs Adams: A huge, big city. What you're talking about? Well, anyway, I remember when I was traveling and I had a train that left here and train left from New Bern. I hadn't been out of New Bern or vicinity before and when I got on a train, the only thing I could think of was a hymn, "lead down me on and I am far from home."

Eva Gibbs Adams: But anyway, when I got to Winston, it was mainly a girl school. You could almost count the boys on that. But I was very much impressed with it because I thought their method of teaching and what they did was pertinent to what we were going to need up with here. And fortunately, I had one teacher, my critic teacher, who made us make lesson plans for one teacher school, two teacher schools and whatnot.

Eva Gibbs Adams: So we had done that, and we had done it on the basis of just one particular room. And fortunately, I had done that because when I first came out of the two-year school, I taught in a rural district where there was one teacher.

Sonya Ramsey: Where was that?

Eva Gibbs Adams: It was outside of Vanceboro, North Carolina. I had about 26 students in the whole house, in the whole school. That's from 1st grade through 7th.

Sonya Ramsey: Oh, okay.

Eva Gibbs Adams: But see, I had been trained to know how to keep everybody busy and on the level in which they were supposed to be studying, because we had made lesson plans for them.

Sonya Ramsey: What were some of the problems the students faced—