

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: —in the western section near Johnson C. Smith. And I had a grandmother who lived on the other side of town, right near where my wife lived. And so we learned about each other in visiting my grandmother, which was just about a block from her house. And so while visiting over there, we learned to play with her and her sisters. She had three sisters—isn't that right [indistinct 00:00:43]?

Lillian Jenkins Shute: That's right.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Three sisters and a brother. Also, her daddy was a Presbyterian minister, who was preaching just about a block away at the church at the time. Also, my father was a Presbyterian minister, and he worked at Johnson C. Smith from 1907 to '47. So—We went to high school together. And after high school she went to Durham to take nurse training. Maybe she can tell you about her nurse training better than I can.

Lillian Jenkins Shute: And you went to A&T State.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Well, I'll tell it. You tell about your nursing.

Lillian Jenkins Shute: A&T State University.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: No, you tell about your nursing training.

Rhonda Mawhood: Where did you study?

Lillian Jenkins Shute: Lincoln Hospital School of Nursing in Durham. North Carolina—

Rhonda Mawhood: Do you remember what it was that made you decide to be a nurse, Mrs. Shute?

Lillian Jenkins Shute: Oh, I just, as long as I could remember, it seemed like that's what I wanted to do. Because we're retired now, but I was in public health for a while, and then after that, I worked at a hospital here, Good Samaritan Hospital. And we've been married for 50 years. We have three children and 12 grandchildren.

Rhonda Mawhood: Did you notice a big difference between Durham and Charlotte when you moved to Durham?

Lillian Jenkins Shute: Not too much. I guess I didn't go out that much. I thought Durham was a nice place to stay.

Rhonda Mawhood: Where did you live when you were doing your nursing training?

Lillian Jenkins Shute: In [indistinct 00:03:01].

Rhonda Mawhood: And did you have friends there? Other students?

Lillian Jenkins Shute: I've had a few. I knew some people that lived close to the hospital, we would visit sometime.

Rhonda Mawhood: Did you have any family in Durham at that time?

Lillian Jenkins Shute: No.

Rhonda Mawhood: And how long did your training last?

Lillian Jenkins Shute: Three years.

Rhonda Mawhood: Did you stay in Durham over the summers as well?

Lillian Jenkins Shute: At that time, it was year round. We didn't get the summers off. That was just for a short vacation.

Rhonda Mawhood: And what did your parents do? Your father was a Presbyterian minister, and your mother?

Lillian Jenkins Shute: My mother died when I was quite young. I had a stepmother. She came into a home with five children. She really stayed at home, and she had a job, but she [indistinct 00:04:11].

Rhonda Mawhood: And you—

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: I went off to North Carolina A&T University. And while there I played football and I was a member of the track team. After finishing school, I got a job with a textile outfit, and I stayed there 35 years.

Rhonda Mawhood: And—

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: 35 years, in the quality control division. And after that, why, I retired and started taking care of my wife. But let me go back a little further now. I came from a large family. There were, well, eight of us. This is the original Shute family.

Rhonda Mawhood: Thank you. Oh, wonderful picture.

Lillian Jenkins Shute: See that little boy on the left?

Rhonda Mawhood: The one here? Handsome family.

Lillian Jenkins Shute: There were four boys, and he's the only one left now. Only boy.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: I might also add that all of my brothers, all of our sisters, and my dad finished Johnson C. Smith, and my two sisters, they're still living. The older sisters, they're still living. They taught in the city system for many years. And the baby sister—

Rhonda Mawhood: [indistinct 00:06:13] one?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Yeah. She married a Baptist minister. And I might also add that all my sisters married preachers.

Rhonda Mawhood: Did any of the boys become preachers?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: How's that?

Rhonda Mawhood: Did any of your brothers become preachers, Mr. Shute?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: One brother, this one, taught at Livingstone College and Bennett College. He had a PhD degree. The sisters all had a master's degree.

Rhonda Mawhood: My.

Lillian Jenkins Shute: [indistinct 00:07:00].

Rhonda Mawhood: Thank you, ma'am. So the two of you, it seems to me, might have spent quite a lot of your time in church when you were growing up. Can you tell me a little bit about church?

Lillian Jenkins Shute: That's true.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Yeah. We went to church each Sunday, Sunday afternoon, and occasionally at night. Sunday night. We had what it was called, Christian Endeavor. I don't know what you had at your church or not, but we had it at my church. She was a member of the Brandon Presbyterian Church, and I was a member of the Biddleville Presbyterian Church. And I might add that I have—I am a lifelong deacon—correction, elder of the church.

Lillian Jenkins Shute: I had one brother. He was a minister also, and I think my father was proud that he was [indistinct 00:08:11]. But he started his own church, the Statesville African Presbyterian Church. Think he served over 20 years.

Rhonda Mawhood: And where was your brother's church?

Lillian Jenkins Shute: In Statesville Avenue.

Rhonda Mawhood: Statesville—Charlotte. Were there organizations for young people in your churches when you were growing up?

Lillian Jenkins Shute: Yeah, but like he said, they called it Christian Endeavor back then, I think.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: They've always had the young people's program. Sunday school and church and afternoon service for the young people.

Lillian Jenkins Shute: I think his church had the Boy Scouts for [indistinct 00:08:59].

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Had Boy Scout troop.

Rhonda Mawhood: And did you do fun things in the church, like picnics or things like that?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Oh yeah, we had picnics. Yeah.

Rhonda Mawhood: And did you ever see each other at those picnics? Did different churches ever have them together?

Lillian Jenkins Shute: Not too much during that period. I guess we got together more after what, high school?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: After college. She had a lot of fellows from Johnson C. Smith to come and see her, see—so, and of course I was in Greensboro most of the time, and when I came home we decided that probably the grass was greener at home. So we courted for seven years, and got married in '41. And we have three children, two boys and a girl, and 12 grandchildren.

Rhonda Mawhood: Did you correspond when you were at college, away from each other?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: No.

Lillian Jenkins Shute: He wrote once in a while.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Not too much.

Rhonda Mawhood: And did you write back, Mrs. Shute?

Lillian Jenkins Shute: Yes. He'd like to write mostly. And he was at school. You wanting to talk about the sit-ins, anything?

Rhonda Mawhood: Before that, actually. We know more about the civil rights movement. We're trying to sort of figure out where the civil rights movement came from, what kinds of things were going on before that.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: I might add, my father in 1892 played in the first Black intercollegiate football game in America. And the game was played between Bill University and Livingstone College. And they just recently celebrate the 100th anniversary last fall. Also, he started, I believe it was 1900, helped started the first Black school system in Gastonia, North Carolina.

Rhonda Mawhood: Was your mother involved in your father's work?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Yeah, she worked with him. Course with children coming on, they start—I think the first child was born 1900 and the last one 1924. So yeah. But even between children, she taught in the county school system a while.

Rhonda Mawhood: Really? Elementary school or secondary school?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Elementary school. She's also a graduate of Barber Scotia College.

Rhonda Mawhood: Barber-Scotia.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Yeah. In Concord.

Rhonda Mawhood: Do you remember your grandparents at all, Mr. Shute? I think Mrs. Shute might.

Lillian Jenkins Shute: I don't remember mine.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: I remember my father's mother and also my mother's mother. I remember both.

Rhonda Mawhood: What kinds of things do you remember about your grandmother, Mr. Shute?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Oh, they were very lively person. And I recall they would come visit us on occasion some Sundays, and they would, sometime would sit down and not speak to other. One of those things. But at one time, one or both of them lived with us in the family house. We had a house on the—right near the campus on West Fayette Street, and for a while my daddy's mother lived with us, and she passed away in '24, 1924. And then my mother's mother came and stayed with us. And she lived to ripe old age of 94, I believe. And my mother died when she was what? Was 95?

Lillian Jenkins Shute: I thought it was 92.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: 92, 93.

Lillian Jenkins Shute: I'm not sure.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: And as of now I have two sisters who are both over 90 years old. So they somewhat long livers.

Rhonda Mawhood: That's wonderful.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Yeah.

Rhonda Mawhood: Did your grandmothers ever tell you stories about their childhood, the family history, that kind of thing?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Yes. Some stories. I don't recall too much. They had to work in the field, and that was pretty rough going at time, but they didn't talk too much about it. I know my mother's mother, she had I don't know how many children, four or five children. And at one time she was more or less—had to carry the whole load, so to speak. But my father's mother, she had for a long time somebody staying with her, her niece staying with her. And of course when her niece got married that's when she moved in with us, and she stayed with us until she passed away.

Rhonda Mawhood: Do you ever remember getting into trouble when you were children? Things that your parents would discipline you for?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Oh yeah. Yeah, we—

Lillian Jenkins Shute: My younger sister said that I would fight her, and I didn't want to talk about it after we grew up.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: We had chickens, cows, and a large garden. So for the most part we raised most of our food, and very seldom had to go to the store for anything. And then we had to, as I grew older, [indistinct 00:16:43] because my older brothers did it before I did. They used to do all the family washing on the washing board, big tub, washboard.

Lillian Jenkins Shute: We did, too.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: And they grew up and left home. Then that fell on me. I had to get up early in the morning, make fires, four, five fires, and help wash the clothes. When my mother—my grandmother moved with us, she left a house over in the Greenville section near where my wife lived, and my daddy rented it out for \$2 a week. And my job, when I was going to high school, was to go over there each Monday morning, collect that \$2. It was a distance of about almost two miles, from my house over there. Good two miles. I

have to go over before breakfast, collect that \$2, come back home. And I got a quarter for doing that. And that quarter would last me all week. I could spend it today, but it would have to last all week, see. So that was one of the chores I had.

Rhonda Mawhood: What kinds of things would you spend your quarter on?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Well, we would, at school—what they have down in basement, Leah? Wasn't a snack bar. But you could buy a meal.

Lillian Jenkins Shute: Buy a hot dog or something.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Hot dog, something. You could get a hot dog about that long for a nickel, and drink for a nickel. Sometimes boys would get a loaf of bread for a nickel, cut a big hole in it, and pour a can of beans in there. At school do a lot of things growing up. But it was great growing up. But in the section where my wife lived, the boys were kind of tickled about fellows going walk—coming over there seeing their girls. And sometime they'd fire a rock over there. But I got along with most of them. I never had much trouble.

Rhonda Mawhood: So you could visit that side of town okay?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Yeah. Excuse me.

Rhonda Mawhood: I'm living now in Durham, because I'm going to Duke University. But—

Lillian Jenkins Shute: You like Durham.

Rhonda Mawhood: Mm-hmm. I like it. People are very friendly there.

Lillian Jenkins Shute: I've never been to Canada. I was hoping I'd get to see it, when I could travel. I've never been there.

Rhonda Mawhood: Montreal's a nice city. Well, it's my home, so of course I think it's a nice city.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: What's your major?

Rhonda Mawhood: History. I'm doing a—I just started a PhD in history.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: That's good.

Rhonda Mawhood: This past year. I'm learning a lot.

Lillian Jenkins Shute: One of our grandchildren graduated from Duke.

Rhonda Mawhood: Really?

Lillian Jenkins Shute: She's living in Pennsylvania there.

Rhonda Mawhood: I'd like to bring you back a little bit. You were telling me about being in high school and what you spent your money on, that you were collecting for your father. Did you have dances or things like that at high school?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: At what?

Rhonda Mawhood: Did you have dances or things like that when you were in high school?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Oh yeah. Yeah. They had dances and usually—

Lillian Jenkins Shute: House parties too, a lot. Seem like.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Mostly house parties. But once in a while they would have dances at school, usually at the end of the year, something like that, they'd have dances. But I guess I did most of my dancing when I was in college. Fraternal dances and so forth.

Rhonda Mawhood: So you were a member of a fraternity?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Oh yes. I am a '58 year member of the Omega Psi Phi chapter.

Rhonda Mawhood: I see. And did you join a sorority, Mrs. Shute?

Lillian Jenkins Shute: No, I didn't.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Yeah, this is a—member of the—this man was ex-president of A&T, and he was the oldest member in the national fraternity. He just died a few weeks ago at 101 years old.

Rhonda Mawhood: Oh my. I would have liked to be able to talk to him. I'm sure he saw a lot in 101 years.

Lillian Jenkins Shute: He was pretty well [indistinct 00:21:36] at times—

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Yeah. He really was, until he got sick.

Rhonda Mawhood: And what position did you play in football?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: What position? I played right guard. I was a little fellow, only weighed 160 pound, 165 pounds. But I was right in the middle of that. And on the track team I ran the hundred yard dash, time nine, nine and a half, which was pretty fast time. I was inducted in the sport hall of fame in '82.

Rhonda Mawhood: Did you ever see Mr. Shute play football, Mrs. Shute?

Lillian Jenkins Shute: No. Didn't get up there. I feel like our son's more interested in basketball. [indistinct 00:22:59] football, they really liked basketball.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Can you see?

Rhonda Mawhood: Oh, there you are. Yes sir. So you were a good athlete, and you said that your father played football as well.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Well, played football at the very beginning of football.

Rhonda Mawhood: Was he happy that you followed in his footsteps to play football?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Oh yeah. He passed on before I was inducted, but I don't think he ever saw me play, because we did come down here to play Smith from Greensboro, on two occasions I believe. But the others saw me, anyway.

Rhonda Mawhood: Did he ever suggest that he would like you to become a preacher like he was? Well, or your brothers, maybe?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: What'd you say?

Rhonda Mawhood: Did your father ever suggest that he might like you or one of your brothers to become a preacher also? Like he was?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: He didn't encourage to [indistinct 00:24:25] no, he just let us go our own way. I was going into another field. I wanted to go to mortuary school, but I didn't get much support, so I wanted something that's—and I enjoyed my work. It was type of work that kept you on your toes all the time. Plus I had—worked with people. The top man was a man from—he finished Albany, I think he was about 4th or 5th in his class, and his wife was number one in the class. They were very nice people. We got along fine. So I, matter of fact, I went there to stay six months. I had a job in South Carolina in a school, Presbyterian school, but we had one child and we were looking for another one. And that time they were not paying too much in the schools, so I could make more by staying here. So I did. So I stayed home for 35 years.

Rhonda Mawhood: So you married in 1941. Can you tell me a little bit about what your wedding was like?

Lillian Jenkins Shute: It was a very small wedding, married at home. I had to have that wedding gown.

Rhonda Mawhood: Where did you—did someone make your wedding gown for you?

Lillian Jenkins Shute: No, we bought it.

Rhonda Mawhood: Bought it, mm-hmm.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: This was one of our distinguished brothers that you knew, I'm sure.

Rhonda Mawhood: Oh my goodness. Yes. Yeah, of course. Did it take you a long time to pick out your wedding dress, Mrs. Shute?

Lillian Jenkins Shute: No, it wasn't much of mine. It didn't cost much. But I always wanted a wedding gown, even though I didn't have a church wedding. My father had passed, and my stepmother was doing the best she could.

Rhonda Mawhood: And so was it Mr. Shute's father who married you?

Lillian Jenkins Shute: My pastor.

Rhonda Mawhood: Your pastor. I see.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: [indistinct 00:27:20].

Rhonda Mawhood: Oh, thank you. It looks like maybe you were married at Christmas time.

Lillian Jenkins Shute: December 22nd.

Rhonda Mawhood: December 22nd.

Lillian Jenkins Shute: I got cheated, because you got your gift all in one, Christmas and anniversary. And on top of that, my birthday is January, too. I think one year I got—he said, "This is for all three of them, in one." Was that the year I got the TV, the small TV?

Rhonda Mawhood: So you got married right after the beginning of the Second World War, or right after the United States joined?

Lillian Jenkins Shute: Yeah, right after Pearl Harbor. That was the 7th.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Beginning of the war almost.

Rhonda Mawhood: Do you remember what life was like for people during the Second World War here in Charlotte?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Yeah, things were very tight. For instance, people who smoked cigarettes, in going

awake in the morning, you could see a line in front of the drugstore waiting, cigarette line. The ration board gave us so many coupons that were—

Lillian Jenkins Shute: Yeah.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: So things—

Lillian Jenkins Shute: Things were rationed like sugar and—

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: —other things were rationed.

Lillian Jenkins Shute: You couldn't get but so many pairs of shoes because they were sending them to the army. The servicemen. Had to have a stamp to get the shoe then.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Yeah, you couldn't get so much gas.

Lillian Jenkins Shute: And nylons were scarce. They had lines for those. Some of that must have been things they had to use in service, and evidently.

Rhonda Mawhood: Was it hard for you to keep house during the war, Mrs. Shute, with rationing with that?

Lillian Jenkins Shute: No. We got stamps for the children, and sometimes other people would want some of the stamps, because they didn't have children, and they wanted more things. But we managed very well.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: A lot of things we do without, learned to do without.

Rhonda Mawhood: What kinds of things would you learn to do without?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Well, you couldn't get sugar [indistinct 00:29:55].

Lillian Jenkins Shute: You had to have—it was rationed. And I don't know about the meats. Do you?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Some of the clothes you couldn't buy in the store.

Lillian Jenkins Shute: I remember the nylons were scarce.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: I was fortunate in working at that time for the company I was working for.

Rhonda Mawhood: Which company was that, Mr. Shute?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: It was AJ Glock and Company. But it went—it later changed to Thompson [indistinct 00:30:30] Fibers. They had a lot of textile products. But I said I was lucky, in that, a lot of things

that they could get sometime, by hook or crook. You know what I mean? If I might use that term. And so I could get some of—even, I know the man had a connection with Scott Drug Company, wholesale house, and some people couldn't get cigarettes, and yet I would go down there and get a whole case from the president. And then there was a man from Boston, I'm trying to think of his name. He was a millionaire. And I had to send some cigarettes up there to him one time. So, well this case of who you know. One of those things.

Rhonda Mawhood: Did people make money off of that during the war here in Charlotte? Did you ever hear about that? I know they did other places, but did you hear about them making money from that in Charlotte?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Made all kinds of money from people. For instance, the beginning of the war, Charlotte was dry, and a bootlegger used to come to the place where I worked, and unload a case of Scotch and a case of [indistinct 00:32:08] by every corner, I mean to the men upstairs, and the man also bring cigarettes. Sometimes he'd bring a whole case of cigarettes. I think cigarettes were so—were selling at that time 50 cent a pack, which was a big price back then. Of course I understand they sell now nearly \$2. Course, thankfully I don't smoke. But you could go to the store. A lot of times they wouldn't have meats. And I went in the store once looking for—well, looking for something. Oh yeah, the man had some frog legs. He said he'd sell them for a dollar and a quarter. I said, "Well, give me a package of [indistinct 00:32:52]." Oh boy. It was a lesson in sacrifice. You had to do—just had to do it. That's all.

Lillian Jenkins Shute: You couldn't buy many shoes. We had children, so sometimes people would ask us for the stamps from the children. Because seemed like some people ain't have [indistinct 00:33:22] shoes, and maybe we can—

Rhonda Mawhood: Did you ever give anyone any of those stamps, Mrs. Shute?

Lillian Jenkins Shute: We tried to use them in the family.

Rhonda Mawhood: Did you share stamps within your family, with your brothers and sisters?

Lillian Jenkins Shute: Yeah, in the family.

Rhonda Mawhood: I'd like to ask you about segregation itself. One thing we've been asking people is if they remember seeing signs of segregation.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Oh yeah. We'd go to the train station. They had tickets office, and they had—Southern Station, they had a fence, White over there and Black over there. But you could still ride the same train. All the time, it was kids who got there first. And some places we couldn't go at all to eat. They wouldn't serve you. You come to the back door, yes. I recall going to one place on my lunch hour, and the man just told me bluntly, he said, "I can't serve you in here." Said, "You can go down the back and be served, you want." But I kept going.

Rhonda Mawhood: So you didn't eat there?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: I didn't.

Lillian Jenkins Shute: We had water fountains, and they had one White and one Colored. Well, I worked at the health department, I decided I wanted to try the other fountain out to see if it tasted different. I was young, and maybe I was wrong, but I just wondered if there was difference in the water, because they had it marked like that.

Rhonda Mawhood: And so did you try the White fountain?

Lillian Jenkins Shute: Yeah, nobody bothered. They didn't say anything.

Rhonda Mawhood: And was it any different?

Lillian Jenkins Shute: No, but we just couldn't understand why the sign was up there.

Rhonda Mawhood: When you were children, did your parents explain these signs to you? Do you remember people explaining to you why those signs were there?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Well, you kind of grew up knowing where your place was, so to speak, you see. And that was one of those things. The places we knew we couldn't go, we didn't go. I recall going to a doctor's office once, and I went on in the office and sat down, in the waiting room, sat down. And they saw me. There was [indistinct 00:36:24] and so she took me outside and took me around to the doctor's—one of his main offices. But nobody else was in there, or just two of us. But there were doctors who would wait on you, that is White doctors. But for the most part you'd have to sit out in the hall until they would call you.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: And I started with the doctor in '43, I believe. Year '43 or '44. But I didn't have any trouble with him. And he waited on me until, oh, maybe 10 years ago when he retired and his son took it over. But now they don't—I mean just first come, first served. But the company, when I went to work for this company, I was the only Black there. And they had a company party, and the manager came out and told me, he said, "Shoot, we going to have a party. We going to town to party." He said, "I know they won't take you in, but here is some money. Take your wife out somewhere and give her a good time." And I did. He gave me some money.

Rhonda Mawhood: And did you go out?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Oh yeah, we went out. So, but later on, they as a company grew, they took on more people, that is more Blacks, and they continued to have those parties. But president told me, he said, "We going to have a party out to my house, and want you and your wife to come out there." And I told Leah, who said, "I don't go." But I went anyway.

Rhonda Mawhood: You went by yourself. Mrs. Shute didn't want to go.

Lillian Jenkins Shute: But I went the next year.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: I went by myself. Course I went out there and after two, three drinks I was right at home. But the next year and after that, Leah would go with me. I mean that's one reason why I stayed there. But as I say, they treated me just like one of them.

Lillian Jenkins Shute: But they did set up a party for the Blacks, a very nice party. But it was separate. It was all Black. But they seemed to enjoy, the ones that came. [indistinct 00:39:04].

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: What happened, the man asked me if I thought the people out there in the warehouse would want a party. I said, "Yeah, they would like it." He said, "Well, I'll tell you what you do. You set it up and go wherever you want to go. Give them whatever they want." So we went to a Holiday Inn, had a big dinner, had plenty to drink, had a nice band. So they had a good time.

Lillian Jenkins Shute: Dancing.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: That thing went on. As long as I was there, they did that. So lot of them, lot of people had trouble. But I didn't have too much trouble. Like I said, I learned early to know what to do. But as I grew older, that thing kind of got on me, and I felt, and I still feel now, that I'm just as good a citizen as the next man. And especially placing where I pay taxes, as well as anybody else. I'm entitled to, and I tell them so.

Rhonda Mawhood: When did you start—do you remember when you started telling people that you were paying taxes like anyone else, and that sort of thing, when it started to bother you?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Well, after the war, and in the '50s, and some other things were happening all over. This thing, the sit-in, you know where it started in Greensboro. So we had one of those fellow, one of the original sit-inners, is a member of my church, yeah, and I saw him this past Sunday. So what I find, for the most part, if you carry yourself in such a way, people respect you, they respect what you say, even if they don't like it lot of times. Haven't been too much problem.

Rhonda Mawhood: What kinds of ways did your parents, each of you, teach you to deal with other people, to deal with adults, for example, to treat adults, when you were children?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: They taught us to respect everybody. Even we went to school, if we didn't do the right thing and they got a bad report, then they'd deal with them when they got home. If the teacher tell it, you told the teachers to deal with it, and then let us know. So we didn't have much of a discipline problem. My daddy was a very strict man. Even, he was strict even in his classroom. He told his students, "Class start at 9:00. If I'm not here 9:00, you leave. But if you not here at 9:00, don't come in." It's one of those things. He

was a great man. God-fearing man. And he was a highly-respected teacher, minister.

Rhonda Mawhood: And Mrs. Shute, how did your parents or your father and your stepmother teach you to speak to adults?

Lillian Jenkins Shute: To always respect them. And in our neighborhood, if you got a whipping in school, you might get another when you get home.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Same thing.

Lillian Jenkins Shute: Like it happened in your school, too. [indistinct 00:43:13] trying to remember about where Charlotte—guess you heard where Charlotte had a school, high school. When they first opened the school, they played all Black teams, and they didn't have a, what you call it, activity bus. The faculty had to take them in their cars, but they made the games. But that's the way it was. The coach would drive his car and some of the faculty members would take them. So they played games mostly all-Black schools. And they integrated it.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: I tell you, excuse me, one thing that happened in Charlotte many years ago, they had for the most part Colored cabs, Colored taxicabs. If you go down to the Southern Station, all the cabs down there were Black. And one time they had a Black bus that followed the same route as the streetcar, that is running from this section through downtown, the Brooklyn section, and then coming back. The street car cost seven cents to ride. The bus was five cent. But after a long, so long a time, then they cut it out, they made them stop. I don't know what happened. The insurance rate went up to a point where they felt the Black couldn't handle it, so they curtailed it. So it's one of those things.

Rhonda Mawhood: And the street car company was owned by White people.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Oh yeah. Yeah. What's the name of it? Street car company.

Lillian Jenkins Shute: Didn't ride the street car much. We walked to school.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Yeah.

Lillian Jenkins Shute: What was it? Over a mile.

Rhonda Mawhood: Did you walk along with your friends to school?

Lillian Jenkins Shute: Yes, we walked to downtown. Because the downtown was really downtown then. Had lot of stores. We didn't ride the streetcar much.

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: I think walking helped all of us. Probably one reason why we last a long time. Don't want that back and forth to school every day.

Rhonda Mawhood: Did you play with the other children when you walked back and forth to school, when you were small, I mean?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Yeah.

Lillian Jenkins Shute: Seem like everybody walked then, didn't you?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Everybody walked. Didn't think anything about it. It was—walking was the order of the day. Because I was a grown man almost before my father bought a automobile.

Rhonda Mawhood: Do you remember the first car that your father bought?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: Yeah. Yeah, first car he bought. I was old enough to drive, then. Yeah.

Rhonda Mawhood: Do you remember what kind of car it was?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: How's that?

Rhonda Mawhood: Do you remember what kind of car it was?

Mathew Atkins Shute Sr.: He bought a Chevrolet, and he didn't keep it too long.