



THE RUTH ANN OVERBECK  
CAPITOL HILL HISTORY PROJECT

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**Interview with Curtis “Doc” Robinson**

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**Interviewer:** Dee Atwell  
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TAPE 1/SIDE 1

**ROBINSON:** I came to Washington in 1947, and I've been a native here ever since.

**ATWELL:** Mr. Robinson, you realize you came to Washington the year I was born.

**ROBINSON:** Is that right? [Laughs] I'd just gotten out of the service, and I came here. My wife was here; we had a new baby, and I came to live first; she was here with her sister.

**ATWELL:** Were you already married?

**ROBINSON:** I'd been married about two years. We were married in 1945. So she came to Washington to have the baby. We were all down in Tuskegee where I was in service and she came up here to have her baby, and I was transferred to Lockbourne, Ohio, (that's in Columbus, Ohio) [Rickenbacker Field] and upon having the child, I came to Washington and I got out of the service here, and lived here ever since.

**ATWELL:** Where did you live first, when you first came here?

**ROBINSON:** At first I lived in the Northeast section, on F Street, at 13<sup>th</sup> & F Street N.E. Eventually, a year later, I bought a home on 1444 Lamont Street N.W., and I lived there for several years until after I graduated from the School of Pharmacy. That was in 1952, and then I opened up a store on Alabama Avenue and I moved on Alabama Avenue to be near the store.

**ATWELL:** Whereabouts on Alabama was that?

**ROBINSON:** That was the 2100 block of Alabama Avenue but I lived in the 1800 block, just a couple of blocks from the store.

**ATWELL:** That was Southeast?

**ROBINSON:** That was Southeast, yes.

**ATWELL:** What was the neighborhood like, in those days?

**ROBINSON:** The neighborhood in Southeast? It was a new neighborhood. Houses on Alabama Avenue where I lived were built at the close of the war, World War II, and there was a small strip shopping center at the end, and that's where the store was. I eventually sold that store and moved over to Independence Avenue, the 1500 block, 15<sup>th</sup> and Independence, where I stayed about five years, then I moved up on East Capitol, 922 East Capitol. I think that was in 1965 when I moved up to East Capitol.

**ATWELL:** What was the neighborhood like then?

**ROBINSON:** The neighborhood was a family-type neighborhood, people who'd lived there a long time. As I remember, everything was beginning to change, the houses were being remodeled for condominium-type, and it moved from one-family house, to a multi-family. That was about 1966-67 in the neighborhood.

**ATWELL:** Was the neighborhood integrated then?

**ROBINSON:** The neighborhood was mixed. On East Capitol Street itself, there were two or three black families, but around Lincoln Park, from Eleventh Street east, it was mostly black. Near the area of Eighth and Pennsylvania Avenue, the homes in that area were mostly black, so all of that has changed now.

**ATWELL:** Were there a lot of corner stores, a lot of small businesses?

**ROBINSON:** There were quite a few small mom-and-pop stores at the time. As a matter of fact, there was a large Peoples', now CVS, was at the corner of East Capitol and 11<sup>th</sup> Street, right at Lincoln Park, and that building has been changed over to a condominium-type.

**ATWELL:** There on the west side of the park?

**ROBINSON:** On the west side of the park, yes. It was on the Northwest corner.

**ATWELL:** Where did people do their grocery shopping?

**ROBINSON:** There was a small Safeway at Third and Massachusetts Avenue and there were small stores on 11<sup>th</sup> Street near the park. There were no large supermarkets in the area at all, so shopping was done in small stores. There were a lot of corner stores. Eventually they had a Safeway at 3<sup>rd</sup> and Constitution Avenue, I think it was. That only lasted about four or five years. It was changed over to a home.

**ATWELL:** Now the house that you have your pharmacy in, on East Capitol, that used to have doctors' offices in it?

**ROBINSON:** Yes. But before it was doctors' offices, it was turned into a rooming house. Doctors began moving in that building in about 1964, and changed it over to a doctors' building, and I moved there in 1965. It was completely a medical building at the time.

**ATWELL:** People in the neighborhood would come in to see the doctors and just have their prescriptions filled.

**ROBINSON:** Yes. It wasn't only people in the neighborhood. People all over the city came to see those doctors. They were quite popular there. And not only did they have a doctor there, there was a dentist's office there also, and later on an ophthalmologist's office. It was a medical center.

**ATWELL:** And where did you live at that point, in '65?

**ROBINSON:** In 1965 I lived where we are now, here on 36<sup>th</sup> Street S.E. I moved over here in 1963.

**ATWELL:** Was the house new, when you moved here?

**ROBINSON:** No, the house was not new. This house was built by the first owner. He was an Italian stone-mason. He was really from Italy. He and his wife built this house. I think they had two sons that moved away and that's the reason they sold it, because the sons had been educated and moved; they were in New Jersey, I think, and they were alone, so they didn't care to have a house this large anymore.

**ATWELL:** What are your memories of doing business in the city? I'm struck that it has changed so much. I didn't know segregation, and I'm interested in the good changes you think you've seen.

**ROBINSON:** Let me go back into when I went into business in 1952. That was on Alabama Avenue. In the 1700 block of Alabama Avenue was a drugstore owned by whites. In the 2100 block of Alabama Avenue was the drugstore I owned. Two and a half blocks away, on 28<sup>th</sup> Street was a drugstore owned by a Jewish fellow. Four blocks away there was a Peoples' Drug Store, so there were a lot of drugstores, and that neighborhood was mixed. Ninety percent of my customers were black, and ninety percent of the other stores' customers were white. It worked, much mingling between the two types of clientele. As a matter of fact, in Washington during that time, there were independent drugstores in most neighborhoods. There were many, I don't know, maybe 70 or 80, that many. Any place you went almost on all corners, there was a drugstore, and a food store, mom-and-pop food store, whose corporate name was DGS. DGS had stores all over the city. They had a warehouse down 4<sup>th</sup> and D Street, I think, or 4<sup>th</sup> and C Street S.W. A big warehouse there; it's been changed over to buildings now, a lot has been gone, taken.

**ATWELL:** S.W. or S.E.?

**ROBINSON:** S.E.; no, S.W.

**ATWELL:** It supplied all those little stores?

**ROBINSON:** It supplied all those small stores, yes.

**ATWELL:** And was there an association of independent pharmacists?

**ROBINSON:** Yes. The association of independent pharmacists had a wholesale called the Drug Exchange, and when you opened a store, you bought stock in the Drug Exchange, and you bought your drugs at a discount, and, of course, you received your dividends quarterly, just like any other stock, but that was the place most independents got their drugs from. There were two other drug wholesalers in the

city at the time. One was Henry Gilpin. Gilpin was at Canal Street. All that's been changed now, they had to move when they brought the freeway through. Another was District Drugs; it was on First Street N.E. But the Drug Exchange was the place most that most independent pharmacies dealt with.

**ATWELL:** How would someone pick their pharmacist? Was it mostly just convenience?

**ROBINSON:** I didn't understand the question.

**ATWELL:** I'm sorry. How would someone pick you to be their druggist? Was it because of where you were located?

**ROBINSON:** Where you were located; that's right. Yes. The location meant an awful lot. At the time, most of the stores were small. I think I opened one of the first large stores for blacks in the city, the one up on Alabama Avenue. That had a fountain and we sold practically everything in that store.

**ATWELL:** A soda fountain?

**ROBINSON:** A soda fountain. Yes. And we sold a lot of different appliances: lamps, anything you could use in a home, we sold.

**ATWELL:** In what 100 block?

**ROBINSON:** That was in the 2100 block of Alabama Avenue.

**ATWELL:** Did you expand the original store, or was the original store big enough?

**ROBINSON:** The original store was big enough for that; it was a very large store. We eventually took the soda fountain out. Our reason was that the customers there were just a lot of young kids; and they were noisy and keeping some of the better customers away. We finally closed the fountain, and we found it to be true, our business did improve after that.

**ATWELL:** You had the store on Alabama Avenue and East Capitol Street. Where else did you have stores?

**ROBINSON:** I had a store on 9<sup>th</sup> and U Street N.W., 60<sup>th</sup> and U Street N.W. Eventually I bought the store on 28<sup>th</sup> Street and Shipman Terrace [S.E.] that I just told you about, that was owned by a Jewish fellow down there.

**ATWELL:** OK. You bought out your competition?

**ROBINSON:** I bought out the competition. Yes. Then all the stores got too large for me. I was not a business major, so it was getting too complicated for me to run. I ended up selling the stores and closing

the rest of them, and I ended up on Independence Avenue alone, and eventually, to move into East Capitol Street.

**ATWELL:** When you had all those stores, do you remember how many people you employed?

**ROBINSON:** Oh, let’s see, I can count on 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12—about 16.

**ATWELL:** Were you the only pharmacist?

**ROBINSON:** Lord no, uh-uh. There were 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 other pharmacists there.

**ATWELL:** Do you remember what the hourly wage was then?

**ROBINSON:** No. The pharmacists were paid by the week, I think. About \$110 a week. When I first got out of pharmacy [school], a pharmacist’s salary was something like \$60 or \$70 a week.

**ATWELL:** So a pharmacist could earn about \$110 a week.

**ROBINSON:** About \$110, yeah. I think that was the base that Peoples’ at the time was paying. And they were—they were greatest to their employees. But not of blacks. My senior year in pharmacy [school] was in 1951. That’s the year they hired their first black pharmacist, and only in one store. It was in a black neighborhood. It was on 7<sup>th</sup> Street, I think 7<sup>th</sup> and N, or 7<sup>th</sup> and M, or somewhere in that neighborhood.

**ATWELL:** N.W.?

**ROBINSON:** N.W., yes. They hired two pharmacists there to run that store. It was not until three or four years later they began to hire them. A lot, almost all corporations; for instance, the transit system in the city; all the bus and trolley drivers were white. It wasn’t until about 1952-53 that they changed over to hiring blacks. So the city had changed, and that was about the same time they changed... A little later on, the counters in the Five and Dime stores began to serve blacks.

**ATWELL:** Where did your children go to school?

**ROBINSON:** Right here. My daughter [Linda] started school at Stanton School, no, Garfield School on Alabama Avenue. Racy started on Park Place, on Water Street N.E., no N.W.

**ATWELL:** Who is the second child?

**ROBINSON:** She’s my first child; she died when she was ten. My second child [Curtis C. Robinson, Jr.] started school at Park View for one year. Then we moved to Alabama Avenue. In the third grade we took him out. He was having some problems. It’s now what they call ADD [Attention Deficit Disorder]. They didn’t know what it was, but they tested him and in the third grade he could do fifth grade math, but his

reading and retaining knowledge was in second grade so they suggested we take him to Georgetown Day, where he could get special training. That was on, at the time, Military Road. I had to drive him out there every day. He completed his elementary school there, and his high school was here in Washington in the city, city high school. That was the beginning of testing children for that, and they didn't put him on a drug, but suggested that he go to a special school.

**ATWELL:** What high school did he go to?

**ROBINSON:** He went to Anacostia; Anacostia High School.

**ATWELL:** Did he go on to college?

**ROBINSON:** He spent one year in college, down at my home town in Orangeburg, South Carolina, my old college. Claflin University. After that, he took a couple of courses up at UDC, but ever since he got...

**ATWELL:** You moved over here what year?

**ROBINSON:** In this house? 1963.

**ATWELL:** Was this an integrated neighborhood?

**ROBINSON:** No. I was the first black to move in. Everyone moved out but three whites, and they're still here, as a matter of fact. All the other whites moved out shortly after.

**ATWELL:** Do you think the riots in '68 had anything to do with the whites moving out, or were they just moving out to Maryland?

**ROBINSON:** Well, two things. I think they were getting good prices for their homes. Some of them just didn't want to live in a black neighborhood. The ones who didn't move decided they would stay. There were two ministers and a school teacher that stayed. The minister was later transferred. He was a Methodist minister, so the bishop moved him. A black minister moved in the house, but the school teacher is still here, and the other minister, his wife is here. They got a divorce, but she stayed, and he left, and the kids grew up here, very friendly.

**ATWELL:** Is it still a predominately black neighborhood?

**ROBINSON:** Oh, yes. After we moved in the whole neighborhood began to change. The street behind me and the street in front of me all changed.

**ATWELL:** And it's still to this day.

**ROBINSON:** Still to this day. There are only a few whites here now. There are I think two Oriental couples, families, here. But predominantly black.

**ATWELL:** What are your memories of the city during the riots in '68?

**ROBINSON:** The riots in '68. I remember it was a terrible thing that I wish were stopped. The businesses seemed to be burned indiscriminately. I had a business on 15<sup>th</sup> and Independence Avenue and I understand one of the neighbors came out and protected my business. I was left intact. All of the other businesses in that area were damaged. It was a disservice to themselves, to us, because the property that was damaged was probably, most of that, we lived in, and businesses that we used. All it did was vent our anger. We were all angry about the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King, but that was not the right way to go about it.

**ATWELL:** Did your wife [Florie] work in the stores with you at all? Did she help keep your books? Was she part of your business?

**ROBINSON:** My wife worked when I had a fountain on Alabama Avenue. After that she stayed home. She didn't work long, and that was only about maybe two years at the most—a year and a half.

**ATWELL:** Where did you shop? Where did you buy your groceries? Or do you remember, actually, where she shopped?

**ROBINSON:** [Laughter] That was the one thing. I did a little shopping, very little shopping. I think she used the Giant. There was a Giant in our neighborhood. That was on Alabama Avenue and Good Hope Road, up in that area. I think that's where she shopped.

**ATWELL:** Where were the streetcars? Were they down East Capitol?

**ROBINSON:** The streetcars downtown on F and E Street, went up 7<sup>th</sup> Street, up Georgia Avenue, went up 14<sup>th</sup> Street and Connecticut Avenue up to Connecticut Circle, and went out Florida Avenue out to Calvert Bridge, over that way. In Georgetown, it was on Wisconsin Avenue. It came down M Street. That was probably the real extent of it, because you could get a transfer from the streetcars to the bus. The other streets were taken over by a bus. It was owned by the same company.

**ATWELL:** Oh, yes. O. Roy Chalk.

**ROBINSON:** O. Roy Chalk. That's right.

**ATWELL:** Where were the streetcars on the Hill? Was there one on Eighth Street?

**ROBINSON:** Streetcars on the Hill... On East Capitol Street. Came out East Capitol Street. Let's see, Lincoln Park, to 19<sup>th</sup> Street out to [the] ball park, and one, that went by 8<sup>th</sup> and A, went over to Pennsylvania Avenue and out Pennsylvania Avenue to 19<sup>th</sup> Street. It didn't cross the bridge at Pennsylvania Avenue. But the one that went out H Street went out to Capitol View. That would be H and Eastern Avenue, Southern Avenue. Out that area, that was as far as it went.

**ATWELL:** But there was one that went down Eighth Street, from Gallaudet down to Pennsylvania Avenue?

**ROBINSON:** Yes, that's the same one that went by Gallaudet, came out 8<sup>th</sup>, and went across 8<sup>th</sup> and East Capitol over to Pennsylvania, and one went down to the Navy Yard, or it would go out Pennsylvania Avenue to 19<sup>th</sup> Street. And that was the extent of the streetcar.

**ATWELL:** And then busses filled in?

**ROBINSON:** Busses took over in that area, yeah. Busses came out of Anacostia, and would go up and down Minnesota Avenue, over to Benning Road. The streetcar went out Benning Road. Then the bus crisscrossed all over the city: Irving Street N.W. was called a "cross-town bus." It went out Irving all the way across Irving around Minnesota Avenue, Catholic University over in that area, and out Rhode Island Avenue out to the end of the line.

**ATWELL:** I think that route is still running.

**ROBINSON:** It probably is.

**ATWELL:** I went to school at the Washington Hospital Center in '66, '67. That bus route still ran right past the hospital center and out Irving Street.

**ROBINSON:** That's where it ran. And it ran all the way over to Woodley Road, Connecticut Avenue, over in that area.

**ATWELL:** When did you get your first car?

**ROBINSON:** My first car I got when I opened up the business in 1952. It was a station wagon, used for business, and to take my family to church on Sunday. The second car I bought, was strictly for the family, about maybe five years later, and I've had cars ever since.

**ATWELL:** It seems to me people in the city didn't have—at least from what my stepmother told me, she grew up around 16<sup>th</sup> and Webster Street—and she said a lot of people didn't have cars, because they had the streetcars...

**ROBINSON:** The transportation was very good at times. It was frequent, especially at rush hour, but you could get a bus or streetcar almost any time, any 15-minute period, and it was reasonably quick, so you really didn't need a car.

**ATWELL:** Now, of course, everybody thinks they have to have one.

**ROBINSON:** Everybody has to have a car. Families have two or three cars.

**ATWELL:** Where did your family go to church?

**ROBINSON:** Asbury United Methodist Church. It's on the corner of 11<sup>th</sup> and K Streets N.W. I had an aunt who worked here, probably before I was born, she worked at the Bureau of Engraving. She was here then. My cousin, who died last year at 101, came and stayed with me, and she graduated from Howard University. Later she went up to Columbia University to get her Master's. She was probably the first one in the family to get her Master's. Yes. She had a lot of firsts. During the war, she was the principal of a high school in Prince George County because prior to that they didn't have any lady principals but the war took all the men away, so she was made principal of the school. Going back to the church, she was the choir director of one of the choirs for many years, but my aunt started us all in that church. As I said, my grandfather was a Methodist minister, and we all came up in the Methodist church. His brother was a minister, one of his sons is a minister, his grandson is a minister, and his great-grandson is a minister, so there are a lot of Methodist ministers in the family. And we grew up in the Methodist church, and in fact the college we went to [Claflin] was a Methodist college.

**ATWELL:** Down in South Carolina?

**ROBINSON:** In South Carolina. It was a savior for us in Orangeburg, because it had an elementary, high school, and a college there. I saw the first black elementary school being built there. I attended the first year it opened. I was five years old. Before that, we had school that was run by the Stirling Foundation. Most schools in the South were run either by the Stirling Foundation or the Roosevelt Foundation. Blacks weren't provided with any type of school with the exception of schools that went through the fourth grade, four months out of the year. I went with many of those students, because they would come... When they built the school in Orangeburg for blacks, the first day it opened it was overcrowded, it was about 1,500 students there. That's right, because most of the students came from out of the rural area began to come to school there and the boys who were, say 12 and 13 years old was in the first and second grade because it would take two years to make a grade when you're going to school four months out of the year. So, I was the youngest thing in my class. Most of the guys were much older than I was.

**ATWELL:** Now when this school opened, it opened to a more normal school year?

**ROBINSON:** Right. Yes. So the college had an elementary school. My oldest brother, my sister went to elementary school there. My other brothers who were older than me went to the school put out by the Stirling Corporation, Stirling Foundation, rather. So there were no high schools whatsoever for blacks there. So I finished the elementary school there, then went to high school at the college. But I had to work my way through. We weren't financially able to send us. There were six of us in the family, six children, and my father wasn't able to send us all, so we worked, we worked our way and paid our tuition that way. So my sister's tuition was paid and my oldest brother... They preferred the oldest son at the time. He got away with a whole lot of stuff that we couldn't get away with. [Laughs]. So I worked my way through high school and college.

**ATWELL:** What did you do?

**ROBINSON:** My father was a school teacher. He taught in one of those four-month schools, and after school he painted, and he taught all of us to paint, so we made our living when I worked on the campus, doing maintenance work, doing painting, doing that kind of work I got no money but my tuition was paid that way. I ate at home. That's what I did for the eight years I went through school.

**ATWELL:** Did any of your other siblings come up here to Washington to settle here?

**ROBINSON:** No, I was the only one, and it was only because my wife was up here with our child, and she had three sisters that were here. They came up during the war to work in the federal government. So did my wife afterwards. Before we got married, she worked in the federal government, too.

**ATWELL:** Do you remember where?

**ROBINSON:** She worked in the Pentagon! Then I think she was a Grade 2. That was where most blacks were placed, in Grade 1 and 2. I didn't know there was such a thing as Grade 1. It was a funny thing. I got out of the service, and [after five years] I took a job with the... it was called... I can't think what it was called... it's changed. Condoleezza Rice is over it now. I can't think of it. National Security [Council]. It was called Federal Security then. As a Grade 3. The reason I'm getting back to that, I stopped to go to school and I needed a job in the summer, so they were hiring at the Congressional Accounting Office, so I applied and got a job as a messenger, so they called me in and said, "Look, we see you were in the government before, and we want to let you know that we have to pay you at a Grade 3 because that's what you were getting before." [Laughs] So I said, "Fine, I'm only working here for the summer." So I got ready to leave, and I gave them notice that I was leaving, and my supervisor, checking my records, said "Oh, I see you were a First Lieutenant. in the service." I said "Yes." He said, "Well, before you leave, I want to give you something so that if you ever come back in the government, you'll have something permanent, you can come back permanent at this position." I said, "Fine." So the day I left he

handed me some papers at his desk, “You’ll be able to come back at a Grade 1.” [Laughs] Thanks a lot! [Laughs]

**ATWELL:** What made you decide to become a pharmacist?

**ROBINSON:** Well, I was a chemistry major, and thought I was going into medicine when I was in college. My mind changed when I was in Anatomy, messing with these dead cats and dead rabbits. The odors were such I just couldn’t stomach it. I did a lot of throwing up and stuff. I said, well, evidently medicine is not for me. I was in this agency, and they’d just developed this group, they had all of us blacks. It was a high tech group. They wanted people who had some college degree, or college work. They didn’t have to have a degree. So there were about fifty of us that they hired.

**ATWELL:** Now who hired you?

**ROBINSON:** The government. This federal agency, that was the National Security Agency. They put us in two shifts, because this work they wanted to get out seemed to have a backlog. What they were doing, it was work they were getting out of Russia, and they wanted it transported to English from Russian, and they wanted people who could recognize some part—they taught us how to do it, and of course, as I say, there were about fifty of us, maybe sixty, and they had two shifts. They had two high school graduates in there. In these shifts, they put one of the high school graduates as supervisor on each shift over all these college students. That made us in a dead-end situation. You couldn’t move up. It’s something you had to fight, so I decided I wasn’t going to stay in this, and I got out and I figured what I could do with my education, and Pharmacy came to me. I applied and was accepted and went to the School of Pharmacy.

**ATWELL:** This was at Howard?

**ROBINSON:** At Howard. Four years, yes. Took four years of Pharmacy, and I worked as a painter during the time to supplement my income, because I was veteran [?] the G.I. Bill. I had a family, to try to buy a home, and my daughter was sick. She was sick from birth. She was a beautiful thing. I miss her so much. We found when she was sick, she was about four months. She wasn’t able to sit up or anything, wasn’t able to roll over, she wasn’t growing. We took her to Children’s—they couldn’t find what was wrong with her.

**ATWELL:** The old Children’s Hospital?

**ROBINSON:** Old Children’s Hospital, that was on 12<sup>th</sup>, a block past Florida. Eventually, I took her to a pediatrician. He looked in her eyes. He said, “This baby has some type of disease I can’t detect. I think she must be one of these ‘blue babies’ I hear about.” So we took her back to Children’s, and got the report, and they confirmed they thought she was probably a “blue baby.” There was nothing they could do

about it. So I was reading about a Dr. Bullock over at Johns Hopkins who'd had some success with "blue babies" so my wife and I took her over to Johns Hopkins in Baltimore and they examined her and said "Yes, but she's a little different from what we've seen and we have no operation for her, but if she lives long enough we'll try to develop something." So, about a year later, they called us and said, "We'll develop an operation especially for your child." So she still couldn't stand up, but she got so she could sit up, and we took her over there, and they operated on her, and six months later, she was walking. But what they did was they took a vein from her leg and made a second artery going from her heart to her lungs because the blood she was getting was bypassing the lungs. Part of that was going right through the heart back through the system.

**ATWELL:** She wasn't getting enough oxygen?

**ROBINSON:** Wasn't getting enough oxygen, so this gave her a little bit more oxygen. But when she got to be ten years old, she outgrew that, and so they needed to enlarge it, and she didn't recover from that operation. But she was going to school, and she was doing very well; very smart in school. She didn't survive that operation.

**ATWELL:** This was the late 60s?

**ROBINSON:** This was early 60s, about '63 or '64. '62. She didn't move into this house. It was just before we moved over here.

**ATWELL:** How did Parade Magazine find you?

**ROBINSON:** I don't know. They called me one day, and asked "Are you Robinson?" and I said "Yes." "Did you go to Howard on the GI Bill?" I said "Yes." He said "We want to use you on an article we're writing for Parade Magazine on the GI Bill." So they got me and interviewed me and took about five rolls of film for that one picture, and that was it. How they got my name I just don't know.

**ATWELL:** Did you become famous for a while after the...?

**ROBINSON:** Yes, I got calls from all over the United States, really. I certainly did.

**ATWELL:** Did people that had lost track of you find you from that?

**ROBINSON:** Not really, but people I knew that I hadn't heard from in a long time did call.

**ATWELL:** Your wife passed a couple of years ago?

**ROBINSON:** Yes.

**ATWELL:** How old was she when she died?

**ROBINSON:** She was 79. She died on her birthday. We'd been out in the afternoon, and visited a lot of the neighbors, and she'd been sick about a week. She was seeing a cardiologist (?) she was sick about two weeks, really. We changed doctors because she didn't seem to be getting any better, and our primary physician told us to get another doctor and we did. He recommended somebody else. She seemed to be doing pretty good. We came in that afternoon, had dinner, sat down to look at television. She died in her sleep. That was after 56 years of marriage.

**ATWELL:** Wow!

**ROBINSON:** That was a long time.

**ATWELL:** The article that was in the paper said that you deliver.

**ROBINSON:** Not all over town, but my customers, most of my customers, have been with me for years and years, and have grown old along with me, and the ones that request it, I'll deliver to them. Usually it's like a visit. I'll sit down and talk a few minutes, and we discuss old times.

**ATWELL:** Some of them must be like family to you.

**ROBINSON:** Oh, they are. Some of them I've known over 20 years.

**ATWELL:** You keep better track of their medicine, probably, than their doctor does.

**ROBINSON:** Yes, because occasionally I have to remind them not to take something they've been taking before, because their doctors changed their medicine.

**ATWELL:** We've had a good talk here today.

**ROBINSON:** Thank you! This was short. I had an interview with Dr. Brown from U.S. Park Service...

END OF INTERVIEW