

Interview with Dr. Blayton  
10/2/95 at his home  
Interviewers: Eric Heinen  
Susan Glissen

I, I, I, I'm a country doctor - when I came here this was a country town... I came here about the same time that, of course the restoration had begun before I, came - grad, graduated from Howard, university medical school in 1930. I took a one year rotating internship, one year for internship now would take five or ten years- and after one year of rotating internship I came to Newport News to practice medicine, a uh, frat brother of mine who was one year ahead of me told me - well - maybe we should uh try to come down to Newport News, cause the was working him to death - which was true- but they didn't tell him that the shipyard employment had dropped down from 16,000 down to 500 - just to keep the furnaces warm during that year was a pleasure, he he he. So after starving for a year in Newport News some, some patents that were due to, to helped me get started. But my brother was down there and wasn't doing anything so he came up here to Williamsburg that never had a black doctor and uh there was a little black doctor down in Dr. Waters' office - the dentist you know - and uh,

he said you messed with my mouth for hours, and I don't see a single face ???? he said we never had a black doctor, we should have one- so he told his church, this black church in Williamsburg, the story and they and after I had been down there for about twelve months - doing nothing you know - Because in those days I was getting some country calls. But nobody had no money in those days, you know 1931. So they hauled me to Williamsburg in 1932, the triangle block...

As a matter of fact I was delivering babies and didn't know I was violating the law....I delivered a couple of babies in my office, he he he... and before that I'd go out in the country and see how the mid-wives were getting along.... well I, the state Department of Health, the guy who slowed down from Charlottesville, became then the state director of Maternal and Child Health...and I was..I still had..patients were still sick they would..couldn't...didn't have the...come to free clinics, sick was on Fridays and pregnant women on Tuesdays...I ran the clinic for the Richmond State Department of Health...for this area. Where I could build a little brick building first I was

working in a little shed back...and uhm, it looked so nice that one of the dishwashers at an Inn or a Lodge, I don't know which now said, "Lawd, Dr." I had just had my new building, my new brick building in the Triangle block..."Lawd, Dr, Blayton you got a regular hospital here. I wish you'd let Henrietta have her baby, she been praying she have a baby." My vacation came up and I wanted to go to New York, and I let Henrietta come by and look at this new building I had and she had her baby. And word got around...Dr. Blayton delivering patients in Triangle. And um, there was a boy, he was a clinic doctor for the state department of health, then told his boss who was the state director of maternity health, and they didn't want to lose me because I was the only one running the free clinics for them...so this boy's boss, he was a professor at Charlottesville before he got that job but he still taken down a state job, as the director of maternity for the state of Virginia. He got in his car and came down and says, where the courthouse is right now, I was running the free clinic for them, for the state department of health, and um, he had his secretary type a little slip of paper which said "This be

Blayton Maternity Hospital, Two Beds." So I wasn't violating the law.

The same week that the Topeka versus the Board of Education, in 1954, this, this, this, that's Bruton, that's the pastor at the time, and some of his workers. And those two black boys there are my sons. That's Fr. Crayhill (?) was his name I guess. And as I say, about two days after the Topeka thing, he came around to see if Jim and Oscar would join this conformation class. Ha, ha ha, that's Jim and Oscar there. He didn't waste his time, he was very quick. You see Rockefeller had already take over then and the people had already come down from other places you know...and Crayhill was quite a guy.

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**SIDE A**

<b><u>Time:</u></b>	<b><u>Description:</u></b>
0:00-0:40	Introductions
0:40-2:35	Coming here as a country doctor/history
2:35-4:05	House calls in the 1930's/ midwives
4:05-7:25	Building his hospital and the State Department of Health
7:25-9:00	Segregated medicine and doctors offices
9:00-11:55	Williamsburg Community Hospital/integrated medicine
11:55-13:00	Bruton Parish and his sons
13:00-22:05	His sons and their schooling/church
22:05-24:50	Rockefeller and CW
24:50-26:00	How the rest of the south dealt with integration
26:30-27:20	Integration outside of the schools in Williamsburg
27:20-28:00	His parents and their education
28:00-30:25	His wife and current life (1980's on)/giving up of his license and the State Board of Medicine
30:25-32:00	The extent of integration into social and other circles (on-paper quote)/black medical societies
32:00-37:30	Building his hospital (again)/black business in the triangle area his patronage and the operation of the hospital
37:30-39:10	His coming to Williamsburg/brick layer story at W&M
39:10-42:00	NAACP in Williamsburg and organized protest (or lack thereof)
42:00-43:45	CW and Rockefeller again
43:45-end	Voter Registration and politics

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**SIDE B**

<u>Time:</u>	<u>Description:</u>
0:00-1:40	Black elected officials/school board
1:40-4:45	Voting/Registration
5:00-12:45	Time as a doctor (lecture story)
12:45-17:50	His being at piece with everything and his childhood (Indian story)
17:50-21:30	His wife and life now (domestic things like cooking)
21:30-25:45	Closing (train story, how he hurt his knee and hip)