

Unified Committee for Afro-American Contributions
Oral History Documentation Project

William H. Greene

Interviewed by Jeanette Pettit

November 21, 2020

At the USCT Interpretive Center in Lexington Park

Transcribed by REV.com on December 3, 2019

Edited by Bob Lewis on November 21, 2024

[this interview is not logged]

Original format is MP4 from digital video recorder

46 minutes, 26 seconds

Jeanette Pettit ([00:02](#)):

My name is Jeanette Pettit, and the date is November 21st, 2019. And I live [removed address] in California, Maryland. Unfortunately, we experienced an equipment failure during our earlier interview, but the people who were present thought the content was too valuable to lose. So, we're taking the unprecedented step of repeating this interview. We're most appreciative of your flexibility, and your consenting to repeat your interview. Would you please state your full name, and the date, for the record?

William Greene ([00:49](#)):

William H. Greene, and today is November the 21st, 2020.

Jeanette Pettit ([00:59](#)):

Thank you very much for coming. Where were you born?

William Greene ([01:04](#)):

In Drayden, Maryland.

Jeanette Pettit ([01:08](#)):

What is your earliest memory?

William Greene ([01:13](#)):

Oh. Okay. Well, I guess, growing up in our home in Drayden, Maryland, with ... I had 11 siblings, 9 sisters and 2 brothers, in addition to myself, so there was 12 in my family. And so, I remember in our home, when one of my sisters, after we completed our homework, then she would ask us, it was time to go to bed, and again, there was no electricity at the time. So, we would do our homework or whatever by candlelight ... Not candlelight. By lamp light. And then, she would take the lamp up the stairs, and the children would all follow her up the steps. And since I was the youngest child, I would be in the back, and of course, it would be dark back there. And so, they would always say, "The Bogeyman's going to get you." That's one of my memories when I was young. There's a lot of other ones.

Jeanette Pettit ([02:25](#)):

Tell me about your family.

William Greene ([02:25](#)):

Well, as I mentioned, there was 12 of us. My sister, Mary Frances Morgan, who's on your board here, she's the oldest, and she's currently 93. And I just talked to her a few minutes ago after I got here, and I'm the youngest.

([02:54](#)):

Our mother passed away when I was about a year and a half, and my father, his name's George Greene, and he had the responsibility for keeping the 12 of us together. He was a waterman, as well as a bandleader. He had his own band. And he also worked at the Senator J. Allen Coates's home, as a butler.

([03:29](#)):

He kept us together as a family. After our mother died, there was a number of individuals who said, "Mr. Greene, we can help you if your children, we'll take this one." Another person said, "We'll take these two," another one said, "We'll take that one." And my father insisted that no, he was going to keep his family together. And so, none of them were sent to anyone else, and we all stayed together which was great, because we had a very close family. Even today, we have a very close family, and we all look to each other. They all supported us, as each of us grew up, we looked to the older ones to give us support, and they did. I think that's very good in family bonding.

Jeanette Pettit ([04:21](#)):

Yes, it is. And you said you lived in Drayden during your childhood.

William Greene ([04:28](#)):

That's correct.

Jeanette Pettit ([04:29](#)):

What was Drayden like?

William Greene ([04:31](#)):

Well, Drayden was, I guess, like Mississippi. I frequently think of, there was a store named Dent's Store, which was maybe a half mile away, and that's where we did our shopping. In those days, there were a number of general stores around, and there really wasn't, like Lexington Park, where you go, and you purchase whatever you need to go to, to go to the general store. And Dent's was the general store.

([05:04](#)):

So, of course, we would walk to the store, and we would have to ask for different things, because being Colored at the time, you weren't allowed to just go around the store and pick up what you wanted. You had to go to the clerk at the front of the store, and tell her what you wanted, and then she'll go and get it for you. Again, you weren't allowed to just walk around the store and pick up what you want.

([05:36](#)):

And then, she would make a tab, and then at the end of the week, when my father got paid, he would go to the store and pay the tab. Usually my brother and I, my brother's name was George, and we would take our red wagon down to the store, and that's how we transported the products that we got from the store, and take those products back home. I guess I can remember that. All the black people at that time, they worked in white people's homes. That's the only kind of work they had, or they worked in a

field of some nature. And again, a lot of the blacks were watermen, a lot of them were farmers. That's my basic memory.

Jeanette Pettit ([06:36](#)):

Okay. Did you ever live anywhere else, other than just Drayden? Did you live anyplace else in Saint Mary's County?

William Greene ([06:52](#)):

No. Throughout elementary school and high school, I went to Saint Peter Claver's Elementary School, and then I went to Cardinal Gibbons Institute. That's the two that I noticed on your board over there. There's a history of Cardinal Gibbons Institute. That was a wonderful place. I lived at home with my family and went to elementary school and high school in Ridge. That's where the school was located, which was about 20 miles from home. That's where we had to travel about 20 miles one-way and 40 miles round-trip every day to go to a parochial school. There were other parochial schools between my home and Saint Peter Claver's, but the catholic church was as discriminatory or racist as any other organization in the United States and so black children were not allowed to go to white public schools or white catholic schools. So we had to be ... We took a bus to Saint Peter Claver's and Cardinal Gibbons and had to go past the other catholic schools on the way there.

Jeanette Pettit ([08:28](#)):

And how did that make you feel as far as a child and as a young adult, having to experience those things?

William Greene ([08:39](#)):

Well, I was born in a segregated country, a segregated situation. That's how I was born, so all I knew was segregation. I didn't know anything else other than segregation. That's the environment I was born in. And so being segregated against and treated differently was something that you were born with. You didn't know anything differently, so when you were treated differently, whether at the Dent's store or going to school or even going to church, you know the church we went to was a segregated church, was a catholic segregated church. I know I'm going off the point, but you had to sit in the back of a church. You had to get communion last. You had to go to confession last. When there was a segregated graveyard, and when there were church festivals, there was a white church festival and there was a black church festival. When you went shopping, you weren't allowed to pick your clothes wherever. You shopped in Leonardtown, wherever. And so you lived in a segregated society. That's the only thing you knew. You didn't know any ... You didn't know living in an integrated situation. So how did I feel I felt that this is the way the world was.

Jeanette Pettit ([10:31](#)):

Okay. How would you describe your family's financial situation?

William Greene ([10:38](#)):

Well, my father was employed all the time. It's interesting that although my father really, in today's terms, didn't make a lot of money, and we had 12 children. There was 12 children in the family. My mother didn't work again. He married again, so when he married again my stepmother raised 12 children which was a remarkable thing for her to come and raise 12 children. She was a beautiful

stepmother. We didn't know her as a stepmother. We just knew her as mother, because again I was a year and a half when my mother died.

Jeanette Pettit ([11:24](#)):

What was her name?

William Greene ([11:26](#)):

Her name was Blanche Greene. Her former name was Blanche Greenwell. I'm sorry. I forget the question.

Jeanette Pettit ([11:35](#)):

That's okay.

William Greene ([11:36](#)):

You can repeat it because I wanted to answer the question.

Jeanette Pettit ([11:40](#)):

Okay. How would you describe your family's financial situation?

William Greene ([11:43](#)):

No, again my father worked as a butler at a state senator's home, as a waterman, as a musician. You know, he more or less had three jobs, which none of them paid very well. But because we had such a large family, my mother did not work. She had to raise those children. But yet, we never suffered from malnutrition or hunger or lack of clothes or lack of anything. We always had everything. I didn't know poverty. If we were poor, I didn't know it. I thought we were doing fairly well and I guess we did compared to a lot of other people.

([12:31](#)):

I remember going to school, a lot of my friends would come to our home because we had something to eat. They did not have anything to eat because they were in large families as well. Frequently, they would be the oldest in the family, the oldest boy in the family, and so their parents had to look out for the younger ones. Their parents would say, "We have to feed the younger ones first," and so sometimes some of our friends would come to our home to get something to eat. But we always had something to eat. Three, two meals a day when we were going to school. Breakfast, they didn't have school breakfast and school lunch and after school dinners and all that kind of thing. We had breakfast before we went to school and my father had to pay for the meals at school. There was no free lunch. He had to pay for the meals for all 12 children at school, and then we'd come home. We had dinner. We'd have a snack before going to bed which was usually molasses and grease. That was a snack.

Jeanette Pettit ([13:46](#)):

Did your family own land?

William Greene ([13:49](#)):

Yeah. We were on a large parcel of land. My grandmother and my aunt also lived on the same parcel of land, which was about 60 acres of land. So there was two homes there. There was my grandparents' home. There was my father's home on that parcel of land.

Jeanette Pettit ([14:11](#)):

So you had actually some wealth there in that land?

William Greene ([14:14](#)):

Yes. We raised a lot of the foods that we ate. We raised it. We planted gardens and we planted livestock ... Not planted livestock, but we had livestock such as pigs and chickens and ducks and turkeys. So has my grandmother. She had those things, and so we supplemented the food we got from the stores with the food that we grew. Of course, we all had to work in the gardens which was okay. We were used to working. Back in those days, children worked. It was not a problem.

Jeanette Pettit ([14:52](#)):

Yes, we know. I was one of those kids that did that. Did your family attend church?

William Greene ([14:58](#)):

Yeah.

Jeanette Pettit ([14:58](#)):

And I remember you talking about church, so ...

William Greene ([15:02](#)):

Yeah. We walked to church because my father worked on Sunday also. So he wasn't available to take us to church so we walked up two miles to St. George's church and we walked back. But as I mentioned, even church was segregated. We just assumed that that was the way it's supposed to be.

Jeanette Pettit ([15:33](#)):

Did you take trips as a child? And if you did take trips, where did you go?

William Greene ([15:38](#)):

No, we didn't take trips. That just wasn't a thing that black families back in those days did. You maybe took a trip to the movies once in a while, but other than going to the movies or on Sunday when my father came home from work he would take us somewhere to get a pack of chewing gum and then he would pass out the chewing gum to each of the kids, a stick of chewing gum, but no you didn't really take any trips.

Jeanette Pettit ([16:10](#)):

What kind of recreational activities? Since you all didn't take trips, I'm assuming you were ... What did you do when you were home?

William Greene ([16:20](#)):

We were a large family, and so recreation was playing among ourselves. We had plenty of family members to have a baseball team, to have two teams, so we played baseball among ourselves. The girls played in their doll ... They made up their own dollhouses in the woods. They'd go out in the woods and they'd clean a section of the woods out and they'd find cardboard boxes and they'd make their little dollhouses out of cardboard boxes that they made a dollhouse in the woods. But we played games such as hopscotch and marbles and climbing up in trees and going down to the stream and getting in the stream in the water and those kinds of things.

Jeanette Pettit ([17:18](#)):

I know that you played with your family. Did you play with other kids? Did other kids find your family, some of those ... Where they would come in and play with y'all?

William Greene ([17:31](#)):

Again, not so much, because we had a very large family. We never thought about when you play, you have to go play with your neighbors because the neighbors were a long ways away. Two things, one we played among ourselves because it was a large family, and the other thing is to play with somebody else meant that you'd have to walk about a mile ... Well, for black children. There was some white children around, but there was segregation. You didn't play with white children.

Jeanette Pettit ([18:07](#)):

What was your favorite activity?

William Greene ([18:08](#)):

Well, as far as recreational?

Jeanette Pettit ([18:13](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

William Greene ([18:14](#)):

I guess playing marbles and playing ball in our front yard. Those will be the home recreational activities. I guess in school it was same thing. Within your studies, you also went out to play ball at recreation time. That's the only recreation I can remember.

Jeanette Pettit ([18:45](#)):

Okay. What did you do once you ... And you went to ... Your high school was-

William Greene ([18:55](#)):

Cardinal Gibbons Institute.

Jeanette Pettit ([18:56](#)):

And what did you do after that?

William Greene ([19:01](#)):

Well, we had the Oblate Sisters of Providence were the instructors at St. Peter Claver's and Cardinal Gibbons Institute, and they were excellent teachers. There was a black sister organization out of Baltimore, and so they were responsible for the instructions at St. Peter Claver's and Cardinal Gibbons. Again, I forgot-

Jeanette Pettit ([19:41](#)):

What was your life like after you got out school? What did you do after that?

William Greene ([19:46](#)):

Oh well what I guess I was saying is that they ... And plus there was the priest at the school which was Father White when I was there. They very much encourage you ... Well let me say first of all, they always instilled in you that you were very capable, that you had a lot of skills, that you can accomplish something, that you were somebody. And so throughout your school experience, you always felt that you had a future, that you had a great future, that you could be someone someday because that's what the black nuns instilled into you. They taught you as though you could really learn. They didn't teach you as though you had an impediment to learning. They taught you that you can learn anything and everything. The course was challenging, but the students were able to meet that challenge, and so the students were given a challenging curriculum.

([20:56](#)):

Many of the students, including myself, after high school we did a number of things. Whether it was go on to vocational or technical schools, many of us did that. Many of us went on to maybe start a business, a private business. Many of us went to college. Because we all believed that we could do something, that we were somebody. We took national tests and the students at Cardinal Gibbons Institute frequently did much greater ... Their testing came out better than some of the white schools nearby, such as St. Michael's. We generally did better than the students at St. Michael's, which was an all white high school.

([21:54](#)):

We were encouraged to do something after graduating from high school. That was natural for us to do, to do something, and so many of us went on to college and I was one of those that went on to college. I went to Wheeling Jesuit University in Wheeling, West Virginia. I was the ... I didn't know I was going to be the only Black there when I got there, but I didn't see any white people. So when I got there, I was the only Black on campus. It was interesting. When I first got there, I was approached by some of the white male students and they wanted to know what position did I play? I really didn't understand what they was talking about. I was sort of mystified. So they came back, "What position do you play?" I thought they was referring to high school. I played a little bit of basketball in high school. Back then, I wasn't that great so I played whatever position they told me to play. I really was perplexed by the question.

([23:07](#)):

I think somebody said, "Well aren't you here on a recreation scholarship or athletic scholarship?" I didn't really know what an athletic scholarship was to be honest with you. I didn't know what an athletic scholarship was. Back then, I don't know anybody who got athletic scholarships, so I simply didn't. We had to pay for going to college. When I was there, I was fortunate. They had what's called a work study program. You can work on campus while you're in school, so I was able to earn a little bit of spending change while in college.

([23:53](#)):

It was the difficult thing being at the school was that I had somewhat of a complex. It was like being a fish in a fishbowl. That's how I felt. Maybe that wasn't the right way to feel, but I always felt different. I guess I would have felt a lot better if I didn't feel differently, but I very honestly ... And it wasn't their fault, because I was treated well at school, but I still felt different. And so I always ... Irregardless of the circumstances that I was in, whether it was social situations or classroom situations or whatever, I still felt Colored and so ...

[\(24:46\)](#):

In the entire four years that I was there, there was one occasion in which a young man came from New York who was black. He stayed for about nine months. He was very accustomed in New York to being in a different kind of environment, so he didn't want to deal with being one of the only ones there and so he left. When he left, I was still the only Black there.

[\(25:15\)](#):

After my junior year, funds weren't that great to continue and so I stopped at Wheeling Jesuit University and I went to the American University in Washington, DC. And that was quite a different experience because there was other People of Color there, and so I went to American University and took the same ... I was majoring in political science. At Wheeling, since it was a catholic college, you also really got a minor in philosophy and theology. There was a lot of theology taught and a lot of philosophy taught. So I really had almost three majors: political science, philosophy, and theology. And so I went to American University for about a year. Not all of my credits from Wheeling was able to be transferred to American University, so I'm back to Wheeling. Wheeling University, again, and I did my senior year at Wheeling. I don't know. By that time, I must have gotten smarter or something because in my first two years I really didn't do that well. I didn't do that well at Wheeling. But when I went back in my senior year, my grades were tremendously better. I guess by that time, I was just more familiar with being in a college atmosphere and what to expect and I guess I felt more comfortable or whatever. I guess the break I had for one year being in a diverse environment maybe helped me a little bit.

[\(26:55\)](#):

I graduated. Still the first black to graduate from the Wheeling University. I went back a few years ago for the 50th anniversary of our graduating class, 50 years. I went back three years ago. And I met a lot of my classmates, and they were very welcoming, but I still felt unique. It still was no different, although they wanted to be ... I don't know if they were as welcoming as they could have been, because even when I was there, I had some friends, I had really no real close friends. I'm not sure whose fault that was, whether it was their fault or my fault, whatever, but I didn't so I was mostly alone while I was there. When I went back for my 50th anniversary, I felt alone again. So I don't know, maybe it was me.

Jeanette Pettit [\(27:55\)](#):

Well it could have been you, or it could have been them.

William Greene [\(27:59\)](#):

I'm not really blaming them. Maybe it was just my personality. I don't know. But then when I finished Wheeling University I came back to Drayden and I wanted to work in St. Mary's County because at that time there weren't a lot of Blacks who finished college and came back to the county. There was very few, and so I wanted to be a Black College graduate. I wanted to work in St. Mary's County. I took a number of tests with the federal government in different things. Because I wanted to work in St. Mary's County, I eventually had a job with the school system, first moving trailers around the county, and then I got a job teaching in the county.

Jeanette Pettit ([28:47](#)):

What did you teach in the county?

William Greene ([28:52](#)):

Park Hall Elementary School, taught that for a while, but that really wasn't my intent to be a teacher and so I applied for the State of Maryland and I was accepted by the State of Maryland as a counselor for the employment service, the vocational council for the employment service, and very soon after that I got to be in a management position and really ... That's after both two years of being a counselor, I got to be a manager and I was paid as a manager, and a director, and assistant director, and a few other things for about 35 to 45 years in the State of Maryland.

Jeanette Pettit ([29:30](#)):

Okay. What else did you do? I mean, when you came back, St. Mary's County was different, and I'm sure when you came back ... As you progressed in your job and your work, what did you do? Did you get involved in other things? Or were you just ...

William Greene ([29:55](#)):

Well I came back to St. Mary's. It was interesting also that while I was at Wheeling College, this was the time of the civil rights struggle, major civil rights struggle. And I didn't know anything was civil rights. When I left Drayden, Maryland, I didn't know there was a civil rights struggle going on. I was just a black boy in Drayden, Maryland. But when I went to Wheeling, some of the upper class students were very much aware of the civil rights struggle so they would frequently ask me questions about H.K. Brown or Martin Luther King or ...

Jeanette Pettit ([30:40](#)):

Thinking you knew them personally?

William Greene ([30:40](#)):

Yeah, they just assumed that I, because I was black, I was very much aware of the black civil rights movement. But I was just come from a little small town in St. Mary's County, and I didn't know anything, but they just assumed that I did. So when I came back ... The other thing too while I was at Wheeling College, again because of the civil rights movement, the upperclassmen, many of them were from Washington, DC area, many of them were, and so they would offer me a ride back to Maryland. That was very interesting because we would get involved in the sit-in demonstrations from West Virginia to St. Mary's County. As we drive along, we'd stop to get something to eat and we would all go into a restaurant and they would want to refuse to seat me, the restaurant management would want to refuse to seat me. And so these students that I was with, again they were upperclassmen, they would say, "Well if you can't serve him, we won't eat here either." Then we'll move on and go to another restaurant. This was in West Virginia, then Pennsylvania, then Maryland. Maybe we got Maryland, we might be able to go into a restaurant and get something to eat, but we did that on several occasions. We would try to get something to eat and they just wouldn't ... They would tell us that, "We don't serve colored people here."

([32:36](#)):

So when I got back to St. Mary's, I had finished college and all that, I happened to be at Happyland Club one evening. I met Mr. Tolbert, Fred Tolbert, and he was involved with the NAACP. And so we were

talking. He said, "You know, you should come to our meetings sometime." And so I did. I went to a meeting of the NAACP in St. Mary's County and got very much involved with that and became at some point vice president of the NAACP in St. Mary's County and got to know such great people as Evelyn Holland, Melvin Holland, and James ...

Jeanette Pettit ([33:19](#)):

Barst?

William Greene ([33:19](#)):

No. I forgot the name. Down in [inaudible 00:33:28] county, James ... I can't remember his name. There was a number of people who were very influential in the civil rights movement. Of course, the Newkirks, Ted and Virginia Newkirk. I got to know them. And also I was getting heavily involved in ... We of course were involved in a number of demonstrations in Lexington Park and in other towns, and then later on I got involved with the human relations commission and became chairperson for the human relations commission for the county and became involved with the school system, the St. Mary's County Board of Education and got to be on a civil rights or something kind of committee with the St. Mary's County Board of Education. When I came back home in the next number of years, I became quite involved in the efforts to integrate the county. The county was not in any way integrated at that time. We became very involved.

Jeanette Pettit ([34:39](#)):

How do you feel about the county now with the changes that have gone on in the county? How do you feel? How do you think that ... Have we come ahead or are we just stagnant or have we made any advances that were positive as far as you were concerned?

William Greene ([35:02](#)):

Well I think so. I think generations have changed and a lot of the generations coming along now, white or black, they really know nothing about segregation and how it was. [jet noise in the background] So they don't really approach things in a segregationist manner. They really don't. They just assume whether it's in the public accommodations or whether it's in employment or whether it's in service to the public or whatever, they just assume that you are citizens and you get service because again the generations coming along now they really don't know anything about segregation and those kinds of things.

([35:45](#)):

So in that sense, it has progressed. The only thing is, I have to say though, one of my first jobs as I mentioned before, when I came here, I got employment with the State of Maryland and I became the WIN program director. One of the things that we did in the WIN program, we trained people. We set up a number of training programs throughout southern Maryland in all kinds of fields for young men and women. We trained them, so we wanted them to get jobs. At that time, back in the late '60s, early '70s, it was still a lot of segregation and black people really weren't being employed in the county. One of the things we had to do was to go out and recruit and recruit jobs. We tried to get employers in St. Mary's County to hire these people that we were training.

([36:59](#)):

For the Patuxent Naval Air Test Center, for example, at that time, most of the Blacks that were hired, were hired in custodial or lawn maintenance or cafeteria and those kinds of jobs, the vast majority were.

And so we got the Patuxent Naval Air Test Center to hire a considerable number of people that we trained. They as well as a lot of other employers in St. Mary's County, Blacks had to first prove themselves. What we would do, we would have them to go in there to various different employers and work a core work experience so they could prove and show to these employers that they had the talents, they had the skills to do the job, and after doing that for several months at a stipend from an agency, then they would hire them.

[\(37:54\)](#):

And so we did that with the Patuxent Naval Air Test Center. We did that with a number of banks who prior to that time had not hired any Blacks in cashier, clerical positions, they hired a number of people. The Board of Education was another organization. They got to hire a number of people. SMECO, Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative, we got them to hire a number of people. The hospital, we got to have them to ... We would train licensed practical nurses. We'll send people to various types of schools in Washington, DC and Baltimore. Then when they come back, we have to try to find them jobs. We would get the hospital to hire them. A number of-. Harry Lundberg School of Seamanship, we got them to hire some people. So it was constantly talking to employers in southern Maryland and getting them to give black people a chance. Some of them did, and some of them resisted. One of their arguments was that the people that work here, they would not be comfortable with black people working here. That would make a very uncomfortable work situation, so that was a reason that they gave for not wanting to hire any Blacks. So we weren't successful with all of the employers.

[\(39:37\)](#):

And of course because it was a tri county organization, we also worked with employers in Charles County, the Indian Head Naval Ordinance Station that your father worked at. When I would go to Indian Head to try to get them to hire people, I would frequently talk to your father-

Jeanette Pettit [\(40:00\)](#):

My father in law.

William Greene [\(40:00\)](#):

Your father in law, sorry. I'd frequently get to talk to him. We got the Charles County government and St. Mary's County government, the St. Mary's Department of Social Services was a big effort to get them to hire people. Although we were getting a lot of their clients that we were training, they really weren't hiring them once we trained them. But we had to work diligently with the director. When I say we, it was mainly me, had to work diligently with the director of St. Mary's County Social Services, the Calvert County Social Services, the Charles County Social Services, Charles County Community College, we worked heavily to get them, the president of the college, to get them to hire. Because even the college, the Charles County Community College was one of the entities that were training our people so once we got them trained then we had to try to convince the rest of the college to hire some of them. We were successful. The social service agencies, they did pick up and hire, so did the College.

[\(41:13\)](#):

None of the people that we got to get employed in the counties, so they had now retired. Many of them, I see them all over the place and they have retired from the Base, they retired from Social Services, they retired from the Board of Education, they retired from SMECO, retired from Indian Head, and you know so I think ... Well I feel good that we were very instrumental in getting the county or county employers to start hiring people, and they did, slowly but sur-, successfully.

Jeanette Pettit ([41:55](#)):

I do remember the WIN program. I remember how well the people worked, and how much you all tried to get them into those jobs. They did get in those jobs, and they worked well.

William Greene ([42:09](#)):

They did. They worked very well and they moved up the ladder and they were progressed in their employment and so I was very pleased to see that. As a matter of fact, the thing we first started before we got the Charles County Community College to cooperate with us in training some of our clients, we started our own secretarial class right there at the office. I was able to get the General Services Administration to donate a whole pile of typewriters, probably 20-some typewriters, we got the General Services, which wasn't easy going through that whole bureaucracy to get the General Services Administration to give us typewriters. They weren't very good typewriters. I had to get my brother in law, Daniel Morgan, you may know Dan Morgan. He just happened to be a typewriter mechanic up at Greenbelt, now I don't know where to go. But I convinced him to repair the typewriters, make them operable, because we had a whole bunch of typewriters that didn't work. He came down on the weekends and he got all the typewriters to work. We started one of our first secretarial classes right there at our office in White Plains. We trained a lot of ladies for that and we trained a lot of men in mechanical skills and we got them mechanical jobs around the county.

Jeanette Pettit ([43:47](#)):

Okay. Now I'm going to get a little personal. How did you meet your wife? And how many kids do you have? Talk about your family, if you don't mind.

William Greene ([43:55](#)):

Sure. My life is Dolores Greene, and actually I was working as a counselor for the employment service and she just happened to come into the office one day looking to apply for a job, and I was assisting her in trying to get a job, and we just got to know each other.

Jeanette Pettit ([44:20](#)):

The rest is history.

William Greene ([44:21](#)):

The rest is history. We were married and had three children and I'm very pleased with my children. They are engineers. My son right now is in China. As a matter of fact, I got a message while I was here saying, "I just landed in China," in Beijing I think. I just got a message since I've been here that he just landed in China. My daughter, she's an engineer at Aberdeen Proving Grounds and my son he works for Booz Allen Hamilton. He works out of Lexington Park here but he actually lives in Atlanta. My daughter, she's a housing counselor up in Baltimore, other daughter. They are grown and married and doing well and I'm a very lucky father, very lucky.

Jeanette Pettit ([45:14](#)):

Yes, you are. Is there anything about you and your family that you feel you missed or that you would like to expand on?

William Greene ([45:22](#)):

About me and my family?

Jeanette Pettit ([45:24](#)):

You or your family or anything else you would like to expand on.

William Greene ([45:28](#)):

No. My mind's not working that well this morning.

Jeanette Pettit ([45:36](#)):

I think we have completed our interview, and thank you very much. We appreciate you coming back. I hope doing this again ... We had a little mishap, but we want to thank you so much for coming back and helping us again.

William Greene ([45:52](#)):

I'm very glad to be here.

Alma Jordan ([45:52](#)):

Did you ask if anybody else have any questions?

Jeanette Pettit ([45:52](#)):

Does anybody else have any questions?

Donald Barber ([45:52](#)):

I just want to thank you for coming back. I mean you had an excellent interview.

William Greene ([46:02](#)):

Okay. Well thank you very much.

Donald Barber ([46:04](#)):

You're very welcome.

Alma Jordan ([46:04](#)):

Name the people who are here.

Jeanette Pettit ([46:05](#)):

The people who are here is Anna Mosley and Donald Barber and Alma Jordan and of course me and Mr. Greene. Thank you again so much.

Alma Jordan ([46:16](#)):

Thank you so much.

Donald Barber ([46:18](#)):

[inaudible 00:46:18] thank you.

This transcript was exported on Sep 29, 2024 - view latest version [here](#).

William Greene ([46:18](#)):

You're welcome.