

INTERVIEWEE: Rebecca Clayton  
INTERVIEWER: Jessica Roseberry  
DATE: March 15, 2007  
PLACE: Mrs. Clayton's home in Timberlake, North Carolina

### CLAYTON INTERVIEW

JESSICA ROSEBERRY: This is Jessica Roseberry. I'm here with Mrs. Rebecca Clayton. She was the secretary to Dr. Grace Kerby. We're going to be talking today about Dr. Kerby and about Mrs. Clayton's work for Dr. Kerby. It's March 15, 2007, and we're here in her home in Timberlake, North Carolina. And I thank you so much for agreeing to be interviewed today, and I really appreciate it.

REBECCA CLAYTON: Thank you.

ROSEBERRY: I wonder if I might ask when you started to work for Dr. Kerby?

CLAYTON: End of May, 1960.

ROSEBERRY: Now, were you working—?

CLAYTON: I was a secretary in the chief resident's office, and I was pregnant with my first child. And Dr. Kerby asked me to come to work for her when I returned from maternity leave. So I was perfectly happy in the resident's office (*laughs*) and sort of hesitated as to whether I really wanted to do that or not, make that change and having a new baby and all at the same time. And so I decided I would do that. And then after I'd worked for her a long time, (*laughs*) I really wondered how in the world I got the job (*laughs*). Because not only having a new baby, but I was commuting from Roxboro at that time, which was a sixty-mile-a-day commute. And so once I got to know Dr. Kerby better, I was just amazed (*laughs*) she ever hired me. And I hesitated originally because I

didn't know whether I'd be able to do what she expected me to do because she was doing a lot of research and she was chairman of the house staff committee at that time. And she did all the house staff schedules and that was typing I would be expected to do and the same thing with the manuscripts. And I just wasn't sure that I could handle that. But it was the right decision for me to go to work for Dr. Kerby, and I've always been glad I chose that.

ROSEBERRY: When you said you weren't sure why she chose you or that—was that—you just—?

CLAYTON: Well, (*laughs*) once I got to know her, you know, like I say she really was a very private person, and once I saw how much detail she put into everything she did, I was just amazed that she ever even considered hiring somebody who was (*laughs*) several months pregnant at the time. Her secretary at that time was married to a house officer at Duke, and they were leaving that summer, so that's why she was looking for a new secretary. And I knew her in passing in the resident's office.

ROSEBERRY: What was the maternity leave like or what was the length that you were allowed, if you don't mind my asking?

CLAYTON: In 1960, you know, you didn't have any. (*laughs*) I had saved some vacation time and used that, and that was it. I was out six weeks.

ROSEBERRY: So you'd saved up six weeks of vacation?

CLAYTON: I don't remember now if I saved that much or not, but anyway six weeks was what I was out. I used some vacation. And then I had another daughter in 1971, and they still didn't have maternity leave, and so it was the same story again (*laughs*). I used some vacation time. I think I did end up using maybe a week of sick leave or something.

And again I was back in six weeks. And it was rather strange, my oldest daughter went to work at Duke after she got out of college. And some of the people that she knew in the clinic also knew Dr. Kerby was there at the time that my second daughter was born. And so they told my oldest daughter about Dr. Kerby coming in the medical PDC [private diagnostic clinic] that day when my second child was born and telling everybody, “Rebecca's got a baby girl!” And they were just amazed that she was telling that, you know. (*laughs*) They didn't know she was that open about lots of personal things, you know, I guess. I don't know. So—and I had worked the day before my second child was born and she had told me to go on home; she thought I looked tired. And so Tracy was born that night and she called the next morning to tell me just not to come in and (*laughs*) she was already born, so Walter had to tell her, she's already here (*laughs*). And then I had somebody replace me for that six weeks, and then I worked with her until she retired.

ROSEBERRY: So how long was that?

CLAYTON: She retired in November of 1976, so sixteen years. And then I still stayed in touch with her. She had a house in Durham. And so she kept it while she was retired, because she didn't want to get rid of it. And so I looked after the house for her. I kept her car and went back and forth two or three times a week. She had a great detailed list of what she wanted me to do and who to call for this—whatever needed to be done at the house and she just had a—she was a very detail-oriented person. (*laughs*) She was a computer before they had computers. (*laughs*) So I remained her contact in Durham for all those years. And actually her niece still owns the house, they still rent I; it's rental property. But I remained quite close to her.

ROSEBERRY: You mentioned that she was very detail oriented. How did that play itself out?

CLAYTON: Well, she made numerous notes. She carried little notes around with her and she had them in her pocket. And when she'd meet somebody, if they said something she'd pull out her little notes and look at them, and some people commented her memorial service how detailed she was. I made some notes after the thing. I've got a copy of those notes and they're sort of brief that I made at the time because I knew I would forget it if I didn't. And a couple of them made comments about how secretive she was about the house staff schedule. She made these things up at the beginning of the— well, the house staff started in June. Well, she had these schedules made up a good while before that once they did the match program, which happened in March, and then she did all the schedule making between March and June when they started. And a couple of people at her memorial service commented about how detailed she was and everything. And one of them pulled out his little papers all these years later, and he said she was very much responsible for what he had become today and so.

ROSEBERRY: Were there other ways that that showed itself, that detail, attention to detail?

CLAYTON: Oh, I'm sure it did. She liked gadgets. She had a lot of gadgets around the house.

ROSEBERRY: What kind of gadgets?

CLAYTON: She would have all kinds of tools and pliers and things that one wondered when she ever got around to using them, you know. And then she was not at home that (*laughs*) much; she was devoted to Duke I mean, because she was obviously into the

three things: the patient care and teaching and research. And she was in there all times of day and night even after I went to work for her and she was already, you know, fully established as one of the rheumatologists at that time. She was quite a worker.

ROSEBERRY: Are there other—how else would you describe her? Are there other things that come to mind?

CLAYTON: She was tough. (*laughs*) My husband used to tell me that if he worked for Dr. Kerby, he'd know all about her. I said, "No, you wouldn't either." (*laugh*) She's been out here a few times. Before we moved here we had another house over on the highway and she visited us there sometimes. He would just sit and talk to her and ask her all kinds of questions. And she liked what he was doing because he was mechanically inclined and he could do all that kind of stuff, so she was very interested in what he did and liked to talk to him about it and all that, you know. She came out here one time—I guess that was after I retired—and one of my daughters was—can't think, was my sister—somebody—the river is back over behind my sister-in-law's house out here. So she went down on the river to see the Flat River over there, which has nothing to do with what you're interested in, (*laughs*) but she was quite a lady.

ROSEBERRY: Some of the—we don't have very—I don't have very many pictures of her. I haven't seen very many, but she looks very serious in some of those pictures.

CLAYTON: I've got one I've copied for you.

ROSEBERRY: Oh great, thank you. I've got one of those pictures.

CLAYTON: This was one that she had made probably not too long before she retired.

ROSEBERRY: Oh, super. She looks very serious in that picture as well.

CLAYTON: And they kept it in the rheumatology library for a number of years, and then with all the renovations and everything that went on, I wondered what happened to it. But I saw Dr. Nancy Allen—she's also a rheumatologist—a couple of years ago, three or four years ago. I had my husband over there seeing Dr. Rice. And she told me she had that picture. I forgot whether it's, you know, twelve or twenty—I don't know—it's a pretty good-sized picture, so she said she had that picture. I've got her biographical sketch and her—

ROSEBERRY: Oh, wonderful.

CLAYTON: — bibliography. That's from the Harrell Center. And these were the notes I made at her memorial service.

ROSEBERRY: Oh, great.

CLAYTON: And then this was a note, a page that we found, that her niece found when they were going through stuff after her death. I had never seen this before. It goes up to—

ROSEBERRY: This is a biography.

CLAYTON: Um-hm, kind of thing where it goes up to I think it was uh 1950-something. I don't see a date on that, somewhere around '50, early fifties. It told about her future plans, and I was interested because I'd never seen that before. She was an excellent typist. I'm sure a lot of people didn't know that.

ROSEBERRY: (*laughs*).

CLAYTON: But I'll give you this stuff when you get done with this.

ROSEBERRY: That's great. Thank you very much. I appreciate it. So she was an excellent typist?

CLAYTON: Excellent typist, and (*laughs*) I would go in sometimes on Mondays when she'd been typing on the weekend and the typewriter ribbon would have run out during the weekend. Well, she would get the typewriter ribbon out and try to change the typewriter, but that was—she was not interested in that; I was supposed to (*laugh*)—. So I'd come back in on Monday morning, and she'd have this ribbon spread out either across my desk or across the typewriter to let me know that (*laughs*)—

ROSEBERRY: It's time.

CLAYTON: —time. And so I pretty much watched it pretty closely, tried to leave it okay on the weekends or pretty much all the time. But every once in a while, I'd forget, you know, but she wasn't ugly about it or anything, but I got the message. I was supposed to have that typewriter ribbon on before (*laughs*) I went home on Fridays.

ROSEBERRY: Would you describe her as a serious person?

CLAYTON: Yes.

ROSEBERRY: It sounds like she was pretty dedicated to her work as well.

CLAYTON: She was very dedicated. She was never married. She had a sister, who in later years had Alzheimer's, and she lived probably twenty years with Alzheimer's. And she hasn't been dead too many years, but that's who Dr. Kerby lived with in Florida after she retired from Duke. Yep, she was quite serious. They were able to do a lot of travel. She liked to travel. She traveled a lot even when she was working. She did a couple of sabbaticals while I worked for her. And then other times she and her sister did traveling, and she traveled by herself. But they did a lot after she retired, too.

ROSEBERRY: Do you know if she had any—besides traveling—maybe any interests or hobbies outside of work?

CLAYTON: She liked—she had roses in her yard. Well, Witherspoons Rose Culture thing, kept them planted and trimmed and all that stuff that she liked. She liked that type of stuff. And she liked birds; she kept bird feeders outside her back door. And she kept all these sunflower seed and peanut butter and all that stuff. And so when she'd go off on trips, I'd go by and feed the birds for her. (*laughs*)

ROSEBERRY: Well, now I know that Medicine has kind of in the past traditionally been where a lot of men tend to be. And other departments, maybe like Pediatrics and Obstetrics were earlier more welcoming to women, but Dr. Kerby was chief resident in the fifties and then she became the chief of the Division of Rheumatology later on. And I'm just wondering how she accomplished that in a field that maybe wasn't as early on welcoming to women?

CLAYTON: I don't know. She was in medical school in the mid-forties. And this was at a time when the war was going on. So I'm thinking that maybe, you know, that was a time that maybe they were more accepting of women students. I've got a picture of her senior class that year, and I think there were three or four women in it. I don't know.

ROSEBERRY: Do you know if she was—was she treated any differently?

CLAYTON: I have no idea.

ROSEBERRY: In the department did you witness anything? Did you see anything of her being treated differently by patients or other doctors because she was a woman?

CLAYTON: I didn't see it. I mean, it may have happened, but I didn't see it. She was very well respected by everybody I knew. I mean, you know, it was Dr. Kerby: they sort of stood in awe of Dr. Kerby.

ROSEBERRY: Did she kind of hold herself that way as well, to kind of—?



CLAYTON: Um-hm. One of the comments that was made at her memorial service was by Dr. William Stead, who was Dr. Eugene Stead's son, and Dr. Eugene Stead's well, well known, but you may know that, too, that he was tops in the country in his field, well known. But anyway, his son at the time said that when she was interviewing him about an internship position at Duke, he was all into computers at that time and that was like the early seventies which was—he was in the beginning phase of that. And he said that—let's see how'd he have it? That if she could keep him away from the computers or something that he thought he could do it. Anyway his comment was that she kept him just that busy (*laughs*) the whole three years that he was her resident. So I thought that was right neat.

ROSEBERRY: So she had—it sounds like she had some—or she held her authority. She was—they knew that she was boss.

CLAYTON: Yeah. They very well knew that she was, you know. (*laughs*) Of course Dr. Stead was her boss but then she was chairperson of the house staff committee.

ROSEBERRY: How long was she chairperson of the house staff committee, do you know?

CLAYTON: She was already—I'm thinking it was a couple of years before I went to work for her and then up until about the last year that she worked. They had made some changes at that time; somebody else was there for about a year or so.

ROSEBERRY: She was in charge of scheduling?

CLAYTON: Um-hm. The interviews, and that program worked through what the—I don't know if you're familiar with it or not, the intern-resident matching program: it's a national matching system. And you had deadlines of when you had to interview all these

applicants, all those applications. Well, they started inquiring like in the summer the year before they planned to do their internship starting the next summer. And so we had to get all these brochures together and application forms and have everything ready when the season started to get all this information out to the hundreds and hundreds of people who inquired about the program. And then it was—then they would submit their applications later, and all those applications had to be reviewed. You had to have a—they had to submit a dean's letter, a transcript and three letters of reference. And so that was my job to keep up with all that part of it (*laughs*) and to get where they decided who they wanted to interview. They had a committee, and that evolved over the years and changed over time, too. But it was a pretty detailed process to invite the people they wanted to interview, and then we had certain days set up in the fall for the interviews. They would come in from all over the country. And we had to, you know, make arrangements for them to lunch and getting them on teaching rounds and getting them to any conferences that were going on that day. They would have a couple of interviews with people on the house staff committee and have lunch with some of the house officers. We tried to match them up to get them together with people from their medical school so they'd hopefully plan to—that they would have a good day while they were at Duke and go away with a good impression.

ROSEBERRY: You were involved in arranging some of that, too?

CLAYTON: Some of the interviews, uh-huh.

ROSEBERRY: So she was—what was involved in her work as division chief?

CLAYTON: She was in charge of the fellows: there'd be two or three fellows in the system at the time. I don't remember exactly. I was told that she started the first

rheumatology clinic that was started in North Carolina at that time, and that was at Duke.

I never heard her say that, but I heard it. I can't remember now where I heard that she started that first outpatient rheumatology clinic, which would have been in the early fifties, I guess. Fifty—maybe mid-fifties.

ROSEBERRY: Were there any other firsts maybe that you knew of that she—?

CLAYTON: She did a dermatology residency before she went into Rheumatology.

ROSEBERRY: Did she— I know that she worked with Dr. [J. Lamar] Callaway, is that right?

CLAYTON: Um-hm.

ROSEBERRY: And what did they work on together?

CLAYTON: I don't know. I really don't know. They made some of those—he may be co-author on some of—I don't remember exactly.

ROSEBERRY: Sure. Well, were there other doctors that she collaborated with that you know of or—?

CLAYTON: Well, she would have medical students working in her lab. Sometimes some of the rheumatology fellows would come through on a rotation. She had one or two along the way that did some research with her.

ROSEBERRY: What was she working on in the lab, do you know? That's fine if not.

*(laughs)*

CLAYTON: You can tell more about that looking at that bibliography and the title of all those articles, because she did quite a few in that span when I worked for her.

ROSEBERRY: Okay.

CLAYTON: I think there was a test that they did at that time: C-reactive protein. And I think she and her technician—mostly Dr. Kerby, I'm sure—sort of perfected that test, but I don't know really the details. I just know that they were doing that on an experimental basis and then they started using it as one of the tests that they did at that time. I'm not even sure that they do with that test anymore. She had her hands in a lot of things.

*(laughs)*

ROSEBERRY: It sure sounds like she did. Well, I wonder if I could ask about kind of the interaction with Dr. Stead? Did you ever see them interacting together and what—I know that you mentioned that he was—

CLAYTON: I didn't really see them together that much. Maybe he'd come to our office once a year, probably not even that. And I didn't see that because, you know, they would go in her office, and I was not privy to what was being said or anything. I feel sure it was a good relationship, because, well, I think he made the comment that his secretary, Bess Cebe, was his right hand and Dr. Kerby was his left hand. So I knew he appreciated her abilities.

ROSEBERRY: Do you know how she was his left hand? Was it through the house—working with the—

CLAYTON: The house staff.

ROSEBERRY: Well, did you know Bess Cebe?

CLAYTON: Um-hm. She was a wonderful lady, too, yeah.

ROSEBERRY: What was she like?

CLAYTON: Oh, a whole lot like Dr. Kerby: a workaholic. *(laughs)* Both of them were. In fact, I was told in later years that when Dr. Kerby wanted me to go to work for her that

she, meaning Ms. Cebe, didn't want me to leave the resident's office. And when she told me that in later years and said Dr. Stead told her, no, that if Dr. Kerby wanted the change and I wanted to go he wouldn't stand in the way. And so—but that was—probably should be off the record. (*laughs*) But that's what she told me several years later. So I was always glad I went to work for Dr. Kerby. (*laughs*)

ROSEBERRY: Was she a pretty strong personality, too?

CLAYTON: Yeah, um-hm. I mean, I was sort of intimidated in her presence, too, but I found out later years that I shouldn't have felt that way. (*laughs*) She was a nice lady, too, very nice. And the house staff and all the senior staff respected her, too.

ROSEBERRY: Did she fairly well keep Dr. Stead organized, I hear?

CLAYTON: Uh-huh. Think so.

ROSEBERRY: Well, back to Dr. Kerby. I wonder if I could just ask the question of from your perspective, what do you think her impact on the department or the hospital in general might have been? What's important for us to remember when we look back about her?

CLAYTON: I guess that's hard for me to say as a secretary. I mean, there are other people who could answer that much better than I can. I mean, personally I think she had a big impact on it. But she was a trailblazer. (*laughs*) That's difficult for me to answer; I don't know.

ROSEBERRY: Well, did she—so I'm assuming from what I've heard you say that she never kind of talked about what it was like to be a woman in this position?

CLAYTON: Uhn-uh. No. Uhn-uh. She was basically one of the boys. (*laughs*) Not boys, but I mean, they respected her.

ROSEBERRY: Now, did you—I've heard you say that you were really glad that you went to work for her, and I wonder—it sounds like you two had a pretty good relationship. But it also maybe sounds like she had a fairly strong personality and kind of wanted things done a certain way.

CLAYTON: Um-hm. That's correct. I was—this is sort of off the subject, too, I guess, but when—she had cancer before she died and she survived about five years with the cancer. And I was able to, right before she died, to go to Miami. And she was in a nursing home at that time. And I was able to spend four days with her. And that was—it was sad, but it was—I was always glad I had that opportunity to go. And I had never flown. And I knew if I wanted to see her alive again, I had to fly. So I got the arrangements made. And (*coughs*) she wanted me to bring down the family silver. She had that in a vault at Wachovia Bank. So I got the silver from the bank. I happened to have a friend who worked there, so she went to the vault to get that silver out. So I carried the silver to Florida. And I called the airport before I went to tell them what I was doing to see what arrangements I should make and everything. So anyway they told me what to do at the time and all. And I carried the silver. I didn't check it in or anything; I just kept it with me at all times. So I had no problem at all with it. I guess you couldn't do that now with all those knives and things (*laughs*) in a box of silver. But, so I did. And then like I said, I was able to visit with her at the nursing home. I stayed with her niece, and they had a car there I could drive over to this Susanna Wesley nursing home, which was several miles from where the niece lived. And that was in Miami, right on the outskirts; it was near Hialeah, I think. It had a Miami address but was near Hialeah. So I drove over there not feeling very comfortable doing that every day with somebody else's

car and all that traffic, but I did it. And so I was able to talk with her, and she shared a lot of things with me at that time. I was really glad I had the chance to go spend that four days with her. And that indeed was the last time I saw her. That was around May Twentieth somewhere along in there that year and then she died June Eighth.

ROSEBERRY: You two had quite a relationship.

CLAYTON: Um-hm.

ROSEBERRY: Do you know if there were other people that had similar kind of relationships, secretaries within the hospital?

CLAYTON: There probably were. I don't know but—and this relationship was a long time in developing. But I guess she had to learn me to know (*laughs*) what to expect or whatever, but it didn't happen—it was years developing, years.

ROSEBERRY: Now, did secretaries within the department or beyond the department, did you all interact together, or was it—?

CLAYTON: Um-hm, yeah. See, most of them were secretaries to men with families and so that was, that was the difference with Dr. Kerby being a woman without any family around Durham or anything. I guess I just sort of became her family in Durham. (*laughs*) I don't know.

ROSEBERRY: Well, what did the—how did the secretaries interact together? Did you all eat lunch together or do things—?

CLAYTON: Not really. Most of mine would be telephone conversations, because I would be scheduling these interviews. And a lot of them I knew personal but some of them I just knew the voice on the telephone. So I didn't have a whole lot of time for socializing. (*laughs*)

ROSEBERRY: You mentioned the projects with the house staff and getting ready for those big events when people would come and interview. Were there other kind of big projects that you were working on with Dr. Kerby?

CLAYTON: Well, no, just the typing that I had to do for these manuscripts, that sort of thing. And she had a couple of grants I had to keep up with, ordering the supplies for the lab and the office, doing her letters to the referring physicians and to the patients that she saw, the discharge summaries for the people who would need it and just the routine stuff that goes with operating an office back at that time. (*laughs*)

ROSEBERRY: Now, was she working with primarily elderly patients or—I'm just wondering what the population of people who would have rheumatic diseases. Do you know?

CLAYTON: Yeah, most of them were older people. And she had some younger people that had lupus, too. She had—I know occasionally she would have a Duke student that might have that, and that went along with her specialty. But most of them I think probably were older people with rheumatoid arthritis, but not necessarily. She—with all her other duties, she saw patients a couple half-days a week. So she saw a lot of patients over time, but she had all these other responsibilities, too.

ROSEBERRY: So primarily administrative and—?

CLAYTON: Research and teaching.

ROSEBERRY: Okay. Do you know how she was received as a teacher?

CLAYTON: I'm sure quite well. I talked to Dr. Haynes shortly after her death. He's a rheumatologist and has since served as chairman of the Department of Medicine.

ROSEBERRY: So Bart Haynes?



CLAYTON: Uh-huh.

ROSEBERRY: Okay.

CLAYTON: And he told me as I recall that she was the best clinician he ever had. So I took that to mean she taught him a lot.

ROSEBERRY: That's great. I know that she was the first chief, the first female chief resident in the department. Were you there when there was a second chief resident that was a female? I think that was thirty years later.

CLAYTON: Yeah, I was but I don't remember who it was, to be honest. I've probably got some records I could go back and look.

ROSEBERRY: So that was—it also probably was not much discussed it sounds like?

CLAYTON: I really don't—I don't know.

ROSEBERRY: *(laughter)* That's fine. That's fine.

CLAYTON: But she did say—I learned this when I was talking to her when I was in Miami right before she died, that she didn't know she'd been appointed chief resident until she met Dr. Norman Conant in the hallway of the Bell Building, which was where our office was. And he told her that he'd just announced it at a medical PDC—a staff meeting or something. And so that's what she told—that's when she found out she was chief resident. *(laughs)*

ROSEBERRY: Do you think she was pleased with some of the—with being chief resident?

CLAYTON: I'm sure she was. I'm sure she was. I've got a couple pictures over there that was her class that year she was chief resident.

ROSEBERRY: Oh great. Thank you. Oh, old photos of her—

CLAYTON: There she is right there.

ROSEBERRY: I see.

CLAYTON: And that's not labeled but I think that was the senior staff that year.

ROSEBERRY: Okay.

CLAYTON: And this is labeled. See, this is her label. There she is. This is where she—that's her group.

ROSEBERRY: This is the House Staff, 1950 to 1951.

CLAYTON: Now, this is a copy of some—this is what I mean by her detailed notes.

*(Roseberry laughs)* I don't know where my original is; that's a copy I found the other day.

ROSEBERRY: Wow. So—

CLAYTON: She had a housekeeper, and she had a man that looked after the yard.

ROSEBERRY: So she's asking—these are kind of the things she's asking you to take care of?

CLAYTON: Uh-huh.

ROSEBERRY: Pick up, get the mail, get the—

CLAYTON: Uh-huh.

ROSEBERRY: Oh, she's—

CLAYTON: She'd left me money to pay these bills for her or whatever so—

ROSEBERRY: It is quite detailed. She's got a lot of things to do, and it's very neat and looks like she's got a lot of things to take care of on there. That's great. Thank you for showing that to me.

CLAYTON: This was one I guess they did in later years as a School of Medicine.

ROSEBERRY: Oh, this is a book—I'm describing that for the recording just so that we can—book of some of the students maybe, graduate classes.

CLAYTON: I think she graduated in '46. Let' see—

ROSEBERRY: This is her class; there she is.

CLAYTON: Oh yeah (*unintelligible*) yeah. See, this is when they did—

ROSEBERRY: Alumni of the Duke School of Medicine.

CLAYTON: There's several years worth in here: '32 through whatever the last one here. Fifty-five, fifty-six or somewhere along in there.

ROSEBERRY: Uh-huh. Great. Thanks for showing it to me. Do you think she was ambitious, would you say?

CLAYTON: Um-hm.

ROSEBERRY: Yes?

CLAYTON: Yes.

ROSEBERRY: Do you think more so than some of her counterparts or in equal measure to some of the others in the department?

CLAYTON: Probably equally so. I don't—I learned—see, she did a lot before she went to medical school, because she was older when she went to medical school. And her niece told me—and I guess this was probably after she died—that Dr. Kerby had inherited some money at one time, and she said, “Well, I got this money, what do I do with it?” And some of her people asked her, Well, hadn't you always wanted to go to medical school? (*laughs*) So the niece was the one that told me that that's how she went to medical school, because of this money she inherited.

ROSEBERRY: What kinds of things did she do before she went to medical school?

CLAYTON: She had worked at several different places. It's on that biographical sketch, the different places that she worked. And this biography type thing, that explains some of that, too. But she worked at several different places I mean around the country at different times. And then once she went to medical school she stayed on there for—she never left Duke after that.

ROSEBERRY: She found her calling.

CLAYTON: Um-hm. (*coughs*)

ROSEBERRY: So how often were you when you were—after she retired, when you were picking things up for her or paying her bills, how often did you say those kinds of things—?

CLAYTON: I kept her car at that time. And in fact that little green car sitting out there under (*laughs*) the carport is her car. I inherited it.

ROSEBERRY: Really?

CLAYTON: That's what my husband drives (*laughs*) all the time. Still got it, you know, sentimental reasons I don't want to give it—. He likes it, so—. But I checked on her stuff about three times a week. And I was really in a carpool with some other people out in this area. But I had my day that I drove in the carpool, so I always was sure to keep my day so I could stay in the carpool when I wanted to and the rest of the time I drove her car and checked on her stuff.

ROSEBERRY: So did she mainly interact with other physicians it sounds like and yourself (*unintelligible*)?

CLAYTON: Um-hmm.

ROSEBERRY: So was retirement difficult?

CLAYTON: I don't think so because she had—she had hear loss in later years, and it got difficult for her to hear. She had one hearing aid, I know. She told me once it got difficult for her to hear heart sounds. And so she retired—well, she was sixty-four when she retired.

ROSEBERRY: You think she was reluctant to retire?

CLAYTON: Maybe a little bit, but I'm not sure. She and her sister enjoyed, they enjoyed retirement. She was an artist. I've got a picture that—I kept after her one time to paint something for me, so she finally painted some pine trees I got hanging out there in the hall. You want to see it?

ROSEBERRY: Sure, yes. Thank you. (*Sounds of Clayton walking away and then returning*)

CLAYTON: She did that one for me because I asked her to. (*laughs*)

ROSEBERRY: It's an oil painting of—

CLAYTON: Now, this was one she had at home. This is a ponciana tree in Florida.

ROSEBERRY: Oh, wow.

CLAYTON: I told her niece I wanted it, so that's how I got that.

ROSEBERRY: Oh, that's very nice. It's a tree out in a field with some flowers.

CLAYTON: That was down in Miami somewhere.

ROSEBERRY: It's beautiful. Thank you. There's that attention to detail again, too.

(*Clayton laughs*) I see it. I had a question that I had in my mind, but I—. Was your work in the office as a secretary, were you seeing people come in and out? You were—

CLAYTON: Somewhat.

ROSEBERRY: Was it fairly autonomous?

CLAYTON: Yeah. That's why I liked it. (*laughs*) Once she knew I could the job, she pretty much let me—I mean, I knew what she expected, but she didn't hover over me. I mean, I tried to get it done in a timely fashion most of the time. But yeah, that's what I liked about it. After she retired, I continued to do that job, but there was—along the way there were several different people that had the position that she had—the so-called chairman of the house staff committee.

ROSEBERRY: Did they have different styles?

CLAYTON: Well yeah I guess so, but I liked—I think it was four or five different ones and they were all special to me. I enjoyed working for all of them, I sure did.

ROSEBERRY: Well, how would you maybe contrast some of those styles, if you don't mind my asking of just how they—?

CLAYTON: I don't know how to do that. I would say there was never anybody put any more time or dedication to the job than Dr. Kerby did. (*laughs*)

ROSEBERRY: And did they all have families outside of work or—?

CLAYTON: Pretty much. I'm sure they did.

ROSEBERRY: And was there maybe a—?

CLAYTON: And they were all men, too. (*laughs*)

ROSEBERRY: Was there an emphasis from them on spending time with their families, or was it maybe just a personality difference of Dr. Kerby was very much dedicated to her work?

CLAYTON: That's difficult for me to answer, because they were all dedicated in their ways, too.

ROSEBERRY: I understand.

CLAYTON: She was just unique, I guess.

ROSEBERRY: We were talking about kind of your being able to get things done without her hovering and you were fairly autonomous, and was there kind of a time—was there a fairly strict schedule that you were on during the day or—?

CLAYTON: Yeah, pretty much, because these things had to be competed in a timely fashion, because you had to think ahead to get these schedules typed up, and then you had to get them printed and get sent. I had a list of people I had to send all these schedules to, and they had to get our schedules before they could do their schedules for call schedules and all this sort of thing for the different divisions in the department. Yeah. We had timeframes—timeframes—different times of the year to do different things. Same thing with getting the brochures ready to go out. Well, most of the time when I was working for her, it was just like a twelve-page, ten- or twelve-page thing, you know, describing the department, what they did and the rotations and all that. And then later years it became a more elaborate thing with lots of color pictures in it and more. Well, as time went along, things changed. (*laughs*)

ROSEBERRY: To kind of entice people to come and—?

CLAYTON: Um-hm. At first when they were interviewing them—was no such thing as copy machines. So they had to—the physicians on the committee ended up having to do interviewing sight unseen as far as our records were concerned pretty much, because we kept everything in our office, and they really didn't have that much access to it before the interview. But then in later years when copying became (*laughs*) what it was, we ended up coping everything. I guess now they do it all by electronic mail, I'm sure. But at that

time we had to personally—I'm not going to say later years, not exactly, when she was coming through. But during the time she was there, they had the committee—they divided up into three committees. And I've forgotten, maybe three or four people on each committee. And they had to review all those records of people in their committee and then come up with a rank list to rank these people. And then Dr. Kerby ended up taking all these ranks that they had done, and she manually ranked all these people. And they would come up with this final rank list, and that was guarded with your life. I've had people lots of times to try to pick me to find out how we did on the rank list, whether we went down to—if we sent 300 people's names in and ranked them where we filled on that rank. That was totally—you don't give out that information, *(laughs)* And I never did.

ROSEBERRY: How else did your job change equipment-wise?

CLAYTON: Well, I always had—when I worked back there, I always had the regular electric typewriter. I never had to use an old manual typewriter, had a nice electric one. And then we had what they called the Displaywriter, but that was even after her time. I never worked with any kind of computers or anything in her time. It was just that typewriter. And I could do those schedules with the typewriter, and then we could send them to the printing services and get them printed off and everybody's looked like an original schedule. So we ended up with a neat job and you know, as time went along. *(laughs)* She had detailed schedules. And she always released them in three sections: one at the beginning of the year and then interspersed throughout the year. She had the whole schedule, but she didn't release it. And some of them didn't like it because she didn't release it, but her theory was if you needed to make changes and you hadn't released it, then it was much easier to make the changes. Because it was pretty difficult



once they found out a rotation they were getting—and particularly if it happened to be one they really liked—and then if she needed to make changes and take that rotation away from them, they weren't too happy. And she was able to maintain that, I think, pretty much through—maybe the last year or two she may have had to release it all at once but then later years it was no option, you had to release it. I have no idea what they do now. They've probably—it's probably—I know it's totally computerized now, probably on a national basis. I imagine they got something that most of the hospitals use, I'm not sure. But at that time it was all hand done (*laughs*)—and for many years after she retired actually.

ROSEBERRY: So it sounds like a big part of your work was that working with the house staff and—

CLAYTON: And as time went along, the total applications and all that increased tremendously. I mean, it went from hundreds to—hundreds and—I mean, we'd get thousand of inquiries, you know, and had a lot of them from foreign applicants, too. But you had to answer all these letters, you know, so we had form letters that we did all that with at that time. You figured out ways to make it easier for you. But if I'd have had—at that time if I'd had a computer, especially with all the papers that she wrote, research papers, that would have been wonderful. Because typing those tables was hard. And then even the body of the manuscript, obviously you're going to be making changes. I mean, she didn't get it like she wanted to start with. I mean, you just knew there was going to be changes. And then to finally get the final copy, (*laughs*) it took quite a bit of effort. (*laughs*)

ROSEBERRY: How long did those take?

CLAYTON: I don't remember now. It took quite a bit to get them ready to go off to reviewer. She'd do all these—shoot, what am I trying to say? They were not slides but—I guess they were, too, but she had graphs and all that kind of stuff that we had to take to the Medical Illustration Division and get all these things fixed up like she wanted them. But then the tables I had to manually do those, and it was difficult to get them just right.  
*(laughs)*

ROSEBERRY: I'm sure. I can't imagine. Now, you were also in charge of her schedule as well?

CLAYTON: No, she did her own schedule. I had nothing to do with her schedule. She made her own plane reservations and all that.

ROSEBERRY: Was that typical, or that was something that she preferred?

CLAYTON: That was something that she preferred. Yeah, she did all that herself.

ROSEBERRY: Were there any other people that were working for her in kind of a similar capacity that you were?

CLAYTON: She had a technician who did all the experiments and whatever.

ROSEBERRY: So in the lab?

CLAYTON: Um-hm.

ROSEBERRY: So were you then privy to her schedule? You could see when she was coming in or not, or did she just kind of—?

CLAYTON: Yeah, I could but—it was on her desk, but it was almost like sort of felt like maybe I was intruding or something. I didn't really go looking, you know. In fact, I do pretty much the same thing now. I make a list every week of what I'm going to do and the dates and what this and that; it all comes from working for Dr. Kerby. *(laughs)*

ROSEBERRY: So were you fairly organized before you started this work, or were you kind of grow into that?

CLAYTON: I kind of grew into it, I think. Because even getting the job at Duke was pretty much unheard of at that time (*laughs*) for me, because I had worked in a department store in Roxboro, and I knew that wasn't what I really wanted to do. I didn't have a college education; I was just straight out of high school. And my husband worked at a textile mill. And I tried to get a job there. And I said that was the only time I'd ever been discriminated against for being a woman, but I was. They wouldn't hire me because they thought I was going to get pregnant anytime. And the personnel manager, he would tell me to come back in two weeks, and I did this about a year. And so then I decided—I don't even remember. I know, I did go to Kennedy's Commercial School and took some business courses. And so the man up there suggested that maybe I could go to Duke, and so I did and got a job working in the Outpatient Clinic. And medical terminology was beyond—it was just beyond me. But I learned it. (*laughs*) So that's what I started doing was typing appointment letters to patients and typing the workups for some of the physicians there in the Outpatient Clinic at that time—the main one who looked after that clinic at that time, I was typing his notes. And so by trial and error I got the hang of it. Fortunately I didn't really usually have much trouble spelling, but that was another story. And so just trial and error. And so I did that work in that clinic I guess two years, and then Ms. Cebe asked me about the job in the resident's office, so I had that for about eighteen months. And that was during the time that Dr. Kerby asked me about coming to work for her. I think I was about six months pregnant with my first daughter.

ROSEBERRY: So it was one of your early jobs at Duke?

CLAYTON: Um-hm. And so after that I just stuck with Dr. Kerby. *(laughs)*

ROSEBERRY: Well, what have I not asked you today that I should have asked you that would help to know about Dr. Kerby or about your work and what it was like for you, any of those things?

CLAYTON: I don't know.

ROSEBERRY: Are there other women doctors that you saw?

CLAYTON: Yeah, a few.

ROSEBERRY: Do you remember their names?

CLAYTON: One was Dr. Barbara Newborg; Dr. Deborah Kredich, she was in Pediatrics. Dr. Rebecca Buckley is still there, I think, but she was later. She was probably going through residency training maybe when I first started working with Dr. Kerby, I don't know. She was along in that same timeframe. And I know there are others, I just can't think who they were, just come to mind to me. Because I didn't—. You know, I stayed in the office I didn't know—you know, I didn't know a lot of that part of things. I just sort of had a job to do and tried to do it. *(laughs)*

ROSEBERRY: Well, thank you very much. I've really enjoyed our conversation today.

CLAYTON: Thank you.

ROSEBERRY: Thank you very much. I'll turn this off here.

*(end of interview)*