

SALLY McLELLAN

2/13/44

IT'S HAPPENED TO ME -

Contract with rental cars I just can't figure out. Okay I guess we're all set. Looks good.

Very interesting.

LARRY - Well what about just background about yourself, are you from Keene?

SALLY - No I am not. I'm from State College, Pennsylvania and came to Keene in 1960 actually. Gene and I lived in Brattleboro in 1964-65 but that doesn't matter. We were in and out of Keene a lot that year. Jonathan came to our wedding in State College with his mother the summer of 1964. One person, Larry, that I if you have a spot question on some of those high school years and even the issue that you brought up about the Johnson family, the mutual, there is a woman whose name is Ann McGuin and her father was in the Keene Clinic. She was Ann Robertson. Norris Robertson and Dr. Daniels work were two of about five doctors that started the Keene Clinic.

L - No. We had a Norris Robinson. Robertson?

S - You do—Robertson.

L - His daughter

S - His daughter is Ann and it was through. Ann was a roommate of mine in New York. No connection to Keene at all. Just both started working for the telephone company on the same day and a bunch of us got an apartment. But it was Ann that introduced me to Gene. But I had been to Nubanusitt one time with Ann. But she also knew Jon in high school and there was something called the New England Music Camp or something that various members of this group went to at various times or it wouldn't be... a couple might take a car that had summer jobs and couldn't go this summer might go on a weekend go up to the music camp or something like that. So Ann would be was a friend of Jon's and also had some insight into that Keene Clinic Johnson structure.

L - Where is she now?

I think I can find her address.

She lives in ITNACA, NY.

It would help.

But her parents are in a nursing home in Keene, so she's in Keene a lot actually.

Do you remember the name of the man she married? That way I can look it up in the phonebook.

Yes. His name is Del McGuin and they live in Ithaca. She is the first cousin of like Tim Robertson and Jim Robertson.

I know Mrs. Robertson. Who made some outrageous remarks about Mrs. Johnston once.

Now this is the woman whose husband was a doctor vs. Tim's mother.

No I'm thinking of Tim's mother who lives out on the Bradford Road.

Not Dr. Robertson.

Not Barbara.

So then you ended up in Keene.

Yes.

After you got I just want to get the lay of the land. You first met Jonathan at State College.

Did I meet him once before that? It seemed to me ^{YES} ~~that~~ I had met him before. Whether it was in New York, where Gene and I were living and where we had met Ann and all these people or whether it was up here over a weekend. ^{OR-} But I think I had met Jon before he came to the wedding in State College. And he came with his mother. These tapes are going to be somewhat confidential.

Yes. Turn it off if you want.

Okay why don't you turn it off. (BREAK)

I understand.

So the summer of '64 first of all as you're saying ^{LARRY} and it's so important that we keep this in mind there's so much going on in the bigger environment. King's "I Got a

Dream Speech". I think that he was a counselor at a camp for underprivileged children ^{OR SOMETHING} that summer.

That summer of '647

I think he was a counselor.

before we turned on the taperecorder that he was at Willard State ^{PSYCHIATRIC} Hospital in New York just about 30 miles from Ithaca doing a pastoral counseling experience with other seminarians learning really how religion and psychiatry can interface. ^{WOLFE} WE interviewed two people from that experience.

So my even view of what was it was some sort of an intact program.

Sure was. Probably drove over.

He actually came back to Keene and ^{HE} brought his mother to the wedding and they had a social time. There were festivities ^{A NUMBER OF PARTIES} in State College and as always Jonathan was his charming self. He came back to ETS we all got back to our regular lives but at that point he was home would have been home for Christmas and maybe Thanksgiving. It did seem that that year we saw him a number of times. ^{UM -}

Now were you at the time living in Keene or were you living elsewhere and you would go to Keene as well? ^{TO VISIT -}

We were living. Gene and I had gotten married that summer of '64 and we were living in an apartment in Brattleboro. So it was real easy to come to Keene. If Jon was here we would go over for Saturday night. It wasn't any big deal. And he was, ^{OF COURSE,} dealing with a lot of these issues of the-of his-of the civil rights movement. I guess I want to say I was questioning whether I wanted to be specific in civil rights or whether there were other injustices in the system. I think at that particular time. You know we're five years ahead of Vietnam and Mr. Clinton is five years younger than I am and their issues ^{I AM SAYING} they all sort of meld into the 60s. But the first issue was not women rights it was not Vietnam it was really ^{THE FIRST ISSUE} was the civil rights movement.

Absolutely, we say that in our class. Civil Rights started the whole thing, the rest of it. I agree absolutely.

And so it seemed that even going back the year before when Gene and I were in New York and the people ^{THAT} we associated with that was the well and of course the year before when we were in New York was the year ^{THAT} Kennedy was shot. So that seemed to be the thrust. I have said to ^{OUR} children that each generation has an issue and that this was the issue of our generation. Do you see how much more uncomfortable I am now that you put this microphone on me?

.....

Not talking

We have so much tape we don't have to worry about it. What I think we're on the right track I really do. It's easy to get. Because what you're trying to do, I don't blame you, you're trying to help ^{ME FIT} ~~to get~~ the information into the civil rights in Jonathan life. We'll do that. It's all right. What we really didn't know about was what Jonathan talked about and what your perceptions of him were and what kind of a person he was and how he struck you and did you ever just get to sit and ^{CHAT} ~~talk~~ with him or did you go over to his house and meet his mother or sister.

SALLY - Any of those people. - Um -

Like this interview that Bill Schnyder did with you ^{60 YRS.} Course that was in 1966, that was 28 years ago. What was that like? Schnyder is an interesting man. Do you remember that interview? Probably not.

No. So anyway with the ~~I~~ will complete the thought with my children. They have sort of wondered what their issue might be. ^{OF} Course I think they know what it is now. It's the nineties and even making being able to survive in this present economic climate, but they did in sort of the tradition for which they were they ~~grew up~~, they did both go to marches on Washington for abortion rights.

Well that's an issue.

Yes it is an issue. An issue of their generation. So, Jonathan so first of all he was extremely correct and polite and disciplined. He probably unusually so. What did he talk to us about? He talked to us about women.

He liked ^{women} ~~them~~.

Yes.

And women liked him a lot?

Yes.

That's been told to us from people we've interviewed.

Yes.

He was a very handsome person.

Yes. But not macho.

Oh no, no.

Almost delicate of spirit as well as a more delicate physique too. And religion. You know sometimes it would just be, now that I'm not twenty anymore, intellectual prouiding about the Episcopal Church ^{as} and the Catholic Church, ^{as} the Universal Church for which there was no conclusion on that subject.

Young intellectuals holding ^{FOATH} ~~court~~.

^{HOLDING FOATH,}
Exactly.

As opposed to us old intellectuals.

Yes.

You mentioned before something about Connie. You ^{see} ~~saw~~, "We have a lot of respect for Connie in our script. We've heard a lot of conflicting reports. We've heard she was a total all consuming pain in the neck, that she could be arrogant and ditsy. And on the other hand she seemed to be loving, intelligent and warm. And she seemed like a bundle of contradictions and it's also not clear to us that Dr. Daniels and Connie

always got along. But in any case you mentioned earlier before we turned on the taperecorder ^{SOMETHING} that maybe Connie having some knowledge of issues in Keene that might have shaped Jonathan.

My synopsis of Connie first of all might have been that she was able to get away with being sort of arrogant when she was the doctor's wife. She was also, this was the most popular doctor in town and once he was gone and then she had the mental illness of her daughter to deal with and then she had the death of her son and financial hardship, at that point she became more humble, as we all do. So I don't think her, I don't know that she was particularly at any one time as full of as many contradictions but was like us all somewhat evolving over time. And came out, I would say, to be quite a lady in the end. Now you asked me more specifically.

^{ASKED} I'd ask you, I read that quote in the book, the interview about Jonathan's knowledge of *Lost Boundaries* and so forth. Why you hadn't heard anything about that yourself. If you thought that maybe Connie.

Oh, Connie had said that she kind of thought that it was a lot, now first of all Lost Boundaries was before my time in Keene, that she thought that maybe it had been a lot of do about nothing. We all knew that the Johnson's weren't quite, they were a little different. You know, and it really didn't matter and there were some kind of Sunday night doctors' socials whether it involved cards or whatever and I gather that the Johnsons were included in that group and, as can be in a segregated or a person who feels that they're segregated or ^{being} ~~he~~ discriminated against. I'm not using language well. The Johnsons may have had a bit of paranoia, that comes into mind that this town was much more against them then they really were.

I think what happened there was the movie came out in 1949 and the book in 1948, the article in the Reader's Digest in 1947, the fame of that seemed to trigger, well in Dr. Johnson, alcoholism according to Thyra. So we've heard from other people too that most people thought that

maybe that if they weren't African American, but they didn't care. Did Jonathan ever talk about this at all? Did he ever talk about

< — You could get another point of view from Ann McQuin on that one. Then did Jonathan ever talk about this? I don't remember ever discussing Lost Boundaries with Jon. I have with Gene and I think Gene kind of echoed what Connie was saying. I did hear Jon talk about Mr. Miller at the movies and the fact that Mr. Miller would call these kids Mr. Daniels, Mr. Felch instead of calling them ^{BY} their first names. He felt there was some sort of a cast ^{SYSTEM} which required him to do that.

And what were the children, these young men call him?

Oh they called him Mr. Miller, I think, or George. Maybe George yes.

They ^{PROBABLY} called him by his first name?

Yes.

I think that's interesting. Don't you Tammy? I mean that's so. See it's, it might seem slight to you. That's the way it was done though. But it gives us an insight into the way Jonathan was thinking.

Tammy: It might have also been a bit ironic those boys were a bit of tongue in cheek.

It could have been. Yes.

SALLY — That was the way it was done and he just didn't like it. He thought about it and you know it was probably later that he even thought about it, because he's having his consciousness raised outside of Keene. ^{I MEAN, YOU KNOW} At VMI, he's lived in a southern state and then he gets to ETS where there are a lot of liberals and he begins to look at some of these behaviors that they had as kids.

Fairly put. I think that's probably the best analysis of the situation that we're going to come up with. You know, I talked with George Miller's daughter on the phone, Ruth, she still owns land in Keene. I don't know if you've met her or not, probably not. She's very, very shy

person who lives in New York City and comes up to Keene about once every two weeks and I asked her if she would agree to an interview. She refused. She did say on the phone that when Jonathan was killed, ^{HER} ~~his~~ father said he wasn't surprised. That she would not go on the record. And she said that her father and Jonathan had spoken many times. Those are two things that I would have loved to have on the machine. Tammy: What a shame.

There's southern racism. Jonathan was asking for it when he went back. It should come as no surprise to ^{ANYBODY} ~~him~~. But I don't have that attribution in words I just have her saying them on the phone. I may try her again sometime. People change their minds. So you got to know Jonathan pretty well in that short period of time. You only knew him for a little over a year. Where were you when he was. Did you know that he had gone down to Selma?

Yes.

How did you know about that?

That may be the one thing that you want to talk to Gene about. First of all, we know he went to Selma twice. He went for the march and then he came back and completed his courses and then he went down again to work for the registration of voters. And while he was back in Cambridge working on ^{HIS} ~~the~~ school work, getting the taking his exams and what not, getting his papers in, Gene went down to, Gene may have been in Cambridge ^{FOR SOMETHING} and spent it with him at ETS, and heard more about why Jon felt he needed to go back for the summer. But yes there was an evening at the Felch's house between the original trip and the second trip that the three of us are there and I may have gone to bed as this went on ^{LATE} into the evening. You know there's another angle, Larry, ^{YOU} ~~we~~ know this is if it were kids and it's exciting. It's where the action is. I mean it was pretty boring what Gene and I were doing. I was teaching school, Gene

was going to work in a bank and your sort of basically day by day learning ^{a little bit} ~~everyday~~ a bit of the craft of adult life and to the living conditions were hard down in Alabama and they were being followed. I mean there was a lot of danger, but they were taking their black friends and going to these white churches and you can't help but to wonder why a white seminary student wouldn't feel compelled to go back there particularly and I don't know what the ~~other~~ options for the summer were, perhaps he could have gone back to a project such as he had had the summer before in New York but he probably completed that internship and he sure didn't want to come back to Keene and become his mother's escort.

Yes. I think you're right. I mean, the project in Willard was twelve weeks long and had exhausted him and we have some good evaluations of

^{THAT} I guess he went to Watkins Glen racing with an older nurse he dated.

We tried to track her down but couldn't find her.

^{MR. MURPHY} Twelve months in a mental hospital destroys anybody.

Great. Jon was only there for a few weeks.

^{MR. MURPHY} The first twelve weeks. The first ten to twelve weeks total. I've been there. It is an enormous physical and intellectual shock that you go through if you're really ^{ARE IN IT} So you wouldn't want to go back because he'd left having lost having been destroyed.

I see your point.

^{SALLY} And now each one of us, each generation has its little thing. Basically Phil's was World War II except for Phil was a Quaker and a conscientious objector so he got sent to the mental hospitals and the Quaker boys that went to the mental hospitals as orderlies working huge long shifts and everything did bring about a turnabout in the mental health system in this country. It wasn't as bad as when Jonathan went there.

^{CARRY} I never thought about that. They figured you guys were nuts because you didn't want to fight so they put you in mental hospitals. Philip

[↑]
(BREAK)

Daniels served in Camp Chappey Fort, it's in Kentucky. And Jonathan went south, Jonathan, Emily, and Connie would go south and visit their dad when he was training before he went overseas, because he was wounded in the Battle of the Bulge in fact that was his wound which he eventually caused his kidney to give out. Kidneys, excuse me. And I asked Emily about that and she told us a strange story about Black kids picking on Jonathan ^{ONCE} in Washington, D.C. ^{HE DIDN'T ELABORATE -} ~~It was in the library~~, I bet it's in here. I bet the Emily interview is in here.

SALLY - Philip wrote a book on coal one time and did travel around the country to interview people, not that coal is anyway embarrassing with a person but it was a lot of information to gather and interviewing different people. I get inarticulate every time he turns the tape recorder on.

*LONG STORY
BY SALLY'S
HUSBAND*

Tammy: I don't see that at all.

L - How did you hear about Jonathan's death?

S - I'll never forget that day. Gene's parents called us in Brattleboro. Gene was in the bathtub and I went "Oh God no." ^{DO YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN DO YOU SAY?} And then you just can't get in bed and sleep. And so we got in the car and we went up to Bellows Falls where this kid Tony Reddington lived in a caboose and ran Steamtown. So we found Tony and we all went to a diner just to and told Tony just so that he could get used to the idea.

How did Tony take it? Someone we should speak to? ^{HIS MOTHER - S} ~~Does he~~ still live in Bellows Falls? He moved to someplace else.

He was shaken up.

What did you do then? Did you drive over to Keene?

Gene wasn't in shape to go to Keene for a couple of days. I mean he wasn't in shape to see Connie for a couple of days.

The funeral was on Tuesday.

Yes.

Jonathan was killed on a Friday.

And so Saturday and Sunday we just sort of ~~w~~^Wandered around, maybe Sunday night we got to Keene. I didn't go to Jonathan's funeral. Gene and I were to, probably what we ended up doing was where we could we were doing some moving. Because we were moving to Keene that weekend and the mover ~~was~~^{WAS} scheduled for the day of Jon's funeral and it did seem like it was a bit much to try to reschedule the mover and everything so I stayed home and told the mover where to put the furniture and stuff and Gene went to the funeral and was a pallbearer.

We should have brought those photographs. You could help me identify some of them.

But then I think we got I think by that time we were moved. We ~~had~~^{DIDN'T HAVE} a lot of stuff in those days so I think then I did go down to Daniels' house.

Were there many people there?

Oh yes.

Were there many people from the South, do you remember?

Stokely Carmichael came and

We were told he acted kind of strangely at Connie's house. Just sat in the corner and didn't say anything.

Yes. Kind of what I remember.

He didn't have much to say. Where did you sit in the house, in the kitchen, living room, or kind of all over?

I don't particularly remember then versus the other times. The house was a very confused house. She was not an orderly person that any room was full of books and junk and food. I think maybe we sat at the dining room table though. Now that I think about it. And there was great problems in getting Jon's body out of Alabama.

But when we went we probably, I don't think we went Saturday, I think we went Sunday and I think they were still having trouble ~~shipping his body~~^{GETTING HIS BODY SHIPPED UP.}

That's right. John Morris put it in a body bag. Rev. Morris flew up with it across his lap in a little airplane. They got as far as Washington and then the plane he had didn't have instrument flying for that weather so I guess they rented another plane to Boston, Foley's hearse met them at the Boston airport. The plane was so small that Morris had him crammed on his lap.

FALLY - *PHIL* And I think I'm right on this, there were enough political overtones towards the big airlines they didn't want it.

PHIL - Also I was wondering why the papers had to be signed in order to release the body at those airports. I've been through that.

CARRY - This time it was a tiny plane flown by John Morris' friend, *CLOVER* ~~Bubber~~ *McGhee*. We have a picture of the airplane.

PHIL - I wouldn't be surprised if they were just glad to get the body out of the state.

Oh they hid it for hours. Finally it took a call to Washington, D.C. to loosen it up. John *OSCAR* ~~Deer~~ of the Justice Department had to call and we will interview him eventually. So you knew Jonathan for a year and a half.

So it's just a story as I would summarize it an American family, professional, father was a doctor but hard working, served their community, and a community that is brought to their knees over the death of a favorite son and the story goes on and then you know with Father Morrisroe visiting Connie and us having the chance to meet him and Judith Upton and these people coming to Keene from time to time and always gave us sort of a special *KIND OF* connection which I'm an experienced—I'm richer for.

CEEP - *SYN* *THW* *SEP* Tammy: So you met Judy then?

George Miller was the manager of the local theatre. It was one of the things I can remember Jon talking about blacks in Keene and there weren't *VERY* many. But George

one of
 Miller was the manager of the theaters and when this crowd would go to the movies
 on Saturday night, he (George Miller) would address them as Mr. Felch and Mr.
 Daniels. They were kids and yet they in turn called him George and as Jonathan
 looked back on that, in connection with the time and now we have somebody whose at
 the Episcopal Theological Seminary and he's saying "Hey this isn't right. What was
 going on? ^{BACK THEN!} What was our consciousness." Do you want me to do it differently? I'm not
 just telling a story but I'm inferring ^{too} much.

Yes. Try it again.

I thought you were going to introduce me with the who George Miller part was.

No. I'd better not. Maybe. You did it exactly right.

What did I say?

You said George Miller was a black gentleman who ran the local theatre
 in Keene when there weren't many black people in Keene and Jonathan
 once observed that etc.

Tammy: You were very expressive.

Yes. That was great. I mean we could use that but I'd rather . So let me
 It's fun really.

That's why I'm sort of waving at Phil. Phil has always had, if you can imagine, a flow
 of language that is twice my flow of language so in church or anything that we are
 doing together he's always the spokesperson.

Tammy: Interesting. Well it's difficult to be a ^{still + RESILIENT}

Framing is good, everything looks great. I must re you see the sound is
 separate from the ^{IMAGE} camera so you see what I do, I redo this.

Tammy: Which allows him to que everything together.

We'll just start whenever you want to start. Maybe you could just start
 with George Miller was....what you said last time, you said George Miller
 called them Mr. Felch and Mr. Daniels but they always called him George

END
 of
 Interview
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and that's what was part of what you said that was so ironic about this struck Jonathan as such. They always called him George. You're the one that was there so you

Why there weren't many blacks in Keene while these kids were growing up. Limited experience but one point that Jonathan would, did tell me about was that the man that ran the movie theatre was black and his name was George Miller and when they'd go to the movies on Saturday night, they would call him George but he would address them as Mr. Felch or Mr. Daniels. And as Jon looked back at this as he grew up he said, "This wasn't right. We were the kids."

um - so Jonathan told me about growing up in Keene, where there were very few blacks, one of the blacks that was somewhat that they knew in Keene was a man by the name of GEORGE MILLER WHO RAN THE MOVIE THEATRE, AND ALSO TOOK THE TICKETS. AND WHEN THEY WOULD GO IN, THEY'D SAY, "HI, GEORGE!" AND GEORGE WOULD GO, "HELLO MR. DANIELS, HELLO, MR. FELCH." AND AS JON GROW UP HE BEGAN TO THINK ABOUT THIS. AND WASN'T THERE - THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH THIS. HE SHOULD HAVE BEEN "MR. MILLER," AND WE SHOULD HAVE BEEN "GEORGE AND JON." WE WERE THE KIDS.

L. CUT - GREAT.

END OF TAPE.