

Interview Notes

Four subjects were interviewed in sequence.

#1

Subject was asked what the study meant to the people involved, how it started, etc.

Subject--Started with a blood test. Clinic met at Shiloh Church. They gave us shots. Nurse (Rivers) came out and took us in (to John Andrews Hospital). One time I had a spinal puncture--had to stay in bed for 10 days afterward. Had headaches from that. Several others did too (and stayed in bed awhile). I wore a rubber belt for a long time afterward. Had ointment to run in under the belt.

Doctors came every year or so. After 25 years they gave everyone in the study \$25.00 and a certificate. They told him he was in pretty good health.

At the beginning he thought he had "bad blood". They said that was syphilis. (He) just thought it was an "incurable disease." He was booked for Birmingham for "606" shots but "nurse stopped it." Some other doctor took blood that time and he was signed up to go to Birmingham. Nurse Rivers said he wasn't due to take the shots...he went to get on the bus to Birmingham and they turned him down. This was some time between 1942-1947.

He did not know he was sick before 1932. They gave them a bunch of shots--about once a month. Then they did a spinal. Nurse would notify them about the blood tests and bring them down.

He had not talked to any of the other participants lately.

He had the shots in his arm. In 1961 he had a growth removed from his bladder. (He is 66). Health insurance paid for it. He paid his bill and his insurance paid back all but \$20.

Question--could all the people in the group afford hospitalization? What would others have done?

Subject--I don't know. I asked the (government) doctors about it (the growth) and they sent me to my family doctor. The government people didn't know I had insurance.

He didn't know of any others in the study who had been in the hospital although one man had become blind after awhile. He hadn't thought much about whether his disease had been cured. The doctor was seeing him every year, and he was feeling pretty good. He was not told what the disease might do to him. He stayed in the program because they asked him to. Nurse came and got him. He thought they all had the same disease. The blind man had been blind nearly 20 years--had worn glasses awhile, then had become blind.

Question--Did anyone do anything about the blind man's eyes?

Subject--I think he told nurse. They talked one time about sending him somewhere. Wasn't treated that he knew of. He (the blind man) never went anywhere and he (subject) didn't know the details. The blind man is about 75 now.