

[00:00]

INTERVIEWER: So uh, first this is just for the recording, can you state your name?

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah, Charles Terry.

INTERVIEWER: Alright. And uh, when and where were you born?

CHARLES TERRY: Dawson, Georgia, 1927.

INTERVIEWER: 1927. Um, and tell me how long you've lived in Trenton.

CHARLES TERRY: Uh let's see, <inaudible> right now, I came here in 1942.

INTERVIEWER: 1942?

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: And uh, we have uh, we have a map of Old Trenton here. This uh, where have you lived in this neighborhood? Have you lived here?

CHARLES TERRY: Is this uh, East <inaudible>

INTERVIEWER: East State Street at the bottom.

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah, see, I see I used to live on **Sheraton (sp?)** Avenue, you know where the new police station is?

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: Well I used to live right across from there. But now, I live quite a few places, right down on **<inaudible name of street>** <inaudible> lived there for a while.

INTERVIEWER: Okay.

CHARLES TERRY: And uh, I moved here, I lived next to the funeral home up on **Bellevue (sp?)** Avenue hills.

INTERVIEWER: Bellevue or?

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: I used to operate that buildin' up at the hut.

INTERVIEWER: Ah okay.

CHARLES TERRY: See I was workin' for the government there, kept that building for twenty-two years.

INTERVIEWER: Huh.

CHARLES TERRY: 'Til the governor sold it, and that's when I <inaudible>

INTERVIEWER: So uh, so you came here in uh, 1940?

CHARLES TERRY: 1943 <inaudible>

INTERVIEWER: 1943, right. So what do you remember about, about this neighborhood, the Old Trenton neighborhood from uh, 1945 to 1965?

CHARLES TERRY: Oh, it's a lot different from what it is now.

INTERVIEWER: It's a lot different?

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah it is yeah. All nice buildings hang all down Warren Street there, all the buildings, and, and theaters downtown. I don't think they even got them over in Trenton now.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: They used to have a Rialto, Mayflower, all of them down there.

INTERVIEWER: Really?

CHARLES TERRY: Down by the courthouse down there, you know the courthouse?

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: Right there where the courthouse is, there used to be uh, skating rink sit there goin' up the hill.

INTERVIEWER: Really?

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah. And the courthouse then was way down on South Broad Street. And <inaudible>

INTERVIEWER: So uh, what were the businesses like in Old Trenton?

CHARLES TERRY: Good, we had factories everywhere. We had uh, Trenton Pottery all the way took all of Clinton Avenue up goin' out to <inaudible street name>

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: We had uh, Stokes, <inaudible businesses> and uh wasn't nothing but factories round here. <inaudible> you'd walk out of one if you didn't like it and go right into another one.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, um, can you tell us about, about your jobs in, in Old Trenton during that time period?

CHARLES TERRY: Well uh, I worked for the Board of Education uh, nineteen years, I retired from the board of Education.

INTERVIEWER: And when was that? When did you start?

CHARLES TERRY: I retired in 1989.

INTERVIEWER: 1989?

CHARLES TERRY: Used to have <inaudible> for my birthday.

INTERVIEWER: Right.

CHARLES TERRY: Mhm. <inaudible>

INTERVIEWER: What about um, what about when you were younger? Say uh, in your twenties and stuff?

CHARLES TERRY: Oh well uh, see I went into the military when I was 18.

INTERVIEWER: Went into the military when at 18?

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah when I was, see along that time they had the draft on, they'd draft you you know what I mean?

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: So uh, I left the farm, I think was around about 16, soon as I got 18 off the farm, I got drafted.

INTERVIEWER: You got drafted?

CHARLES TERRY: 18. Yeah. It was the draft on the time I, I caught the tail end of World War II. So my, I couldn't really go to the front when V-Day come.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: And uh, I stayed over there a year. And um, Japan. And they sent me back to Port Sam Houston Texas, and they made me uh, a leader, a trainer, you know what I mean?

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: Training recruits. That was the last job I had, then grew up.

INTERVIEWER: Huh.

CHARLES TERRY: But I enjoyed it, sometimes wish I was over twenty and everybody didn't.

INTERVIEWER: So what did you do uh, after you left Texas? Did you come back here?

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah. And when was that?

CHARLES TERRY: That was uh, let's see when did I come back here, '40-, '48 something along that.

INTERVIEWER: '48?

CHARLES TERRY: Mhm.

INTERVIEWER: And what did you do when you came back?

CHARLES TERRY: Uh, that's when I got a job at, I worked for the city a while, I was workin' at **Crescent White(?)** when I was at, when in the military. So they closed down, and I worked for the city temporarily, 'til I got on the school board. Yeah I worked for the school board, **1948(?)** I was there.

INTERVIEWER: Said you worked for, Crescent White?

CHARLES TERRY: Crescent White.

INTERVIEWER: Crescent White.

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah you know, they done tore it down right there **<inaudible street name>** Avenue goin' over the bridge?

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah when you get off Clinton, turn right, Crescent White factory sit right there, some of it still sittin' there.

INTERVIEWER: Really?

CHARLES TERRY: Mhm.

INTERVIEWER: And what'd you do for them?

CHARLES TERRY: I used to be a machine operator.

INTERVIEWER: Machine operator?

CHARLES TERRY: Uh, yeah, yup.

INTERVIEWER: And you said after that uh, you worked for the city?

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah, I uh, about sixty years at Crescent White until they tore it down, then I worked for the city about six, seven months, den I got with the school board. My brother he was the superintendent of the school, he got me a job there.

INTERVIEWER: Hm. Do you remember uh, do you have any specific stories about the Old Trenton neighborhood? Any uh, specific memories?

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah, I'll tell you one thing it was a lot better than it is now.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah?

CHARLES TERRY: Lot safer anyway.

INTERVIEWER: A lot safer.

CHARLES TERRY: Down on uh, Mercer Street, there used to be a slaughter house there, in fact a soup kitchen, you know the soup kitchen?

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: Used to be, all that used to be housing in there and everything, they had the slaughter pen where they used to slaughter pigs and things.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: Then they had the incinerator sittin' right on top of the Solemn Creek Bridge (?) when I was goin' over. Right at the top, they tore all the house down, and they got rid of that <inaudible>

INTERVIEWER: Were you involved in uh, any of the arts in Trenton or the, the culture?

CHARLES TERRY: No, no, no.

INTERVIEWER: What was the culture like? Do you know?

CHARLES TERRY: Well, it was good. Everything was good when I was there. Like I said, wasn't nothing like it is now, it was safe to walk out you know?

INTERVIEWER: Safer?

CHARLES TERRY: You walk out now and you don't if you're comin' back alive or not, or where you die down the guns around here. I pick up the paper, somebody done shot somebody.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah. Let's go over uh, some of the photographs we have here, um, they're uh, they're arranged in order by date.

CHARLES TERRY: Uh-huh.

INTERVIEWER: So they start in 1940 and they go to about 1965.

CHARLES TERRY: Okay.

INTERVIEWER: Um, so, why don't you flip through this and uh, see whether you, whether you remember anything or, you can tell me more about any of them.

CHARLES TERRY: <inaudible> but I can't remember right now.

INTERVIEWER: Think this is around State and Broad.

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah, yeah. Yeah, don't know any of the places there. Cigar place.

INTERVIEWER: This is actually the uh, says the Welcome Home Banner for the, the soldiers.

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Do you remember that or? I guess you went to Texas, afterwards.

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah, Texas, yeah. <inaudible> All these streets out here was two way, Broad Street, Warner Street, they all were two ways.

INTERVIEWER: Two ways?

CHARLES TERRY: Now they're all one way

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: Down on one, <inaudible> the Mayfair, Rialto, all of that was down there. Like I said they had the skating right at the top of <inaudible> courthouse down there.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: All this neighborhood here used to be all buildings, partner buildings goin' down Warner Street (?) before they got the apartments there. <inaudible>

INTERVIEWER: This is probably uh, more around the time when you came back, do you recognize any of this or?

CHARLES TERRY: Look at me, I was just talkin' to him but , <inaudible> I can't recognize them too.

INTERVIEWER: Huh. I guess this is uh, when they were constructing the post office.

CHARLES TERRY: Ah, yeah, none of that. Yeah uh, had them all like this.

INTERVIEWER: Medics (maybe Anetics?) and uh...

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Can you tell me more about any of this or, any anetics or anything?

CHARLES TERRY: This one, Sherwood look familiar.

INTERVIEWER: Sherwood?

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah it look familiar. <inaudible> dollar bill.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah. They were a jewelry place.

CHARLES TERRY: Yea, jewelry, yeah. There was jewelry, yeah I remember that.

INTERVIEWER: Warren Street.

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah, uh-huh. <inaudible> the restaurant. <inaudible> Clinton was nice, down here.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: <inaudible>

INTERVIEWER: Cigar place?

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah. Yup. <inaudible>

INTERVIEWER: S.S. Presby.

CHARLES TERRY: Uh-huh, yup, all that yeah, I remember all that.

INTERVIEWER: You see any of those movies, or?

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah I think this one, <inaudible> Rialto, <inaudible>

INTERVIEWER: This is a street paving.

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: You remember the street paving at all or?

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah yeah, the corner there, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: You worked for the city for a little bit, were you involved in any of the street paving or?

CHARLES TERRY: No, no. I wasn't involved in none of that. No. <inaudible>

INTERVIEWER: These sparking any memories, or?

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah, uh-huh. <inaudible>

INTERVIEWER: What are these photos reminding you of?

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah, um.

[16:30]

CHARLES TERRY: Mhm, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Remember uh, the great snow? From 1960?

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah, yeah yeah. We don't have no snow here now.

[17:05]

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: Sometimes we had, you had a car down there and you park it, it'd snow so hard you couldn't find it the next day.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: That's how hard it used to snow. **Think about it**, when we came up there, me and my grandmother grandfather came up there **<inaudible>** and uh, it was so much snow down the paving we had to walk to uh, **Sheraton** Avenue, **<inaudible>** like they got now.

INTERVIEWER: Mhm.

CHARLES TERRY: If you had a car here you might as well forget it. **<inaudible>** Yeah uh-huh. All these look familiar.

INTERVIEWER: Hm. What do they remind you about?

CHARLES TERRY: Everything down here.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, yeah. About the Old Trenton neighborhood.

CHARLES TERRY: Like I said, it was nice down living here.

INTERVIEWER: It was nice, yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah. **<inaudible>** I used to see **<inaudible>**

INTERVIEWER: Couple more here. REmember any of these, the Planter's Peanuts?

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah, uh-huh. Yeah, all that familiar too.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah I guess this is the last photo we have.

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah uh huh.

INTERVIEWER: So do, so do those photos remind you of anything or?

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah, remind me of the good old days.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: Not like now. Like everything back there now, trouble.

INTERVIEWER: How did the neighborhood change from, how did the neighborhood change from say 1960 to now?

CHARLES TERRY: Damn, awful lot.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah. It got worse you know what I mean?

INTERVIEWER: Got worse?

CHARLES TERRY: Ten years back, business started moving out. When I first came here you could walk in one shop, if you didn't like that, you walk right out in in another shop just like that.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: Mhm.

INTERVIEWER: What happened after all the jobs left?

CHARLES TERRY: Most of them went south, <inaudible> they moved Florida somewhere down there.

INTERVIEWER: Mhm.

CHARLES TERRY: All the people that wanted to go they can go but I didn't want to go down there.

INTERVIEWER: What do you think, what do you think happened to the people in Trenton or uh, what happened to the neighborhood after all the jobs left?

CHARLES TERRY: Well a lot of them left there.

[20:46]

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: Take all my kids, they was born <inaudible> Savannah (?) goin' to Georgia <inaudible>

INTERVIEWER: Uh-huh. So they went back to Georgia?

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah. They wasn't really born down there but they were raised up here.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: But they took a likin' there down.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: I don't know where you been to Savannah, Georgia?

INTERVIEWER: No, I haven't.

CHARLES TERRY: Aw man, that's a, that's a beautiful place.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah?

CHARLES TERRY: It's the capital of Georgia.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: My son, he got a uh, insurance business there.

INTERVIEWER: Really?

CHARLES TERRY: But he was born and raised up here, but uh, he started at Rutgers (?) a Insurance company. Now he's lucky he's got his own down there now.

INTERVIEWER: Hm. What happened to the people who stayed in Trenton?

CHARLES TERRY: Well, most of em, retired around her, a lot of em still leavin' here.

INTERVIEWER: Still leavin'?

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: How would you describe Trenton's uh, arts and culture scene now?

CHARLES TERRY: Well, pretty good yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: Mhm. Yeah it's been a big change, like I said.

INTERVIEWER: What is the art in Trenton like now? Do you know?

CHARLES TERRY: I don't know how good it is now, don't keep up with nothin' like that too much anymore.

INTERVIEWER: Mhm. How do you think uh, how do you think we can improve Trenton now?

CHARLES TERRY: Get rid of some of this crime, firstly.

INTERVIEWER: Get rid of the crime?

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: Walkin' round with guns out here like Wild West.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: Worse than the Wild West round here.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: What about uh, what do you think the, how can we change the, the arts and the culture in Trenton to improve the neighborhood? What do you think we can do about the culture?

CHARLES TERRY: I think ask the mayor a job he has <inaudible> do somethin' about that.

INTERVIEWER: The mayor, yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah, and the governor. Instead of runnin' football games, he should do somethin'.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: You know. Yeah. <inaudible>

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INTERVIEWER: What do you think, what do you think the mayor could do to, to serve uh, to serve your needs, to serve the communities needs?

CHARLES TERRY: Find more police to put out here one thing.

INTERVIEWER: More police?

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah, neighborhood, state troopers, anything singly thing <inaudible> Should have more foot patrol too.

INTERVIEWER: Foot patrol?

CHARLES TERRY: Like years ago. The cops years ago didn't know about ridin' in no cars, they didn't, all of them had the beats, they walked the beats. These, these two cops had a beat, uh, the police station used to be right there on <inaudible street name> Lane, right there and uh, they would always, they all take a beat, two men. Different streets <inaudible>

INTERVIEWER: I heard the cops used to uh, used to know the people on the beats in the neighborhood.

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah, oh yeah. Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: They'd know the people by name.

CHARLES TERRY: Right, oh yeah. See people respected police then.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: Then cops would be walkin' out there <inaudible> you'd better be gone when they come back.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: So, the way I look at it now. The cops they got now, they can't catch you in the car you're gone.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: They don't get out, they're out of shape.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: The best part of the police I look at now are the women. The women in good shape, better shape than the men.

INTERVIEWER: Really?

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah, yeah. Yeah. I got a cover of me on the police report, walkin about there in Ewing.

INTERVIEWER: Oh in Ewing?

CHARLES TERRY: Timmy Copeland? You might have heard about him. Yeah he been on the police force there a long time. <inaudible>

INTERVIEWER: Mhm.

CHARLES TERRY: I think they took him off the street though and put him in uh, Ewing High School up there.

INTERVIEWER: In the high school?

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah, that's where he at now.

[25:18]

INTERVIEWER: Is there anything else you'd like to share with us about, about the old neighborhood, that we haven't discussed or?

CHARLES TERRY: No, that's about all.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah, yup.

INTERVIEWER: What are, what are your hopes for Trenton in the future that you-?

CHARLES TERRY: Well like I said I hope it can get better, don't want to live there with these guns and things in the future <inaudible> these criminals. If I was president, uh, governor, when one commit a crime, I'd throw them down to uh, Camp B down there and lower 'em up on the bars and send over there and <inaudible> one bullet and one bag of <inaudible>, leave 'em over there.

INTERVIEWER: Mhm.

CHARLES TERRY: They can't get back, unless you bring it.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: You try coming back Sharks will eat 'em up.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: So they here in the Atlantic.

INTERVIEWER: Mhm.

CHARLES TERRY: All these jails, now that's called usin' tax payers' money.

INTERVIEWER: All the jails?

CHARLES TERRY: Out in all these, I got some people down there too, get 'em out too, yeah you mess up you just, you know what I mean.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: That'd be my idea, get rid of all the crime here , ship 'em all there on **Isle White (?)** , all that.

INTERVIEWER: Mhm.

CHARLES TERRY: Somebody give 'em a chance to get off the boat **<inaudible>**

INTERVIEWER: Mhm.

CHARLES TERRY: In fact **<inaudible>** blow 'em before they get there ,don't want to mess with 'em you know?

INTERVIEWER: Mhm.

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: You think the future looks bright for Trenton? You think the future looks bright for Trenton?

CHARLES TERRY: I think it's bright enough **<inaudible>**

INTERVIEWER: Yeah?

CHARLES TERRY: Yeah. I mean to think of old times. I mean all that said, but I figure it's better what it is now. Sooner or later. Hope so anyway.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah. Well, I think that's about it for today. Thanks, thanks very much for helpin' us out

CHARLES TERRY: Alright, okay, yup.

[27:13]

CHARLES TERRY: One thing about it, you ever, generation <inaudible> tell you the truth about it, <inaudible> the bad kids out here they don't have no parents either, know what I mean?

INTERVIEWER: They don't have parents, yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: The parents got him out here sellin' drugs, and he takin' the money.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: And he go out there and mess with somebody else's drugs and he gonna get rolled up.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: <inaudible> like they used to.

INTERVIEWER: Mhm.

CHARLES TERRY: As long as he bringin' money in he's good to go.

INTERVIEWER: Mhm.

CHARLES TERRY: Know what I mean? Seen a lot of that goin' on round here. Don't know good neighborhood or good parentin' , don't keep on top of them like they supposed to.

INTERVIEWER: Mhm.

CHARLES TERRY: Gotta lay your foot down. I raised uh, nine kids. I put the foot bone down.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: Diapers, <inaudible> I said diapers, I said you own him <inaudible> If I have to feed him and work for him, he yours. He under my rules, you know what I mean?

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: All my kids never forgot that.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: You had to be a leader.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: Parents the leader, know what I mean?

INTERVIEWER: Mhm.

CHARLES TERRY: Do the right thing in front of 'em, they gonna respect you. A lot of these kids here, they don't get no respect from the parents, know what I mean?

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: I have had young boys talk to me like that. But usually I'm not <inaudible>

INTERVIEWER: Mhm.

CHARLES TERRY: So there was one boy he sit over there in the corner started crying. I asked him what was the matter, he said he ain't ever had nobody talk to me like that.

INTERVIEWER: Mhm.

CHARLES TERRY: <inaudible> goin' get rid of him because he had been waitin' around there. So me and my partner told him, <inaudible> get rid of them for him **he need the money for go back school you know.**

INTERVIEWER: Mhm.

CHARLES TERRY: So we took him <inaudible> our way, we made him <inaudible>

INTERVIEWER: Mhm.

CHARLES TERRY: <inaudible> went back to school they had their money you know.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: <inaudible> we gave him a good talk. This one kid told me he said he ain't ever had nobody talk to him and I said where your mother, I don't know. And he didn't know where his father was.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: It makes a big difference, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Mhm.

[29:40]

CHARLES TERRY: And like I say, you got some good ones out here.

INTERVIEWER: Right.

CHARLES TERRY: You know. You don't always know the good ones from the bad ones, you mix 'em up, know what I mean?

INTERVIEWER: Mhm.

CHARLES TERRY: Every time one gets killed out there, you know did something to somebody, know what I mean?

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CHARLES TERRY: <inaudible> did this to him, so.

INTERVIEWER: Well uh thanks very much for your time.

CHARLES TERRY: Okay, okay. Thank you too.

SPEAKER 3: Thank you.

CHARLES TERRY: Okay good luck to you. Need more like you, you too you know what I mean?

INTERVIEWER: Thank you very much.

[30:30]