WILLIAM LESLIE JACK EDWARDS, MD: a conversation with the editor

William Leslie Jack Edwards, MD, and William Clifford Roberts, MD

Figure 1. Dr. Jack Edwards during the interview.

where he received his medical degree in 1948. He completed two internships: one in pathology at the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital in Boston (July 1948–June 1949) and one in medicine at the Massachusetts Memorial Hospital (July 1949–June 1950). He returned to Dallas and soon thereafter was called to active duty, serving in the Navy. In 1952, discharged from the service, he went to Birmingham, Alabama, and the University of Alabama Hospitals where he was assistant resident and chief resident and then a National Heart Institute trainee in cardiology under Dr. Tinsley Harrison. He then returned to Dallas, settling in private practice and using primarily Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas (BUMC). From 1971 until 1993, he also was clinical professor of medicine at UT Southwestern Medical College. Jack was a past president of the Southwestern Alumni Association and the Dallas Heart Association. He is a longstanding member of the Little Brothers Journal Club. He was a major player in the BUMC community from 1955 until he retired from active practice in 1993. Jack was married March 15, 1947, to the late Patsy Hayes. They have three outstanding offspring. Jack and his late wife Patsy were very active in the Highland Park Presbyterian Church for many years. Jack Edwards is a great guy, and it was a pleasure to visit with him for this interview.

Jack Edwards (Figure 1) was born on September 21, 1926, in Dallas, Texas, where he grew up and has lived most of his life. After attending public schools in Dallas, he went to Harvard College in Boston, Massachusetts, finishing 3 years in 2 years. He then went to the University of Texas (UT) Southwestern Medical College in Dallas,

William Clifford Roberts, MD (hereafter, Roberts): *Jack, could we start by my asking you about some of your early memories?*

William Leslie Jack Edwards, MD (hereafter, Edwards): I was born in St. Paul's Hospital in Dallas, Texas. The first thing I remember was at age 4, sitting on a curb watching kids playing across the street. My momma told me I couldn't cross the street, and I was very unhappy.

Roberts: *What happened from there?*

Edwards: I don't remember anything more. I grew up on Euclid Street in East Dallas, a couple of blocks from Greenville Avenue. On Saturdays I went to the Arcadia Theater to watch a double feature with at least two cartoons and one or two serials. I'd get there about 12:30 PM and stay until I had to get home for dinner. The whole afternoon cost me 25¢. I had a 5¢ Coke and a 10¢ hamburger and paid 10¢ for admission to the movie—a big entertainment day.

Roberts: *How old were you when you started going to the Saturday afternoon theater?*

Edwards: I was probably 6 years old (Figure 2). By the time I was 9, my parents let me get on the streetcar and go downtown to the Majestic Theater or any one of the downtown theaters. Most are closed now.

Roberts: *You didn't even think about safety at the time?*

Edwards: I was not worried about safety and obviously they weren't either. During summers I had instructions to be home for lunch by noon and dinner by 6:00 PM. I had no problem going wherever I wanted to go. My friend and I got into a storm sewer drain one time near my house, and we walked all the way to downtown. About the time we were going to go past downtown, we stopped because a crowd of folks was coming from the other direction in the sewer so my friend and I turned around and ran.

Roberts: *How old were you at that time?*

Edwards: Probably 10 or 11.

Roberts: *What was your house address? Is it still standing?*

Edwards: It was 2014 Euclid, and it is not still standing. It was a 3-bedroom, 2-bath framed carpenter-style house. It had a molded

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Figure 2. At age 6 with his mother, father, and Spot in 1932. (Their car was a Hudson.)

wood plank exterior and 1 × 12 boards for insulation and paper hung inside. During the winter when the wind was blowing, the paper would move a little bit and we could almost feel the wind.

Roberts: *What did your father do?*

Edwards: My father was a general practitioner in Dallas. He worked at all the major hospitals, but mostly at Baylor. His first office was in the Wilson Building downtown, which is where most physicians began their practices those days. The office was then moved to the Medical Arts Building, and that's the office I remember because he frequently took me with him on Saturdays to make rounds at the hospital. He parked me in the old Baylor drug store. Then he would park me at the Medical Arts Building while he saw office patients. I played in the stairwell a lot because it was one where you could look over the edge and see all the way to the bottom. Before the building was demolished they did put a wire cage around the interior so no one could jump over the railing.

Roberts: *When was your father born?*

Edwards: My father was born in 1890 in Arkadelphia, Arkansas, which is near Little Rock.

Roberts: *When did he die?*

Edwards: He died in 1950 at age 60. He had an acute myocardial infarct and was placed in Baylor in a regular room and suddenly died after 3 days. Obviously it was an arrhythmia death, which probably could have been prevented if a coronary care unit had been in existence. Intensive care units didn't come until the late 1960s.

Roberts: *Did your father do everything that general practitioners did then?*

Edwards: He delivered babies and did minor surgery, including appendectomies. He referred complicated obstetric

cases and major surgical cases. His father died when he was 7. He had two older brothers; one became a pharmacist and the other became an office manager. My father worked his way through college and medical school. There were two colleges in Arkadelphia: Ouachita Baptist University and Henderson State University. He went to Ouachita Baptist.

Roberts: *Where did he go to medical school?*

Edwards: He went to Baylor in Dallas. He sold aluminum pots and pans through college and through the first part of medical school. One summer he worked as a physician in a shipyard in Orange, Texas.

Roberts: *Was medical school at that time 4 years?*

Edwards: Yes.

Roberts: *What year did he graduate from medical school?*

Edwards: I think in 1919.

Roberts: *How long did he go to college?*

Edwards: He went 4 years.

Roberts: *How did he come to Dallas?*

Edwards: He came for medical school and he liked the city. He and my mother had met and married. She was from Arkadelphia and had taught school in a little town, Claude, Texas, in West Texas after she finished college.

Roberts: *So as soon as medical school was over, he started practicing here?*

Edwards: No. He had an internship at St. Paul's Hospital and then started his practice.

Roberts: *That was the late 20s?*

Edwards: I was born in 1926, and he had been in practice several years before then.

Roberts: *What did other people call your father?*

Edwards: He was named *William Leslie Edwards*. His nickname was *Jack*. The whole family called him Jack. When I was born, they thought I was William Leslie Jr. but everyone called me Jack. So I thought I was Jack. I got a scholarship to Harvard, and they wanted a birth certificate. The birth certificate stated that my legal name was "Baby Edwards." I wanted to be "Jack Edwards" and they wanted me to be "William Leslie," so we just made a bad mistake and used all three names. We changed the name on the birth certificate.

Roberts: *What was your mother's name?*

Edwards: My mother didn't really like her name. Her real name was *Effie Jane Caldwell*. She came from a family of 10 siblings. My grandfather was a farmer, and he sent all of his kids to college with the help of an uncle and with the eldest kid helping the next kid down the line.

Roberts: *Your mother was born in what year?*

Edwards: She was born in 1890 and she died in 1983 at age 93.

Roberts: *That was a long time after your father. Did she ever marry again?*

Edwards: She never dated or remarried.

Roberts: *In your family, did you have brothers and sisters?*

Edwards: I was an only child. I had an older brother who died at childbirth.

Roberts: *In your time, what was it like growing up in East Dallas and attending grammar school, junior high, and high school?*

Edwards: I went to Victory Place (now James B. Bonham) on Henderson Avenue. The Dallas school board plans to close the school and sell the property. James Bonham was an Alamo hero.

Roberts: *What do you remember about grammar school?*

Edwards: I remember Mrs. Catledge because I didn't like her. She was aggressive with students, not kind at all. I loved Ms. Hughes. She was my absolute favorite, a great teacher.

Roberts: *What was so memorable about Ms. Hughes?*

Edwards: She liked kids. Mrs. Hughes was young, smart, and gave us lots of extra work if we were so inclined. But it was fun work.

Roberts: *Where did you go to junior high?*

Edwards: J. L. Long Junior High. It is next door to Woodrow Wilson High School.

Roberts: *What do you remember about junior high and high school?*

Edwards: I remember that the kids were nice to me. I remember a hayride and I had a date with a girl named Patsy Hayes. Woodrow Wilson High School is in the Lakewood area of East Dallas. It's a pretty building architecturally. When I was there it was about the equivalent of Highland Park High School instruction-wise. There were good teachers there. I did a lot of stuff at Woodrow. My last 2 years were during World War II. I was in the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) and all the guys wore their ROTC uniforms to school. I liked directing the marching band through its paces.

Roberts: *What did you play?*

Edwards: I started out with the clarinet but switched to bass clarinet because it was easier and because it didn't have that third register, which I never mastered. I ran for captain of the band and beat out *Tom Shires*, later a prominent surgeon in Dallas.

Roberts: *In high school did you play sports?*

Edwards: No. I played sandlot football and baseball.

Roberts: *What were your other activities in high school? Were you on the debate team or any other clubs?*

Edwards: I worked on the school newspaper and was in the physics and chemistry clubs. We did not have a debate team. We did have a speech class and our instructor was *H. Bush Morgan*. He was also in charge of the senior drama plays. I was in our senior-year play. My girlfriend at the time was too. Patsy

Figure 3. Jack and Patsy at senior prom in 1943.

Figure 4. Their wedding day, 1947.

and I started going together in junior high and dated for 7 years (*Figure 3*). We got married when we were 20 years old (*Figure 4*).

Roberts: *Did she grow up in the same neighborhood?*

Edwards: No. Actually she grew up in East Dallas when she was young, but her family moved to Irving because her dad wanted some acreage to raise fancy chickens and have a garden and a mule. He was the sports editor for the *Dallas Times Herald*. So Patsy commuted into Dallas. She drove in with her dad and then caught the streetcar from downtown and rode it to Woodrow Wilson. In the afternoon she got back on the streetcar to downtown, got on a bus, and was met in Irving by one of her parents. Her father had a dual schedule. He worked early in the morning to get the afternoon paper out, was off during the middle of the day, and then attended sports events at night.

Roberts: *In school, did studies come easy for you, or did you have to work hard to do well?*

Edwards: I liked to study, so studies seemed easy.

Roberts: *Were there any particular areas you liked better than others?*

Edwards: I liked physics, chemistry, and biology. My best teacher was my English 7 and 8 teacher. One day my chemistry teacher asked me to stay after class. He told me about a contest that he had read about and wanted me to enter. I agreed but wanted to know what it was about. It was the Westinghouse Science Talent Search and it had just begun. I entered but didn't win a prize. I did get an honorable mention, however, and during the next week I got scholarship offers to Harvard and

the University of Chicago. I picked Harvard. Previously, I had planned to go to Southern Methodist University and live at home.

Roberts: *You got a full scholarship?*

Edwards: No, I got a partial. I waited tables the first semester and about killed myself because I took six subjects instead of four. All four semesters I took six courses and, as a result, I finished 3 years of study in 2 years.

Roberts: *When you were growing up, did your family go on vacations? Had you seen much of the country other than Dallas before you went off to college?*

Edwards: We went on vacations to visit relatives. We drove to Houston, San Antonio, Arkansas, Chicago, and South Carolina and saw places of interest in between. Our vacations were relatively short—no more than 10 to 14 days and sometimes even shorter. On several occasions we went to Colorado.

Roberts: *What did you do when you were in high school during the summertime? Did you have jobs?*

Edwards: Yes, I delivered newspapers. I had one job in a drugstore that served wine and beer in Lakewood but I quit after 3 days. I think they were illegally employing me. One summer I took History 7 and History 8 (US History) at Crozier Tech. I rode my bike from our house down Ross Avenue to Crozier Tech.

Roberts: *What did your parents think about you going to Harvard?*

Edwards: They were pleased.

Roberts: *How did you get there?*

Edwards: On the train. It took 1½ days. Then, I took a taxi from the South Station in Boston to Cambridge.

Roberts: *You had never been to Boston before? Did you know other Harvard students before arriving? How did it work out?*

Edwards: I didn't know anyone, but I enjoyed every minute of it. I was elected to my class committee and to the student council.

Roberts: *Where did you live?*

Edwards: I lived in Adams House, the same house that Franklin D. Roosevelt had lived in. His room is now preserved.

Roberts: *What years were you at Harvard?*

Edwards: I was there from June 1943 through October 1944. No breaks between semesters.

Roberts: *During that period (17 months) you finished 3 years of college? And then you went into the service?*

Edwards: No, I came back to Dallas to wait for the draft and learned that Southwestern Medical School had a class starting in January 1945, and I applied. I arrived that first day as a civilian. The dean asked if anyone could pass a Navy physical examination because they had three openings available because three people had dropped out. *Billy Gibbons*, *Bill Huckabee*, and I went to the Houston Office of Naval Office Procurement the next day and came home that night in the Navy V-12 (*Figure 5*).

Roberts: *The Navy paid for your medical school?*

Edwards: Only for the first 9 months and then the war ended and the V-12 program was disbanded.

Roberts: *You had to pay for the rest of your way?*

Edwards: Yes, but it was very inexpensive. Harvard cost \$600 a semester for room, board, and tuition. Medical school was less.

Roberts: *How many were in your class at Harvard College?*

Edwards: About 1000.

Roberts: *What was your standing when you completed 3 years?*

Edwards: I haven't the slightest idea. I made mostly As and Bs. I made one C in organic chemistry because I was in the hospital for 4 days before the final exam and I had put off studying. I had severe otitis media.

Roberts: *You started in medical school in January 1945. When did you decide you wanted to go to medical school?*

Edwards: About age 10.

Roberts: *Just watching your daddy?*

Edwards: I liked the subject matter and I enjoyed watching my dad, although there were a lot of things he did that weren't very much fun to me. He would make rounds in the morning, go to the office, leave the office, go back to the hospital, come home and have dinner, then make two or three house calls after that. He was busy.

Roberts: *What time did he get home?*

Edwards: About 9:30 PM.

Roberts: *What was your mother like?*

Edwards: My mother was a homebody. She did enjoy the physician wives auxiliary and the doctor's wives choral club. She taught a Sunday School class for single working women. She regretted not having a daughter. She had one or two of her nieces to our house every summer. She was a very nice mother.

Roberts: *Your family atmosphere was very pleasant?*

Edwards: Yes, it was.

Roberts: *You got plenty of attention being the only child?*

Edwards: Sometimes a little too much.

Roberts: *You and Patsy met when you were in the ninth grade?*

Edwards: Yes.

Roberts: *What attracted you to Patsy?*

Edwards: She was pretty, vivacious, and smart. We just hit it off. We got married in the spring of 1947. I was near the end of my junior year in medical school. We lived with my parents. They had moved to a house on University Boulevard and had a four-bedroom house which now would sit in the middle of Shannon Lane just west of the Hunt

Figure 5. Wearing his medical school V-12 (Navy) uniform, 1945.

Building of Highland Park Presbyterian Church. The house was demolished after my mother sold it. My parents let my new wife and me have the two front bedrooms and connecting bath. They had one of the back bedrooms, and my maternal grandfather, Richard Baxter Caldwell, lived in the other bedroom.

Roberts: *Were there any professors or teachers in medical school who had a particular influence on you?*

Edwards: *Tinsley R. Harrison.* He was an excellent teacher and a lot of fun. His knowledge was very extensive. Dr. Harrison was the first chief medical resident at the Johns Hopkins Hospital. His acquaintances were all professors. The discussions were interesting. His grand rounds with *Carl Moyer* were very interesting. Carl Moyer in surgery was a great guy. When I got to Boston as an intern at Massachusetts Memorial Hospital, I was very comfortable taking care of patients. Most of the interns who had been to Harvard or Tufts Medical School had a hard time the first 2 or 3 months. They had not had much clinical experience. We had a bouquet of clinical experience in Dallas at UT Southwestern (*Figure 6*).

Roberts: *Tinsley Harrison wasn't at UT Southwestern but just a couple of years?*

Edwards: He came when the school started in 1943 and left in 1949.

Roberts: *In medical school, did you have a hard time deciding what specialty to go into?*

Edwards: It was a very easy decision. I liked internal medicine.

Roberts: *You interned in pathology?*

Edwards: I did and thoroughly enjoyed being at Peter Bent Brigham Hospital, going to medical rounds and the clinicopathologic conferences and writing up the case reports. We had to write a case report for each autopsy with a bibliography for the primary disease causing death. There was a lot of research. I enjoyed what was going on there—working with the Kolf artificial kidney, finding the best uses for newly available cortisone, and working out the sizes of stenotic cardiac valves using formulas for ascertaining how big or small the valve orifices were. Nobody does the latter anymore since the advent of echocardiography.

Roberts: *You started your internship at the Brigham in July 1948?*

Figure 6. The 50th reunion of the class of 1948 of UT Southwestern Medical School. (J.E. is in the first row, second from the right.)

Edwards: Yes. Medical school was a hurry-up schedule at the time. The class started on January 2 and continued until the end of summer; the second year started in the fall and continued to the following summer.

Roberts: *Why did you decide to intern in pathology?*

Edwards: I wanted to try it. I like pathology and I wanted to get back to Boston. I didn't think I could get an internship at the Brigham in medicine. But I could get one in pathology and it was nearly as good for my purposes. I got to go to all the clinicopathologic conferences and medical grand rounds.

Roberts: *Who was head of pathology at the time?*

Edwards: *Dr. Alan R. Moritz*, whose special interest was forensic pathology.

Roberts: *Did you enjoy it?*

Edwards: Yes. I almost went to Duke but decided I would rather go to Boston.

Roberts: *Before beginning your pathology internship, had you already decided that you wanted to do a residency in internal medicine? You got the job at Massachusetts Memorial Hospital while you were at the Brigham?*

Edwards: Yes.

Roberts: *How did you like that residency?*

Edwards: I liked it. The hospital later folded when Medicare came along because it was a specialty reference hospital, mostly admitting severely ill patients. *Dr. Smithwick* was a surgeon treating hypertension; *Jesse Thompson* was a surgical resident there also. *Chester Keefer* was chief of medicine. That's how I got my internship. The relationship between Chester Keefer and Tinsley Harrison was a good one. The reason I came back to Parkland Hospital for residency after that was because *Dick Burnett*, a nephrologist, had become chief of medicine at UT Southwestern. I really liked him. Unfortunately, he stayed only 1 year in Dallas. He got encephalitis while in Dallas, and his wife didn't like Dallas. He did well as chief of medicine at the University of North Carolina.

Roberts: *You were at Massachusetts Memorial Hospital only 1 year? And then you came to Southwestern and did 2 more years of internal medicine?*

Edwards: Not at Southwestern. Four months after I arrived in Dallas for a residency in medicine at Parkland, I was called to active duty for the Korean War. The Army let all their Army Specialized Training Program students out of the reserves, but the Navy kept its reserves. My orders read, "You will proceed to the nearest naval medical installation for physical examination. If any physical defect is found which requires waiver, such waiver will be granted. You will then proceed to . . ." They sent me to San Antonio to the Army. I became Army overnight and wound up fortunately not in a battalion aide station. In 1950, I went over with a planeload of Marines and physicians, about half and half. Of the 50 or so physicians on the plane, three of us stayed in Japan: one was a plastic surgeon, one was an obstetrician-gynecologist, and I

had the 1 year of pathology and the 1½ years of medicine. The Army was looking for a lab officer, so I became the lab officer at the Hepatitis Center in Kyoto.

Roberts: *That was a pretty nice place.*

Edwards: It was a wonderful place to be—beautiful place to visit.

Roberts: *You were there how long?*

Edwards: I was there about 8 months and then I reverted back to Navy control. I got orders to go to the US Naval Hospital in San Diego and was on a medical ward for about 3 months. I kept waiting to call for my family. By then I had two children. Finally, I checked with the chief of medicine and as far as he knew I was staying there, but he couldn't guarantee that. I asked my family to come there and the day they arrived I got orders to move to the Naval Hospital in Corpus Christi, Texas!

Roberts: *How long were you in Corpus Christi?*

Edwards: Until I got out of the Navy.

Roberts: *What was in Corpus Christi?*

Edwards: A US Naval Air Station and a US Naval Hospital. I was a medical officer (internist) for the dependents section. There were also two obstetricians-gynecologists, one pediatrician, and one surgeon. We rotated call at night. I delivered 80 babies that year. I had one case of an internal rotation and one third-stage massive hemorrhage. On both occasions, I called for the senior obstetrician to come in. On both occasions, he refused. He told me to put the long gloves on and reach in there and turn that baby. I did and the baby came out crying and the mother survived.

Roberts: *When did you get out of the Navy?*

Edwards: In 1952. Then I went to the University of Alabama Birmingham with Dr. Harrison. I was a resident, chief resident, and a National Heart Institute trainee under him.

Roberts: *You were there 3 years?*

Edwards: Yes.

Roberts: *You decided you wanted to come back to Dallas?*

Edwards: Oh yes. I always wanted to come back to Dallas.

Roberts: *What date did you get married?*

Edwards: March 15, 1948.

Roberts: *How many children do you have?*

Figure 7. The Edwards family in 1970: Jack, Patsy, Patricia, Bill, and Dana.

Edwards: We have three children: *Patricia Margaret*, born January 14, 1949; *Elizabeth Dana*, born March 30, 1951; and *William Leslie "Bill,"* born July 29, 1951 (*Figure 7*).

Tricia graduated from Agnes Scott College and married her high school sweetheart, Thomas (Tim) H. Hight, who graduated from Yale and UT Law School.

Dana went to Smith her first year, UT her second, the University of Madrid on the New York University program the third, and graduated from UT. She also has a master's in architecture from UT. She married Charles E. Nearburg, who has an engineering degree from Dartmouth.

Bill has a bachelor's degree from UT, an MDiv from Fuller Presbyterian Seminary, a DMin from Garrett, and a PhD in psychology from UT. He is an ordained Presbyterian minister and now works full-time as a psychologist.

Roberts: *Do they have kids?*

Edwards: Trish and Tim have four boys: Thomas, Jere, Jack, and Robert. Thomas Hight III graduated from UT Dallas and Denver Law and works for a pharmaceutical company. Jere Hight graduated from Baylor University and Baylor Law School and has a practice here in Dallas. Jack Hight graduated from Harvard and has a PhD in history from the University of Chicago. He has four published historical novels. Robert Hight majored in classical studies at Baylor University and has a law degree from UT.

Dana and Charles have two children, Rett and Anna. Rett was diagnosed with Ewing's sarcoma at the age of 10. He had multiple surgeries and chemotherapies until his death at age 21. He was a gregarious, artistic, and talented young man. Anna majored in art history at Dartmouth. She works in an art gallery in New York City.

Bill and Anna have three kids: William, Maggie, and Trigg. William graduated from Texas A&M and has an MBA from UT Dallas. He works for a personnel company in Washington, DC. He is engaged to be married. Maggie has a BA from Colorado State and a master's in accounting from UT Dallas. She works for an accounting firm in Dallas while studying for her CPA exam. Trigg graduated from Kansas University. He had a job teaching English in Spain and now is an intern at a public policy company in Austin.

I have five great-grandchildren: Thomas Hight IV, 12; Abigail Hight, 10; Cora Hight, 19 months; Julia Hight, 9 months; and Hope Hight, 2 months. The Hight grandsons have been active.

Roberts: *You had a total of nine grandchildren?*

Edwards: Yes (*Figure 8*).

Roberts: *You went into practice in Dallas when?*

Edwards: November 1954. I retired in June 1993, at age 67.

Roberts: *When you started practicing in late 1954, what was an internal medicine practice in Dallas like? Did you partner with anyone else?*

Edwards: To get on the Baylor staff at the time, one had to be associated with a member of the Baylor staff. It was very tight in those days. I worked with *Mike Scurry*, a well-trained physician from a fairly prominent Dallas family. He had a couple of

Figure 8. The Edwards family, Christmas 2012.

lawyer brothers and went to the Country Day School, which was the predecessor of St. Mark's. He received his internal medicine training in Michigan.

Roberts: *How did you know him?*

Edwards: When I was in medical school, most of our teaching rounds were made by non–full-time faculty who practiced in the city. There were few full-timers at the medical school: Dr. Harrison, Dr. Arthur Grollman, and one fellow, Louis Tobian. Practitioners devoted their time to teaching students and housestaff. When I started my practice, I worked an 80-hour week, but one third of that time was at the medical school for free: making rounds, going to the clinics, teaching physical diagnosis, etc. I had a good time. Our practice was in a building on the corner of Hall Street and Turtle Creek. After 2 years, *Howard Coggeshall*, a rheumatologist, *Al Harris*, a cardiologist, and *John Bagwell*, a gastroenterologist, decided to build their own office building at the corner of Swiss Avenue and Washington. It was the first building in Dallas on stilts with the parking lot underneath the first and only floor. Mike decided to move into that building. *Don Brown* had started with Mike a year before me. *Brian Williams* joined the practice the next year. I decided I would try to work by myself. Mike was nice enough to let me have enough space in the new building for my own office separate from the group. I knew John, Don, and Brian very well. When I was at the Brigham, *George Race* had a surgery internship at Boston City Hospital. His wife, Anne, and Patsy found an apartment that we shared—two bedrooms, one bath—for one year. We remained friends after that year! It was great for the girls because George and I were gone every other night and weekends. Our apartment was the gathering place for the other Dallas expats.

Roberts: *How did you like going into practice by yourself?*

Edwards: I didn't like being on call all the time. John Bagwell was at the other end of the building, and he basically did half internal medicine, half gastroenterology. He would come down to my end of the building and ask for my interpretation of an electrocardiogram. He read electrocardiograms for a hospital in Sulphur Springs. They would send the electrocardiograms to him; he would read them and send

back his interpretation. We started sharing call duty and finally worked into a partnership. I moved down to the other end of the hall in the same building. It was an interesting move on my part. John had a huge practice and I was immediately busy. Back in my day, you scurried around for patients at the start, and it wasn't easy to become fully occupied all day long. I received a lot of overflow from John. I also blunted the training I had had in cardiology in that I went in with a noncardiologist. He was known as a gastroenterologist who had worked with *Milford Rouse* and *Cecil O. Patterson*. (Earlier, I had a summer job with them

doing histories. Patterson was one of the first gastroenterologists using the rigid gastroscope.)

Roberts: *What was practice like? Working 80 hours a week, how did your day start?*

Edwards: I made night rounds for Mike Scurry and Martin Buelle. Don Brown and I alternated night rounds. For that we got low rent and lab privilege. Later, I would have from 5 to 15 patients in the hospital, as would my partners. I'd see 12 to 15 patients in the office every day. Back then everyone would have hospital rounds twice a day. I'd make rounds from 8:30 to 10:00 AM, the time the office would open. I'd be in the office until 5:00 PM seeing patients, and then I would be there another hour returning phone calls. When patients called you back then, you'd call back; none of this talking to the first assistant or going to the emergency room. Most acute patients were worked in on the same day that they called.

Roberts: *At 6:00, you would make evening rounds in the hospital?*

Edwards: Yes. I would get home usually about 9:00 or 9:30 PM.

Roberts: *Then eat dinner with the family?*

Edwards: No, the family ate at 6:00 PM. Patsy was a master at keeping dinner ready to be warmed up for me.

Roberts: *The kids early on would be in bed by the time you got home?*

Edwards: Yes. When one of our girls was in the first or second grade, the teacher told Patsy that she had a terrible problem. Patsy asked her why. She said that we had a very bright child and that they were harder to rear. Patsy had her tested psychometrically and sure enough she was very bright. One test was to draw your mother and father. She drew a pretty good picture of her mother but the picture of her father was awful—no arms and very long legs.

Roberts: *During those years when you were so busy, did you take time for family vacations?*

Edwards: Two weeks every year. When the kids were young we went to South Padre Island, Texas. The beach is a great babysitter. We always took one of their friends with them. We would have six kids and two adults. We rented a house and drove down.

Roberts: *Were you able when you were so busy to go to medical meetings out of town? Which ones did you go to?*

Edwards: I did. I still go to the Texas Club of Internists annual meeting. I started out going to the Atlantic City meetings. One time *Brownie Thomas*, *Al Harris*, and I flew to Philadelphia and rented a car. The chief of the Veterans Administration Hospital, *Ben Friedman*, had a coronary while at the meeting. He stayed in his hotel room, refusing to go to the hospital. He stayed in the hotel until it was time to go home. I drove the car back to Philadelphia and to the airport being quite nervous all the way because I didn't want him to die on the highway. I got a speeding ticket.

Roberts: *Did you get him home?*

Edwards: Yes, and he lived. He never did go to the hospital.

Roberts: *What about weekends?*

Edwards: Every other weekend I was on call until there were more physicians in the group. Eventually, there were six in the group, and then I was on weekend call only once every 6 weeks. My group eventually included *John Bagwell*, myself, *Wilson Weatherford*, *Ray Hicks*, *John Vorhies*, and *Richard Strickland*. Later, when our group was down to four, we shared call with *Billy Oliver* and *David Highbaugh*.

Roberts: *You had some office hours on Saturday mornings?*

Edwards: Yes. We saw patients for a half-day on Saturday. Then I would make rounds for the group at the hospital if I was on call and probably admit one or two patients each day while on call.

Roberts: *On the weekends, did you make morning rounds and evening rounds?*

Edwards: Early in practice, yes. Later, it depended on whether the patients were very ill or not. If so, twice a day; if not, once a day.

Roberts: *In general, how did practice change from 1954 to 1993?*

Edwards: When I started out I was a consultant. I got a lot of cardiac problems sent to me. When I finished I was doing general internal medicine and sent heart problems to the cardiologist.

Roberts: *Mainly for procedures?*

Edwards: Yes. I never wanted to do catheterizations. When I started out in medicine, the physicians who did catheterizations basically saw patients with congenital heart disease, a disease category that didn't appeal to me. I just didn't like seeing all those sick kids. When *Andrew Grunzig* developed coronary angioplasty, cardiology practice totally changed. By then I was too far along to change what I was doing. I didn't want to take a year off and go back for more training. And I would have had to do that to become a full-time cardiologist.

Roberts: *Why did you retire at age 67?*

Edwards: It was a very simple reason: I was in a building with six physicians working together. Of the six, one retired, one had joined the Baylor group of internists, one was going to be a full-time hospital employee at BUMC, another wanted to move to North Dallas, and one wanted to move to Presbyterian Hospital and be a gerontologist. Everyone was leaving. Thus, I would have

had to start over with another sign-out partner in a new office. It was time to quit, and fortunately I was able to do so financially.

Roberts: *When you were practicing, what did you and Patsy do for entertainment?*

Edwards: We were active in a nice four-couple gourmet supper club. We met once a month. The guys really had a deal. The wives did the whole meal. Some of the dinners would take 2 or 3 days to

prepare. We always were sure we were not on call. We thoroughly enjoyed good food and good company and good wine. *George and Ann Race*, *Ben and Alice McCarley* (pediatrician), and *John and Margaret Clayton* were the other couples. We also played bridge. It was inexpensive. We took the kids to a friend's house or vice versa. When they were little they went to bed fairly early so we could play without interruption. (Young people don't play bridge anymore.) Eating out at least once a week was mandatory.

Roberts: *Bridge is a great game. I play the one in the newspaper.*

Edwards: I now play every Friday morning at my church, Highland Park Presbyterian Church.

Roberts: *Have you always stayed active in the church?*

Edwards: My wife was always more active than I was. I always went to church but she did all the extra things (Bible study groups, women's meetings, etc.). I have taught Sunday School and was a deacon. Patsy also enjoyed her Standard Book Review Club, Lide Spragins Book Club, and Beverly Drive Book Club (Figure 9). Members enjoyed her lively and often humorous reviews. She kept up with her Woodrow Wilson girlfriends with a monthly luncheon, the monthly Tri Delta lunches, and the annual girls Mortar Board Retreat (held opening weekend of deer season because their husbands were always gone to their leases).

Roberts: *Are you pleased with your retirement decision?*

Edwards: Yes. The first year was difficult. I had nobody to leave my charts to, so the first year I was copying charts and sending them to patients if they requested them or to other physicians. When I retired I gave my patients a list of good Baylor internists and asked that they pick one. I had 17 filing cabinets full of charts. I kept the charts the required 7 years and then burned them all.

Roberts: *What do you do now? What's retirement like?*

Edwards: In 1960, I bought 190 acres 6 miles east of Van Alstyne, Texas. For years the land just sat. Now I raise cows

Figure 9. Patsy, 1949.

Figure 10. His cattle near Van Alstyne, Texas.

(*Figure 10*), build and mend fences, cut trees and brush. I do everything possible to keep the cows happy.

Roberts: *How many do you have?*

Edwards: About 30.

Roberts: *What kind?*

Edwards: Beefmaster.

Roberts: *You go up there every week?*

Edwards: I don't have a house up there; I commute. I go maybe twice a week.

Roberts: *You stay in good shape working around there?*

Edwards: I'm still in pretty good shape except for breaking my hip 2 years ago. I still can work on the farm, but my hip lets me know about it.

Roberts: *How did you break your hip?*

Edwards: Stupidly. I wasn't watching where I was going as I was saying goodbye to a lady on her front porch. I missed the first step, lost my balance, and fell like a tree in the forest. When I hit I knew I had done it. I got out my cell phone and called my son and told him to come take my car home. I called

Figure 11. 50th wedding anniversary, 1997.

my daughter and asked her to go to the hospital with me. Then I called 911.

I've enjoyed my retirement. I have taken French lessons for 10 years. I play bridge with three other guys Friday mornings at church. I still read medical journals, including the *BUMC Proceedings*. I don't go to BUMC rounds because they are in the morning.

Roberts: *You are a night owl?*

Edwards: I used to be a night owl. Now, I get up around 7:00 AM and go to bed around 9:00 or 10:00 PM.

Roberts: *Jack, is there anything that we have not discussed that you would like to mention?*

Edwards: I have been very fortunate in my life. I liked medicine. I was married to a wonderful wife, Patsy, for 62 years (*Figure 11*) before she died of breast cancer 4 years ago. I have wonderful kids, grandkids, and great-grandkids. For the past 2 years, I have dated Karen Uhr (widow of Barry Uhr, who was a Baylor ophthalmologist). Life has been very good to me indeed.