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WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY FOLKLIFE ARCHIVES

INFORMANT/FIELDWORKER DATA FORM

I. INFORMANT

NAME: Frances Pat Muse Owmby
(Include fullest possible name -- first, middle and/or maiden, last)
(For example: John James Smith; Mary Ann Franklin Smith (Mrs. John))

ADDRESS: 105 Riverview Drive Bowling Green, Ky

PERSONAL DATA: Age 72 Date of Birth August 18, 1918

Place of Birth Cuthbert, Ga. Sex _____

RACE/NATIONALITY/ETHNIC BACKGROUND: Black

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: (Include education, occupation, places of residence, religious affiliation, etc.)

3 yrs. College; Retired - (Personnel Interviewer - Secretary)
Baptist

II. COLLECTOR

NAME: Meiba Jean Davis
(Include fullest possible name as described above)

ADDRESS, LOCAL: 1216 East St. Apt. A

ADDRESS, PERMANENT: 1809 Sandalwood Rosenberg

PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE INFORMANT, SUCH AS COUSIN, FRIEND, EMPLOYER, ACQUAINTANCE, ETC.: n/a

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

Date?

Interviewer tape #: 1

Interviewer: Mella J. Davis

Interviewee: Mrs. Pat Owmbly

Place: home of Mrs. Pat Owmbly

other people: Jolie Owmbly, granddaughter

Tape: AVX 60

amount: both sides

Equipment: Sony tape recorder

M: And the first question I want to put to Mrs. Owmbly is simply when and where:

O: I was born in Cutford, Georgia, on August 18, 1918.

M: O.k can you give me - a short description of what your home town was like, was it primarily black or was it mixed or was it a black township?

O: No, it was a mixed township with blacks outnumbered whites in the town I grew up in about five to one.

M: About five to one.

O: Uhum.

M: [false start] O.K. now that was very interesting to find out, so when your husband and yourself moved to Bowling Green, uhum what year was that?

O: 1942, but let me go back and state this, this is my husband's home.

M: O.k., the house we're in here presently?

O: He was reared in Bowling Green and finished college at Tuskegee Institute. and he finished it in the field of agriculture. and he went to uh Georgia working as a Smith Hughes, what they called under the Smith Hughes Act at that time.

M: O.k. and what did that concern?

O: It's teaching Vocational AG, agriculture to high school students, that's what he taught and at the beginning of the, near the very beginning of this particular program he went there to teach agriculture in the schools of Georgia, and we lived, he taught about ten miles from where I grew up and that was where I

met him at the time that when he first came there I was in school, I went to school down at Savannah at what is now Savannah State, but at that time it was called Georgia State College, it is a part of the university system of Georgia. And he taught there at the little place about ten miles from my home and then we moved down in the Southeast Georgia, to a place called Fitzgerald. Then he got an opportunity to come back home and his major interest had always been in athletics because he played, he played athletics in high school; he played athletics in college and he also was a ROTC student under Benjamin Davis, Sr., I know you, I'm sure you've heard of Benjamin Davis.

M: Uh, no I haven't, [laugh], no haven't.

O: You know Benjamin Davis Jr. was one of the first, Benjamin Davis Jr., was one of I think the first, I guess a five star ^{Dayton, Ohio} generals, used to be up at Wright Air Force Base and his father was a World War II, I, veteran and he taught military science down at Tuskegee and which was the requirement at Tuskegee Institute that all students, all male students take military science and so, he, Tuskegee did not offer physical education, a degree in physical education, so he just opted for agriculture and he got an opportunity to come back to Bowling Green in 1942, or perhaps '43, I 'm not quite sure of the year, it was either '42 or '43 as the coach and physical education teacher, and of course he taught some classes in science and ah here at what was then State Street High School.

M: Now, I've heard that this State Street High School was an all black school.

O: All black school.

M: Can you kinda tell me how it was run or if there were any differences between what you probably woulda found in white school and a black school at that time or were religious classes stressed more or was it just basically the same thing?

O: Just basically academic subjects, I don't remember any emphasis being placed on, you know religion, of course they did the prayer every morning and that type of thing, but the main, one of the main differences was that for years the black teachers, for instance, when they were in the field of athletics, they were not subsidized and where they, white teachers, were subsidized, because he taught for several years before he was subsidized for being a coach, and I guess he'd been here quite a few years before he became subsidized for being a coach and then he taught there and he left there; he went with'em when they moved in to what is, what become High Street School, the black ah....

M: Now is High Street School really built, was it really built on High Street?

O: Yes.

M: What is presently Bowling Green High Street?

O: Yes,

M: O.K. because...

O: Where the recreation department is...

M: Alright

O: Where the Bowling Green Recreation, that's the High Street School Building behind the Hospital, right there at the corner, it was first and uh it was High Street and Second. It was where that school was located and he taught science. Well, you know that had teach do some teaching and he taught science, PE, and, and in later years he coached football mainly and track, that kind of thing. And then he taught there for a number of years and at one time, he was the director of what was called Office of Economic Opportunity.

M: Can you tell me a little bit about that, now was that, was that an organization that the black community started, was it a state organization?

O: No, No. That was a government organization. It's still in operation now, but it's called SKAAC its the one right over here at Second and Center Streets. Southern Kentucky it's SKAAC, I think, is what they call it. At one time they called it SKIOP but its an organization thata helps deprived blacks, it's supposed to help blacks with their, with you know, poverty-stricken blacks.

[State of KY Affirmative Action C...]
[SKIOP? State of KY Equal Opportunity?]

M: Now, that was a state organization.

O: Federal.

M: Federal organization. Do you really think that the Bowling Green community itself had any plans, any aspirations for helping black people? You know, I'm sure they got, you know monies from the state, but did they use those monies to actually help the black community was there an interest in helping the black community locally?

O: Well, perhaps it was various things but not as much as it shoulda been but cause you see out of this organization grew what we have now, is Head Start which Head Start is still under that organization, and after that, well he retired from there because he became disabled and that was our main reason for being here, he came back home. His grandmother lived here; it was an opportunity to come back and be with her in her declining years. So, he would work in the summer uh with the little boys, he liked to stay in sports; he would do that and at that time you didn't have little leagues for blacks and sometimes he could get donations and the like to get uniforms and things for them in well he didn't, he wasn't the only one, but he was one of the ones you know that did

that and when I came here, as you know Blacks couldn't go to Western and there were no blacks working any city jobs unless it was menial labor and High Street School, State Street School as it used to be, was the only black school that we had here in the city, now there were county schools but it was the only in the city and so I been here ever since '42.

M: Now you mentioned family being a reason for your husband's desire to come back to Bowling Green, now have you remarked any changes with the emphasis particularly in black families on staying together, being there with the immediate family other than your wife, your husband, and your children you know, has there been a change?

O: Nah, you, you more or less notice a declining in them; my kids leave home because the opportunities are not great for them here, and I you could just go down the list of any number of, you know, kids that are educated and would be well-trained to go into work here but that the opportunities are not here. At the time, my husband came here, he was, the thing he helped him to get back here was the fact that the man that was the coach there was drafted into service, see it was at the beginning of WWII and that put an opening there, because the opening in the school system here were few and far between.

M: So, can you tell me a little bit about how WWII affected the black community in general, were a lot of young black men drafted, were there, was it better for blacks economically with WWII or did people suffer a lot of losses because of it economically and otherwise?

O: Well, I really couldn't just say flat out. It might of helped some of them. Well, breaking up a family it never helps, but it might of helped some of them economically because, uhum, at least they were working for minimum wages, just the lowest wages you could've imagined and by going into service, they got a stipend and you see the family was taken care of, you know, the government gave the wife and children an allotment, but whether it, uhum, opened any doors at that time for them, no.

M: Did your husband consider going into the army?

O: At the time that he came here he was more of less draft- exempt by being in agriculture, that was considered an essential uh industry or whatever you might call it, to train young men to farm and raise food because which it was needed and then when he came to Bowling Green he became subject to the draft and but, it, he was not called, his draft board was in Georgia, he was not called up for the draft until 1945 and just as he was supposed to be leaving to go, the war ended. And, but see, in Georgia, he was more or less considered draft-exempt, and they just never had bothered him.

M: So when, these young men who didn't lost their lives came back into Bowling Green, how did they find Bowling Green, had it changed

any, did they tried to make it change, were they discouraged by persistent racism, if it was still there?

O: Well, conditions had not changed, but you found the majority of the young men went in service that hadn't finished went back to high school. See a lot of them were draft at 17, 18, 19 and a lot of them hadn't finished high school because I remember my husband had a lotta returning veterans that played on his teams, and a lot of them that he taught, but a lot of them took advantage of the GI Bill of Rights and went back to high school and some of them went on to college and some of them got out and got what jobs they could. And shortly after I came here, they built this what we referred to it as derby underwear, and that's union underwear.

M: longjohns?

O: Fruit-of-the-Looms [brand of famous men's underwear].

M: Oh! Fruit-of-the-Looms, they were called derby?

O: Yeah. They referred to it as derby. I don't know where the derby came from but when, when they were getting ready to construct the uh this particular plant here they went to two influential blacks in this town that were able to contribute, you know, like contribute money, you know how they get bonds and you put in so much money to help lure the industry here. One of them was the Doctor Z. K. Jones and the other one that I know of was a Herman Kirkindale. And they put their money in it and they put in there on the, with the stipulation, that they would hire the blacks so there was one particular woman, and I know this for a fact, that they sent her to get a job there and the only thing they wanted her to do was be a maid; they did not want her to work, they would not give her a job working on the machines and the like. So, when she went back to them and told, they told her go and apply for the job, and when they went back, she went back to them and told them what they did, they said that's not what they told us and I know Dr. Jones told me himself that he went to them, complaining about it and telling them that was not the agreement that they had. And they promptly gave him his money back because they didn't intend to hire blacks and they didn't hire blacks down there until we came up with Equal Employment Opportunities.

M: Now, did the NAACP play any role in getting rights, I mean were the men came back from the war did they have any desire to see things change, having been abroad and seeing different living conditions?

O: That I can't say. I never heard it expressed, I'm sure they did, and I'm sure a lot of them went for jobs, seemingly, in the back of my mind, I can remember some talking about they went for certain jobs but they could not get those jobs, and as I said most of it was just maid service and menial labor.

M: So, really, there, these two men, as probably, as well as your

husband, and other influential blacks played the role in seeing changes come about in Bowling Green, less, lets say, an organization, but more individuals with clout.

O: Uhuh. But now, about the NAACP way in those years about that time I don't remember too much about the NAACP, I'm sure they had a chapter here, but it was in the later years, I guess perhaps I joined it somewhere in 50s or 60s, one, when I became a member of it but it was more or less kind of a mute organization, you know you didn't hear that much for it, much from it but a lot of young men were able to become educated and go off from Bowling Green and get better jobs through the GI Bill. Now that helped them, ah, you know the blacks, the young black men here, more than anything else that at time that I can think of.

M: Now, what. .. go ahead

O: No, I was just going to say that the major, the main occupation for blacks here only a professional level was school teaching. We had a, two black doctors, and a black dentist in Bowling Green at that time and uh Blacks could not go to the hospital, well blacks could go, let's not, let me back up on that, they could go but they could not have children at the hospital, they didn't allow them to give birth. They didn't start allowing'em to give birth or go use the birthing facilities up there on a great scale unless it was an emergency, you know required a special type of service, until, I imagine in the 50s, even in the early 50s, of the late 40s, late, early 50s, because both my children were born at home.

M: So, you had to make use of midwives?

O: Midwives and doctors.

M: and black doctors?

O: Uhuh, well mostly, doctors, I don't know too much about midwives, when I came here I don't remember anything about a midwife. Doctors, the two black doctors delivered the babies and maybe some of them might would have white doctors, but it was rare cases, and I remember one instance in particular where a girl did have a white doctor during her pregnancy, and he said I'm not delivering any baby at home so he made arrangements for her to be, to go to the hospital and have her baby, but immediately upon the birth of the baby, you know after they got everything straight with her, they put her an ambulance and brought her back home. And my sons had tonsillectomies in '56 or thereabouts and at that time blacks went on a large scale to the medical center, what was Bowling Green Warren County Hospital, but they did not let children use the children's ward and when, well, I never had any occasion to use it and I was aware of this and when my children went to the hospital we were in the children's ward and I remember a friend of mine called up there to see, you know to talk with me, to see how the kids were doing, and she couldn't find me, she called on the floor where the blacks normally went and finally they said we have

nobody by that name here. And she kept calling and calling, finally she got me, and her remark to me was 'what are you doing up there;' I said where else would I be? She said, 'Mrs. Owmbly, nobody goes on that floor, they don't let black kids up there.' And when I said, mentioned to my husband, he said, 'nah, I tell you what happened, said ah the Eye, Ear, Nose, Throat specialist that did this surgery for these boys said he made the remark that I have, that I'm doing three surgeries, the two Owmbly boys and a little girl this same morning, and I am not running all over the hospital to see my patients. And I want these boys put on the floor where this white girl is.' She was a white girl.

M: In 19 and 56?

O: Yes and up in the day somebody came along and said to me that the little boy down stairs said he had a tonsillectomy and while I was waiting for my children to come out of recovery, I walked down to see how the little boy was doing, and he was in the room with a elderly lady and she was just as sick as she could be, ah you know she was just out of it and I felt so sorry for this young kid laying there with this elderly woman, you know with the heavy breathing and that kind of thing, and but no; they didn't go ~~to~~ my son, I have a son now that's thirty, he's thirty-eight years old and he said that a group he used to travel with, they were all about the same age and said that they would get to talking about different things and I was born in sucha sucha hospital and I was this and that, and said they said to him, 'where were you born?' Said, he said, 'I was born at home.' 'Born at home? Said why on earth were you born at home?' And they were white kids. And say he said, 'cause my mother could not go to the hospital when I was born to give birth, said they didn't let blacks babies be born at Bowling Green Warren County Hospital, this is what has become the Medical Center. That was, that was just about state of affairs until the advent of you know World War, after WWII. And you know in WWII there was a great separation in soldiers; it wasn't the very best and they began to kinda integrate during WWII but now when I came here it was just a black/ white situation like any other Southern town. I couldn't see that much difference in here and where I came from in Georgia and even though we were farther this way [motioning to north with hand], back this way, you know Kentucky is called a border state, I don't think it is neither north nor south, but that's just about the situation.

M: So, when you came here it wasn't difficult for you to relate, you weren't surprised about the way jobs were doled out about the way blacks lived...

O: Unh unh.

M: Even though people called this a border state, like you said, or the Upland South, it was the same racism permeating society, you know it was..

O: Uhum.

M: Now, how did that show itself in funeral practices, I just assumed blacks took care of their dead.

O: Took care of their own. uhum. Yes, they took care of their own. I now worked in, for a black insurance company, was the clerk or secretary whatever you want to call it at the office oh for I guess 18 years before I went into, went to this industry working for personnel and I was a trained office worker; well, they moved the office, closed the office here, and moved it, well my family was my roots where here. I couldn't, I was not thinking about leaving Bowling Green therefore I went to the, I went to apply for unemployment and also you know I had to apply for a job and they were supposed to help me get a job. Well, they would harass me about, 'what have you done,' and I was not required to take a job other than what I was trained to do.

M: Now, who is they?

O: The employment people, people at the employment office, and so they kept on having me to come in, come in, come in, 'what have you done'; so finally one day, a man said to me, I said, a man interviewed me this time when I went in and I knew him and I said I am tired of coming up here; I said the kinda work that I know how to do I can not get that work in Bowling Green. Now this was in about '60, around '62, around 1962, he says 'I know it, they know it too and I don't see why they keep having you to come in here.' He says, 'you go on back home nobody will bother you anymore.' So nobody else, they never bothered me again and I didn't go to work anymore then until it might have been till '62 when I went because I stayed off of work close to three years, out of work close to three years, so I just became a housewife and then when it was Cuttling the Hammer at the time, Eaton Corporation moved here. I went to them and I went to them as a personnel clerk and in 1965. And from that I went from personnel secretary and from that I went to personnel interviewer and that's where is was when I retired.

M: What, did you just want to work or was it necessary because of your husband's financial...?

O: It was necessary that I work, it was a tough pull those three years that I was off, that we, you know, to make ends meet. We had just moved into the home. I guess we'd been in here three years when that happened to me, it was not easy at all. I needed to work, and I went back to school for a while and then I would get jobs, I would do a little substitute teaching and and help out with clerical work down at the school but I did not have a degree and I didn't, I could you know, do substitute work and that helped some. But, that was the main reason that you know there were no places I could get work in what I was trained to do.

M: Ah, I had made kinda a brief reference to trying to find out how funeral arrangements were dealt with, can you tell me a little

*and
cutting
back*

about that, the putting-away of the dead or was there a special ceme... was there black cemetery?

O: Yes. A black cemetery. And it's still here and of course now you can bury in the white cemetery.

M: What's the name of the black cemetery?

O: Moriah. Mt. Moriah. Moriah isn't it? [granddaughter affirms] Moriah. And its behind the white cemetery. Fairview is the white cemetery. And you go on down the road from there and there is the ...

M: Now is that the cemetery close to Trinity, is it close to Trinity, a block or so from Trinity, or is that another cemetery?

O: Trinity?

M: Trinity Baptist Church on Third and Center, is it not too far from there?

O: That's a funeral home over there.

M: That 's, that's a funeral home. I had saw it, well it's not really close to cem..., Trinity

O: I know where you're talking about, that's Pioneer Cemetery; that's an old old cemetery.

M: Where does it date from? Is it, is it...

O: Oh, I guess from the founding of Bowling Green almost, that is an old cemetery and it would be, you know, interesting to walk over there because, because most of the tombstones you can't read them but those people, I guess some of those people date back in the early 1800s or maybe the 1700s because I used to live across the street from it and that was, there's some black families over there; it would be interesting to go over there, course I think they have it locked up but it might be interesting get permission to, because on the 6th street side between 6th and College there's some tombstones that say a family of color, a man of color, or a woman of color, and because I used to, ah on Sunday afternoons with my two little, my sons and I used to go over there and kinda walk around over there; we would read the different tombstones and it's quite interesting and if they are, haven't been moved a lot of the tombstones were moved, and if they haven't been moved, they're still there but you see I don't know what was the basis of their getting in there on, this was years and years ago, but it does say of color and there aren't many of them, just a few, maybe two or three or something like and that was the reason that I knew there were some black people buried over there. But most of the families that are buried over there their people are, you know, have died out: you don't find too many still living and it is not an active cemetery and has not been for oh for years and years,

years and years. The other, the cemetery is out, it goes out Fairview. You go out Fairview to that Cemetery road and Fariview and you come to white cemetery first and then you keep on down you come to the Catholic cemetery and then you go a little farther and there is the black cemetery. But the city has taken it over now. It used to be operated by the blacks and the city took it over and its, you know, it comes, it's in with all the other cemeteries.

M: What year was that?

O: It must have been, it was in the early 80s, I couldn't pinpoint the year, but I'm sure it was in the early 80s, because my husband died in '84 and they were all under one management.

M: Now you say, now is it on a hill that kinda descends so that you start with the white and you go on...

O: No,...no it is just a straight street.

M: Just a straight street. o.k we're gonna..

O: Uhuh. You know where Keriakas Park is?

M: No. where is that located?

O: On Cemetery road by,

M: Oh, ok. now I know what You're talking about, o.k., o.k. it is it located on Cemetery Road

O: What, the Cemetery?

M: The black cemetery, are all the cemeteries?

O: Uhuh, you cut off the Cemetery road and go...

M: It's not too far from Park Street then; it is, if you're e coming down Park, down...

O: You can't come down Park Street there. You could look back this way.

M: Yeah, I know where...

O: But you can't come through there, you have to come down Cemetery road to get there.

M: O.k.

M: Could you just finish telling me a little bit about the funeral homes because this is really very interesting, the cemeteries actually.

O: Well, it was just that it was segregated, you know, burying and

you just didn't bury in the white cemetery but way by and by they let blacks bury in them and I guess that was in the late 60s when blacks began to bury in the white cemetery but now there's quite a few blacks that are burying in Fairview.

M: What do you think about that? Are you discouraged by that do you feel that Blacks have sorta left their roots by burying in the white cemetery you think it's, we need to take advantage of this new opportunity?

O: No, I don't feel bad about at all. I think that its...since it's all under one management and its all being cared for I think to me its a good idea and because the black cemetery is gradually filling up. And course now, I buried my husband in the black cemetery and I just had this feeling, I guess you would call it sentimentality or what have you, that I wanted him among his friends and that was the reason that I purchased -- we already owned a plot in that in the black cemetery because we bought a plot when his grandmother passed but it was not my desire to bury him where we owned this plot. I didn't like that section of the cemetery, I didn't want to bury him in that section of the cemetery especially not that section necessarily, but where we had the plot, it was so close in there so I purchased another plot for just the two of us because I figured that my kids would never live here again and it wasn't any need for me to purchase a big family plot, but it was just my desire that he be buried among his friends, and that that I did. And for that reason I did not go to the white cemetery.

M: I wanted to ask you what kind of loss the black community suffered when Jonesville and Ragsdale and all these other black communities were kinda plowed through?

O: You mean Delafield?

M: Delafield, Jonesville, all these you know.

O: Well, this a Doctor Jones that I knew, he died back in the seventies and he was ninety some years old and I think that his family owned, he, evidently that was where his family used to live from what he told me, and my memory gets bad, but it's named Jonesville and he was a Jones but later on they came over to this end of Jonesville. I, I think that we did lose something now I'm not; I was glad to see Western [reference to the Western Kentucky University] progress, but I still say that to me there should be some kind of marker that says that at one time this was the sight of a thriving black community because there were quite few blacks that lived in that particular area and that I think some type of a marker should be there and that. The major thing about it when they did it a lot of the people were not treated fairly and that was the thing that was hurting about it and some of them lost ancestral homes, you know, and be them humble or whatever, you have they were still their parents homes, homes they inherited and homes they grew up in, and but, I still say it should be some kinda marker there, some kind of something that said this was the sign

of site of a thriving black community. You know I think it would be a good project to push to let them know that at one time there were two churches there and just worlds and worlds of black homes; there was a lot of black people lived in Jonesville.

M: So it was actually a community, too, that was very self sufficient had its own doctors its own..

O: No. It didn't have its own doctors. Now, I'm not saying that. This man, Dr. Jones was a child when he lived there...

M: O.K.

O: Now, it wasn't a self-contained community, but it was just like a any suburban area, just like you would have Willowood, something of that nature and they were mostly families, several different families lived there but they were, oh well, it grew up around these families some of them were related and some of them were not but it was all family, just a lot families lived there and they had their homes, what have you.

M: The reason I posed that question, because in talking with Reverend Whitlock, he had mentioned that there was some kind of self-sufficiency within these communities, now what about the other community Delafield?

O: Ahum.

M: Did you know, do you know anything about that?

O: Now, I don't know too much about Delafield. I just knew that they had a black school there. Now when I came here, there was no school in Jonesville now so far, now when you go back, let's go back look at Jonesville, those people out there, a lot of 'em kinda had businesses, like of their own, but the businesses did not gain their existence from within the community per se. They had to come out of Jonesville to do their work just like anybody else go to work and Dellaville, I really don't know that much about Dellaville, I just know there was Delafield; I've been over in there and I knew a lot of people from Dellaville, but nothing anything about the origin of it, I do not know.

M: Where was Delafield and specifically Jonesville? I think Jonesville is where Diddle Arena is now.

O: Beginning there, ahum, about somewhere along in that area is where it began and it went straight on out toward the underpass, to the underpass [speaking of Jonesville].

M: By the 31 W ByPass?

O: You know where you go to Western Gateway Shopping Center?

M: O.K.

[railway underpass]

O: You know where the underpass is, well I know it went that far, now how far, rather it crossed, it might have crossed, there might have been some people lived across the railroad, I really couldn't say its been so long, but I do know that it went to that underpass and there was a black man had restaurant right there where, right in front the city school that sits there...

[interpretation: sun blocking interviewer's eyes. Granddaughter asks if she should pull the curtains together]

O: ... L.C. Curry School is, not L.C. Curry, what's the name of the school in Jonesville Jolie? [directs questions to granddaughter]

J: McNeil.

O: McNeil. In front of Mc, across the street from McNeill, there used to be black restaurant and he was a noted cook and ...

M: What were some of his specialties ?

O: Ham, barbecue, and he, he made a delicious cornmeal sandwich, barbecue on cornmeal, and it was, it was delicious, and I guess he had other things that he did but I remember that about his cornmeal barbecue sandwiches, and he was supposed to been, you know, good in the restaurant business but now Delafield, I know they had, the county had a school there. There was a high school there at one time and but by the time I came up here to live. I don't think Delafield High School was in operation but the elementary part of it was. ahum. so

M: How was Bowling Green affected with the New Civil Rights swing did, were a lot of young people getting into it, your children would have been been old enough, right, right in that time to really get involved...?

O: Yeah. They were. They were. I can't remember the organizations that they belong to, but they did belong to groups at the time that the Civil Rights Movement was at its height. My son was oh a sophomore or junior in college, he went, I had one son, both of my sons went to Western and one that graduated from Western, cause he was one of the first ROTC graduates from Bowling Green High, and he went into ROTC, up there he went on a ROTC scholarship, had a very bad very unpleasant experience up there in their.

M: Now what's your, what is this particular son's name, his first name?

O: Joseph Owmy Jr. He, when he went a friend of his, that was a sophomore that he roomed with told him, said now 'I want you to try for the Persian Rifles, said I tried last year and I couldn't get in;' this fella came from, this roommate of his came out of Indiana. He said and 'maybe this year I did enough that it will

be sufficiently broken down that you will get in to it.' So they did, so they let him pledge and he went through all the ritual of the pledging, up until the time came to go in to be accepted into the Persian Rifles and they would not accept him, and he asked them why. And they let him know it was social and his father, it did something to him, it was disillusioning to him and his father asked him did, said do you want me to go up and talk with somebody up at Western cause one, an instructor came to my husband and asked him, was talking to him about it, said 'I hated that,' said 'did it affect the young man,' and he said, 'yes.' Well, he said I hated to see him, that happened to him he's good student and well the man talked to him at length; this conversation been a long, quite a few years ago, I don't remember the details about it, but this instructor came to him, one of the military instructors; and he told my son, say, 'you want me to go see about him,' and my son, he said, 'no daddy said just as much as you would say in my favor they could say against me so let it go,' but it did for a while it uhum it upset him because I guess that was most blatant racial discrimination that he had ever suffered and he finally I guess learned to deal with it.

M: Now, was this sorta like a fraternity or something?

O: Do they still have Persian Rifles up there ...?

M: I suppose they do, I

O: Do they Jolie?

J: I don't think so.

O: They don't have'em.

J: I never heard of them before.

O: It's a part of the, its like a fraternity for the ROTC and it, it was you know elite so he, you know, they wouldn't let him in, they finally they did, in later years I saw where some went in, they finally got where, I think about a year or two after that, but he never would go back, you know to see about it.

M: I wanted to ask you sorta of a couple of miscellaneous things, now there are, you talked about a popular black restaurant, do you know the name of that restaurant?

O: Bill Harden's restaurant.

M: So it was called Bill Harden's Restaurant, then I heard about the only hotel for black people, the tourist Hotel was actually some family's home.

O: Yeah, Southern Queen down at Second and State.

M: What were, how did that operate, did you have a lot of families come in and visit you?

M: Well, they just took in roomers people, traveling through you couldn't go the motel. That's Mrs. Moses that's who you need to go talk to: she can tell you about the history of that. You say you had a Moses on your list?

M: Yeah, a friend of mine was supposed to interview Mrs. Moses but she was not very conformable with the interview so I'm trying to gather little strands.

O: Did she go, did she go see her?

M: Yes, she did go see her and they, she was not comfortable being, you know, taped and so she really didn't get much information.

[Owmyby laughs]

O: Well, Mrs. Moses is working under a struggle; her mother is there, aged and sick and all and her husband, now he was the one you should've, he's passed but he was the one who really could've given you the information but see it was her relatives that had this hotel and it was called the Southern Queen.

M: Was it do you know why it was called that.

O: That was just the name they chose.

M: And is it a two story building, I have never seen it.

O: It is a dwelling house, but its a big dwelling house. You've never been down State Street coming from straight down State going toward, toward Inward bridge here.

M: No, Ma'am, I have probably passed by it someone said it's not too far from the Lemox book store or something, it's not. I don't know, not really good I know where State is at and I know ..

O: You know where State street Baptist Church is?

M: Oh, I know where State Street Baptist Church ...

O: Well, it's straight down, well, its up, because it's going north

M: Uhum

O: And it's about two blocks from there.

M: O.k. o.k. o.k.

O: It's a, her great aunt and uncle ran that place and they lived there too and she served meals.

M: Humh.

O: Uhum, now see I didn't, she was not serving meals when I came here, but the rest of the lodging part was still in operation uhum.

M: So, so this, so this, Southern Queen was must have been a very old establishment, you came here in the 40s and she was not serving meals...

M: Uhum uhum, I don't remember her serving meals there because she was up in age and they weren't doing that then; they were just taking in lodgers.

M: That was the great aunt.

O: Uhum.

M: So were there a lot of visiting people, were there a lot of gospel groups who came through?

O: Well, not necessarily that..

M: But there were visitors...

O: There were people that, am I smoking you out? [reference to cigarette smoke in interviewer's eyes]. There were people were passing through and other people, would some people would just room there.

M: So actually people would work and live there as a home not just for a night.

O: Sometimes, people would come here on temporary jobs like when the tobaccos seasons, see, when they, people come here North Carolina or driving these tobacco men you know the big rigs for tobacco, well people like that would stay there, and maybe construction jobs would come, you know, people would come down here during constructions jobs and ...; they would get rooms there because at that time, you see what really, where they really quit taking in a lot of roomers when people began to be able, blacks began able to go to motels.

M: O.K, you say tobacco season here in Bowling Green or is that in...?

O: That's all over Kentucky, tobacco season; they auction tobacco right over here some place.

M: You mean close to the river?

O: Well, they just have tobacco barns where they do I don't know where the tobaccos are close to they moved them cause where you saw that sign, those barns up there, those building up there they

used to be tobacco barns.

M: O.K, up the road when I was coming down to your house.

P: Uhuh. Uhuh

M: So, so the big cash crop here was tobacco and it wasn't it wasn't cotton, you know...?

O: Nah, nah you don't grow cotton here.

M: O.k. [Owmy giggles]

O: You don't...

M: I figured as much but you know sometimes we ...

O: You don't grow peanuts here either [enjoying my question]

M: You know we get this kinda stereotype that all blacks when they worked in the field they worked on cotton..

O: No. No.

M: We don't think about other crops...

O: Tobacco, I think its tobacco, corn, strawberries, and miscellaneous crops uhuh.

M: So...

O: Now this area we live in, when we moved out here, there were a few houses out here and they just called Beach Bend Road, and the man two doors up from me, he owned from that first house up to where he lived and there were some old houses here, you know, where some people had been living here a long time. And all back over in there was a lot of houses, a lot of blacks and whites and all lived over in there together and but it was a lot of vacant land around and when we got we decided that we would like to build a house and I liked this area I had...

M: What year was that?

O: Well, we started talking with him I guess in 1958 and we came out here and we bought this lot from him; well, there was the house next door was here and the house immediately on the other side of it was here and his house was here well the rest of this, he just had this land in here, and that.

M: Was this a black man?

O; Yes. a black man. And then below him, there were some houses but they there was a rock house, right down there right on the

other side of Owmy Avenue [named in her husband's honor] there is a block stone house and others were just old houses, just regular old houses and ...

M: So this was before Riverside became known...

O: Riverview

M: Before Riverview became known as as Riverview it was called Beach...

O: This was called the Northern Heights Area.

M: Northern Heights Area.

O: All over in here were the projects are, all of that and way by and by they began to build up out here and they brought they put the projects over there [indicating in back of her home].

M: So what was this black man's name who was this landowner, do you...?

O: Billy Payne he owned this land and he sold it, he sold [to] the man next door to me, he sold him the lot that his house sits on and he and another lot and because at one time, where those tobacco barns, that used to just be a big field, cause at one time High Street had a football field there and there was talk at one time of wanting to put the high school; when they were talking about building High Street, they did look at that land first but the blacks didn't want the high school built there because they said they're putting us across the railroad; well they showed them what they could do to build an overpass and the kids wouldn't come in contact with that but blacks didn't want it, and so they had to find another spot to put it the new black school but they had a football field; they played football up there, just beyond that first house where you see over in that field, where you see those building there, they're storage buildings now but they used to be tobacco barns, then they put the tobacco barns there, that was back in the 40s when that was done, and so, but it was a lot of blacks living out here and then they built uh began to build the projects over there and then they began to develop this.

M: Now was the river still busy at that time?

O: No, that river hadn't been busy since I been here you know commercially, no, uhhh, no. No, it has not.

M: Now, seeing that most black people didn't have business opportunities per se were there a lot of black vendors or small merchants who traveled around...?

O: No. uhhh. There was one when I, the only thing I can remember I think there were two real small black groceries. Now the lady

next door to whoever she talks to she can tell'em about those black groceries because I really didn't have any, I didn't know too much about and I guess they...

M: So what did you, farm your own food, that was...?

O: No, you just went to what stores that were available there were vendors, but, yes there were black vendors, you know, go about peddling vegetables and things; black and white, there was a Reverend Robinson, he sold meat and then there was a man from the country a Mr. Kirby sold vegetables but we bought mostly from grocery stores.

M: But not particularly, did you buy from the black ones...?

O: There were no black ones that you could buy your groceries from that would adequately provide with the things that you needed; they were small like: one woman had her grocery in the back of her house, you know, that type of thing it was little under a ma and pa store. You know what they call a ma and pa grocery [laughter, interviewer is tickled by statement]. It wasn't quite up to that, you know, it was real small. uhuh. No, there were no black groceries here, of any note. When I came here there was black, a black man owned a building down town, right, you know where the Federal Building is, well right on the side of that Federal Building on Main St. There was a building that the black man owned he had the barbershop in it there was a doctor up there and I, that was where I, this insurance office was located, and on the side of that he had a pool room and the other black Dr. Dr. Jones was down the Street he had his own building.

M: So, But Dr., where did Dr. Jones get educated?

O: Maharry. He's a graduate of Maharry. He and Dr. Beckett both are graduates of Maharry.

M: And where is that located?

O: Nashville. That's the black medical school.

M: O.K.

O: Yeah. I don't think we have but two black medical schools in the United States: that's Maharry and Howard.

M: I knew of Howard. I hadn't never heard of Maharry.

O: Well, Maharry is one of the most noted. It is strictly a medical college. Howard is liberal arts and all.

M: Uhuh.

O: But Maherry is it's right there with Fisk; you know where you know about Fisk?

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M: Oh, yes Ma'am.

O: Well, you see Maharry and Fisk are right there, in that they're like a complex and they have a black hospital there.

M: So. what would a, so if you had a serious injury or if you were looking for surgery would people go to Maharry well go to hospital ...

O: Lot of people go down to Herbert Hospital at Nashville. that's the hospital that's associated with Maharry Medical College

M: So a lot of so a lot of blacks opted to go there.

O: Uhum.

M: I didn't now that: jest learning tons of information through this interview. [interviewer moves away from microphone].

O: Uhum.

M: I have a couple of more kinda basic questions; we had talked a little about the tourist hotel and the Southern Queen and then this, this popular restaurant, were there any particular foods that the black community loved, like a down where I'm from they go in for sweet potato pie was there you know any particular ...

O: Down on Chestnut St. There was Pete's; there was a place they called Pete's; there were several restaurants, you know, black restaurants on this end, but now Bill Harden was on the other and the reason I mentioned him was he was down in Jonesville but when I came here, there were other restaurants Mustang Inn, it was on Third St. and there was Pete's and there might have been others [informant tapping on table] I can't recall right at the moment.

M: Seems to me that as a state Kentucky's a big lover of pork, I guess blacks went in for the pork with...

O: Yes, they did. Some places where they could go get chili, people in Kentucky are great chili-eaters too and they call'em Kentucky oysters, chittlings.

M: Oh o.k.

O: See in Texas, you all don't eat much pork...

M: Well, well there's steak-eaters; now my mother goes in for her chittlings but I... [the interviewer is 'cracking up'] Texas oysters but she goes in for chittlings and cornbread [much joviality and laughter] ...and hot sauce.

O: Well, I know in Houston I would go into, I went in mainly, big

groceries, I never saw a chittlings, did you Jolie? [question to granddaughter].

J: Not, not in Texas.

O: Not in Texas. In the groceries we went in, we didn't see any; beef was the main meat that you saw out there.

M: Yeah.

O: I said to my son, I said 'Joe, they don't [interviewer is 'cracking up again'] they don't go in for pork: 'said, 'no mother, this is beef country.

M: Well, my mother goes in for her chittlings, well I ..

O: Well, I guess there are a lot of people around there that gets, 'cause now every year when I go to Houston I take him a country ham.

M: Uhum. Yeah. When they, they really are more more more..

O: But there were restaurants where people got; they cooked chittlings and all of 'em I just can't...

M: Pig feet, pig ears?

O: Uhum.

M: Beef tongue, I just tell my mother no, no [hilarious laughter].

O: See, you'd be surprised, now I like chittlings, but as a child I didn't eat that many even though I grew up in the South, and really and truly didn't have that many pig feet because we didn't, my father was not a farmer and he didn't find those things in the grocery stores you had to get them from farmers.

M: Yeah, well, my grandfather, sharecropped and when he was with his mother they had a little piece of land and so I guess hard habits, old habits are hard to break....

O: Yeah. We, I remember, we, one time my mother and father raised some hogs my grandfather raised hogs but ...

M: I think I have one more question for you: what about, what were some general dating and socializing practices; how would blacks socialize with one another and what kind of restrictions did you put on your sons when they started to date?

O: Now blacks mostly outside form of entertainment, strata that I was in, house parties were our greatest and it wasn't too much of a thing 'let's go out to eat; we didn't go out to eat, if you: wanted some chili, said, I believe that I'd like some chili, well you

just go buy chili if you want to sit there and eat it you ate it there; if not you went home. Now, the young people would go and there were a lot of people maybe would eat their meals, 'cause you had Nancy's Tea Room, way down on 3rd St., and they had wonderful food there; that came along in later years, that was I guess in the 60s in the 70s when Nancy's Tea Room was there but to say, to go out and eat we didn't do that because that was for the young people, young, you know we called them teenagers and that kinda thing, and our form of socializing was mostly done from the homes, parties and what have you. With my sons, they didn't uh uh, with the restriction that they had to be home at a certain time and I always questioned them about who they were with when they would come home talking about their girlfriends when they were young; they didn't talk about their girlfriends when they grew up. I didn't know who [they were]. I would way by and by find out who their girlfriends were but when they were real young I would always question them about who is she, who are her people, you know, I still had that; they said, my sons, accused me of being a true Southerner, And mother, they said, 'you got magnolia blossoms stuck up your nose' [interviewer laughs]; he said, 'because people in the South they're class clannish, they're class conscious and said you can't do that,' and my husband would tell me, 'Pat, that's not the way its done.' I said that was the way it was that I was brought up, that I was; there were certain families that I could associate with. There were certain families that I could not associate with; I could not as a girl growing up, my mother 's philosophy was if I'm not a friend of that family then you're not a friend of that family. No, I could be with them at school. Now that was just a philosophy of the South and that was the way black families were in the South, say what you will or may, because I know I grew up under it, and I had to choose my friends from a certain section of people and they had to meet my mother's approval and if she said, you don't associate with them I didn't associate with them, but now I didn't say that to my sons; I trusted them and I always listened to them and more or less heard what they had to say; we were kinda open with them and I more or less didn't place just rigid restrictions on'em, but now, so far as hanging out in restaurants and that kind of thing, no, we didn't go along with that. There are better things to do than that, and they didn't do a lot of going when they were young they didn't... I didn't have any trouble out of them let's put it that way; they stayed around with their, within peers and their group of friends, but they had to be home at a certain time. And if they were tied up with someone that I didn't think that they should be tied up with, I sat and talked with them about it and normally they heard what I had to say and their friends mostly. They were mostly thrown in with the friends that were friends of their father's and mine. So that was taken care of in that respect.

*This really
breaks to his
own smaller
paraphrase
units*

M: O.k this is ending the second element of the interview.

Date

Interviewer's tape #: 2

Interviewer: Mella J. Davis

Interviewee: Pat Owmbly and Mrs. Brown

Place of Interview: home of Pat Owmbly and the home of Mrs. Brown.

Tape: AVX 60

equipment: Sony Tape recorder

amount: both sides.

Cue: 000 Opening announcement: Today's date is November 15, 1990 and I am at the home of Mrs. Owmbly and we're gonna close out

OK

our interview asking one particular question, kinda of a general view of what black family life was like in regards to the church, how it was interwoven, in Bowling Green and particularly in her own experience.

Cue: 021 O: My family belonged to State Street and it is as records show, it is the oldest black church in this area. It is somewhat called the mother church or the pioneer church. This congregation during slavery and after slavery, during slavery worshipped at First Baptist here at Bowling Green and then they came out of that and from that congregation grew the State Street Baptist Church, and it is said that most of the churches in this area are the outgrowth of this particular church. After moving to Bowling Green, that was my husband's home church, and as a family that's where we have always worshipped, State Street Baptist Church. And in the early days family life centered mainly around the school and the church, the two main things, which I guess still is true of today. We were involved with the various organizations down at church; at one time, my husband served as superintendent of Sunday school for several years and my children belonged to the church and we've always been actively involved in church life.

Cue: 048 O: Well, yes they helped; I couldn't go into depth into saying how much they did, but I know that when the NAACP was really activated say here it used to meet at our church, and the pastor that we had was instrumental in helping it to get, in a manner, you would say reorganized.

Cue: 100 O: J.E. Jones. Dr. J. E. Jones was our pastor at that time and being later one, in later, years the young people of the church were involved in Civil Rights Movements to a great degree, but not necessarily from the church; they were in various organizations in the school and there were meetings; they would have various meetings and the like at our church; our church was always open to meetings bent on helping the minorities in Bowling Green and a lot of young people were involved in organizations but to say that they mainly grew out of the church, no. They were, you know, from the school.

O: It must have been, to my knowledge; I became a member of it and would at time: I never have been a consistent attender of it, I've always belonged and helped them with various projects that they would have, but my, I would say in the fifties, somewhere along in the fifties is when I became, that they really put forth effort to get the NAACP.

Cue: 137 O: Well, the Civil Rights Movement was gaining momentum, and I guess they just felt a need to have it, not of no specific incident in Bowling Green, but it was at the height, in the fifties, at the height of Civil Rights Movement at the beginning of it. From the church, we have had various political candidates come and speak to us.

O: Now, we have had blacks run for city commissioner.

The pastor of Tyler Chapel Church ran for the position; he did rather well. He did run and he did run a good campaign. But we've had several others who did run; the earliest candidate that ran for a city commissioner was in the late 60s or early 70s, that was my first knowledge; three of them ran at the same time he did. There were three of them, I remember first one that I know of was somewhere along in that time. Then we've had others to come along.

O: I hope someday that a minority will be elected to a public office.

Cue 148: O: Ministers were involved in public life; they were the ones, the city fathers would contact for various projects because they did give them a lead into the community, to get information and gave information.

O: You find that the ministers were the leaders in the community; they spear-headed their movements; when, you read back into history, you will find, that they spear-headed the movements.

Cue: 164 O: I know, I couldn't say. There was certain things they did help in, but to say...; there were others involved besides ministers but they helped in. Fair Housing Act passed in Bowling Green- there were several blacks on the Human Rights Commission and they urged the passing of the act was through the chair. It was passed.

The first president of the committes was black.

O: It's a city-sponsored organization; it's still here. They have an office in town now. Miss Gwen Downs is the head of the department now. It was organized somewhere in the late 60s.

Cue: 171 O: Yes. The church did have effects on the community. The church was at that time was one of the main outlets that they had and the NAACP. They could counsel with their pastor and they would listen to him. They were able to make good judgments because they could come hear the issues.

O: It increased their interests in it: who the candidates were and if they were black.

O: I wish I could give you in depth knowledge, but I've been removed from it for so long. I was involved in it and aware of it. I attended and served in community activities. My husband was involved in it and therefore it necessarily involved me. My children were in school; therefore, we had a great interest in it. My kids are products of schools of Bowling Green; my husband was an instructor in the schools. It was necessary that we keep up with the trends. We served other people's interests by doing so.

Interview #3:

Interviewer: Mella J. Davis

Interviewee: Mrs. Maggie Ann Brown

Cue: 174 Opening announcement: We're here today with Mrs. Maggie Ann Brown and it is the 15th day of November, 1990. Mrs. Brown was referred to me by my last informant, Mrs. Owmy, and she said Mrs. Brown had particular information concerning life for black teachers working in the county schools. So, we're just going to give Mrs. Brown leave of the rest of the tape to develop and to tell us about any things that strikes her as important dealing with being a teacher and the student experience involved in county schools of Warren county.

B: Now you want to know about the relationship between black students and the teacher?

Cue: 191 B: There were no blacks in the administration; when they integrated, they hired, they hired us as special teachers, but not as real classroom teachers. The superintendent said they probably hire ^{as} cooks and maids. He put one teacher who taught first grade, he put her to dusting books in the library. Rather than let me teach in the classroom, I had some hours of music, they let me to teach music class. They played right in to my hands. They gave me the job of music teacher, from the first to the eight grade for seventeen years. I taught two schools at the same time. A new superintendent came and found that I taught more students than the other teachers; they put a heavy load on me. I think I had 2500, where they had maybe a 1000.

Cue: 223 B: All together; three schools put together made 1500. The white teachers probably had two schools or if they had three, they were small ones. Then he divided it up equally and I got better schools and better treatment. They wondered at first, since I was black, how would I know how to teach them their music. They had a PTA meeting. Parents asked, can you keep them, [the students] out of music. The principal said no. The former teacher was white and she carried me. All the children were waiting. It was a rural school, all white school. We all assembled in the gym and she introduced me. I said my name is Mrs. Brown, I am brown, and have on a brown dress. That was fun, that got me off. I sat down at the piano and played: Beethoveen, jingles. They were so surprised. They really did have fun. We did folk games. They loved to march. One school ^{was} carpeted and we had a music room.

Cue: 272 B: They sent me to the school where the children were rich, Cumberland Trace. It's about four miles from Greenwood Mall. It was '60, about '66 until '72, I'm going by when Kennedy died. See, Kennedy was shot the first year I got this job. I was scared to death when that lady took me to that school. The wealthiest, all

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of them were fond of me; I didn't have any trouble from. The children were helpful. I taught classroom music. They would learn the song from the record and then I played till I got tired.

Cue: 308 B: I had enough hours to teach the music; folkroom dancing, marching, and classical dancing. We would always have costumes. We did Indian, some type of folkroom dancing, square dancing. We did action songs.

B: In education, my minor was English. I went my first two years at Tennessee State, and in the summer, we would go to Kentucky State because they wouldn't let us go to Western at that time. Kentucky State was all black until Kennedy came in. '63 was when they integrated the schools. I made my first year at Western in '57 and graduated in '59. Before then I had gone to Kentucky State and that was quite expensive to travel from here when there was a school right here in Bowling Green, and it only cost three dollars a hour. I took piano at Western. I got the Masters at Western. You didn't want me to talk about that.

Cue: 390 B: I sew and it's a joy for me to make costumes. At other schools, there would be only two or three blacks in a class and the rest of the children were whites. When they integrated, there were only two blacks in each grade and they rest of the children were white. Now, does that make it clear? At Cumberland Trace it was like that.

B: Location, where they lived; where they caught the bus determined where they went to school. They're building the schools where the rich are; where blacks can't attend; there are no blacks living in that area.

B: May not be more [racism]. They could if they wanted to [attend these new schools that were built in the wealthier districts], if they had the money.

Cue: 481 B: If you're located in that area, you could go, but I don't know how the children would treat you. They're built in that area where there are no blacks and they know what they are doing. They're a waste of money; the schools are not crowded. These last three county schools. In the Bristow area; they had fewer teacher and fewer students in there than when I taught.

B: The teachers treated me alright. I had charisma and kinda played into their hands. They would ask favors from me, that was to keep a friend. It didn't matter though because you would see they same people out and wouldn't speak. It didn't matter though. It didn't matter to me.

Cue: 500 B: Does it make a difference, where a child goes, does it make him learn more. Well, they sent me to the ritzy school. The principal said, 'that's what I tried to get her to do' [in reference to the last teacher]; I kinda let the children lead me. If they could play an instrument, I would let them play. We sang seasonal songs. In the Fall, I'd sing about the leaves.

B: To me it was lovely. The children were uniformed; they looked alike. Whatever black was in it, they looked good. They were the best dancers and singers.

Cue: 534 B: Nothing. [answer inreference to what she did to get along] I dressed up. They were jealous of that, some of them. You take the little poor schools; they were jealous of my check, of my clothes, my car, everything I had.

B: I went to a handicapped school three times a week. There were eight grades but four schools. Drive at noontime and stay there to school was out. I did everything with the handicapped school. They learned songs like other students, "Jesus Loves Me."

Cue: 560 B: They learned by repetition. I treated them like real, like they were in the real world. I played the commencement and the wedding march. They had some sense. They loved to do the 'twist' by Chubbie Chucker. They really knew a lot of songs. Everyday living that's things I taught them. I sang songs that would repeat; they could leran that: "My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean." They woman who went there after me said I don't see how you did it, said it almost made her sick to look at them. They went to [school until the ages of] sixteen or eighteen. They see me now and holler, "there go Mrs. Brown." There's one little boy who hollers and throws his arms around me.

Cue: 593 B: For seventeen years, I taught music, but before that, I taught at an all black school... reading, writing, math... Delafield. An old woman named Mrs. Cole and I taught Ron Whitlock [president of local NAACP]. They tore Delafield down two or three years ago. They used to store things in there for the school and when they built all these new school, they just tore it down. They built the white school in the same yard. We sat there and watched them build the white school... while Delafield was still there.. was in the 60s.

Cue: 621 B: I think their dignity was taken becuase they didn't get to shine anymore. They had their proms, and decorating; they built their floats. And their floats would win first but they put it in the back of the paper [newspaper]; they didn't display it.

B: I believe they know [black history].

Cue: 631 B: In the schools, they didn't have no black history in the schools. If they were inventors, we didn't have the black people. Eli Whitney, they never told me. Did they tell you?

Cue: 656 B: I worked at several schools in the classroom. Last seventeen years I taught music. One school was Richardsville; she moved out in that area, a lovely little girl, Holly. Alvaton was another place where they didn't allow no blacks. They were two children; they had to grin ^{and} bear and take what the children said, the slurs. But, not in music, don't you know the black child couldn't get a partner. I'd picked on a child that was stupid, a white child, said, you sit down. So that someone would be with that black child. Because I was at Western [Kentucky University] and I couldn't get a partner so I waltzed on by myself. Teacher said, 'she's got it.' Waltzed on by the ones who were acting studpid. I told the children she must have a partner 'cause I was at Western and couldn't get a partner.

Cue: 683 B: The woman at Western said you don't have to teach the lines and spaces, but I knew I was going to do it, because a child doesn't care if A B,C goes on the line on X,Z, Y, but teach them a song. I was someone special to them to finally they couldn't

tell that I was black, I was just the music teacher.

Cue: 735 B: The white teachers would ask my opinion of things, how does this look; the milkman would be looking. In the black school, we just did have enough money for tacks and paste. All they gave us were two coal buckets and a waterbucket, some erasers and some chalk, for the all black, that was rural schools. They gave us books, that was one of my, on Masters, they asked me so many questions and said that was the most interesting orals they ever sat in on. I just told the truth. I told them about giving us a box of erasers, a box of chalk, two new waterbuckets, new coal buckets. You know we didn't even have a flag. I said to Mr. Cramland, can we have a flag... a pencil sharpener.. I got tired of the children coming into my room trimming their pencils ...; we were in the superintendent's office... he said go on and take one. The books were good used books from the white students, and one year they made a mistake and gave me eight new spellers... they had pushed those aside and let us have them.

Cue: 791 B: I let every grade take their books home, that was all the books they had. It was a pleasure. The child memorizes; he doesn't know one word from the other. One little girl who was in the fifth grade said I hate for Christmas to come because I have nothing to read/ I told the Bookmobile to leave her some books and they did. Black parents were interested [in their children's education], but they could not do any better. They didn't know. I didn't know. Why were in a big school having fun. How we gonna know? My boy finished the all black school... High Street. He was the last class. It was right there across from the hospital. The city built High Street School.

Cue: 828 B: I gave them [children] dignity. A little boy told his uncle: "you're supposed to love everybody." That was such consolation about it, to teach a child that. I taught that you put on a clean dress, you're supposed to comb your hair. There was one little boy who didn't have a mother; I would take his clothes and my husband would wash them and we'd send him in the room and he be so happy when he come out with his clean clothes.

Cue 847: The first class I had was as one room school. I hope I gave them dignity. I hope I didn't sound stupid on that tape. [interviewer's: "no, you didn't"]: