

## **Transcript of a Recorded Interview with Mrs. Leora Rhodes Franklin**

*Interviewer:* A.G. Dunston

*Date:* 9 Oct 1992

*Place:* Richmond, Kentucky

*Project:* County Projects - Madison County - African Americans

*This transcript represents the nearly verbatim record of an unrehearsed conversation. The reader, therefore, should bear in mind that he is reading a text of the spoken rather than the written word.*

The following is an unrehearsed taped interview with Mrs. Leora Rhodes Brooks Franklin, long time resident of Richmond, Kentucky. The interview was conducted by A.G. Dunston, Assistant Professor of History at Eastern Kentucky University for the Oral History Center of ECU. The interview was conducted in Mrs. Franklin's home on the 9<sup>th</sup> of October, 1992.

AG: I want to thank you for allowing me into your home to do this interview. What I'm doing is an oral project, an oral history project on the black community in Richmond. So, what I've been doing for the past year and a half to two years is searching out people who have lived here for quite a number of years and ask them all kinds of personal questions. (Laughter) All about their perceptions of the community and all that kind of stuff. So, what happens is I will turn the tape over to the oral history program at U.K., I'm not at U.K., at E.K.U. and they will all remain in a composite so that if anybody wants to study the community and write about it that they will have these tapes that I've done as resource material. So, we can begin. Where were you born?

LF: I was born right over there, 1212 East Irvine Street.

AG: Down the street?

LF: Right there, next door.

AG: Right here.

LF: Next door. My father and my mother built that house. That'd be over . . . Let's see, I was born there. I'd say about 71 or 72 years ago. I was born in that house. She had a grocery store over the side of the house.

AG: Your mom did?

LF: My mom did. And, she . . . but my mom died when I was 9. When I was 9, she left six, well seven children, she left alone. My dad . . . my dad kept us all together. My baby sister was six months old. My uncle carried her to Ohio. She was raised in Ohio, but the other six of us children, my dad raised us right over there.

AG: Do you remember your momma's maiden name?

LF: She was a Farris.

AG: Was she from this area?

LF: She was from Farristown.

AG: Is that one of the communities outside of Richmond?

LF: That's one of the communities right . . . it's not too far, about 14 or 10 or 12 miles out. You know where Middletown is? Alright, it's between Middletown and Richmond here. There is still a Farristown.

LF: There's a Farristown Baptist Church where Reverend Stevenson is pastor.

AG: Okay. What was her name?

LF: Her name was Maude Ethel.

AG: Maude Ethel....?

AG/LF: ....Farris.

AG: Okay. You were 9 years old when she passed.

LF: When she passed, uh-huh.

AG: Um, may I have your birthday?

LF: 1/3/23.

AG: 1/3/23. Okay. And, he kept you all together.

LF: He kept us all together.

AG: So, where did you go to elementary school?

LF: Over at Richmond High School.

AG: Was it Richmond High then or was it Richmond?

LF: It was Richmond High School. Always been Richmond High School. It's the YMCA now.

AG: Telford.

LF: Telford YMCA, right.

AG: When you went to first grade, where did you start first grade?

LF: At Richmond High. We went . . . when we went, that wasn't just a high school, and had elementary and high all together. And, that one . . . that's the only one here that we could go to. It was black then. That was all predominantly black. I started the school when I was 6 and my oldest sister, she got her leg broke, so momma took me out, so that made me a year behind. She wouldn't let me go to school. I had to stay there, you know, with her. So, I went the next year. So, but, that's where we went to school, right over there.

AG: Okay. Uh, what are your brother and sister's names? Are they here or where are they?

LF: Now, I have one brother in Michigan. He is David Rhodes. I have one, two, three sisters in Ohio. That's Clara, and Elizabeth, and Sharlesette. And, then, I have a brother and a sister here.

AG: And what are their names?

LF: This is Johnnie here. She is next door. Johnnie Rebecca is here. Then, I have a brother that lives right in back of her. There's a house on Linden Street. All this, all this around here belonged to my dad. All this block, all except this house right here.

AG: Next door?

LF: Next door. That was a Chenault house. And it's been here all the time.

AG: Okay. Say it again now. All of . . . your house and . . .

LF: And all that . . . all that to the Dillingham Heights [an apartment complex], all the way back to Linden Street. And all the way down to this street here.

AG: Okay. Was part of . . . was part of . . .

LF: That's Rhodes property. When we lived here, when we were here, this was . . . we had a chicken house. We had a barn. We had hogs. We had horses. We had cows and pigs. We raised all of that here. We had a big barn then, and then, we had a smokehouse over there and we had the store over there. All kinds of fruits. Those were the good old days. All kinds of fruit trees, grape harbors, you name it, we had it here.

AG: Oh, okay. Are . . . are your parents buried here?

LF: Yes. Uh-huh.

AG: At which cemetery?

LF: At Maple Grove.

AG: Is that the old black cemetery?

LF: That's the old black cemetery.

AG: Okay. Are you involved in the restoration of that at all?

LF: Yes, uh-huh.

AG: Okay. I was talking about mowing it and . . .

LF: . . . fixing . . . set time to take care of it and keep up . . . keep it.

AG: Okay. Have you seen the most recent list? Who was I talking to, I think last year, Miss Curry was talking about . . .

LF: Now, that one . . . that one is not the old one that you were talking about. The old one is over there on Four Mile. That's where all the old soldiers . . . Now, none of them, I'd say . . . I don't have any people over there that I know of, of mine. I don't think. All of ours is over there in this one.

AG: In Maple Grove?

LF: Maple Grove.

AG: Where's that located?

LF: That's over on Main Street. East Main, over there, down below the school, you know. That's where, most at, where everybody is, where we have our lot. But, this was a real . . . this one over here is a real old cemetery.

AG: You mean like . . . veterans from the civil war?

LF: Yeah, yeah, right, right. Oh, yeah. They've got real old tombstones and things over there. Some of them just crumble. Yeah, it's real old.

AG: Did you . . . did you finish high school?

LF: Yes. Uh-huh.

AG: Do you remember what year?

LF: '42. '42. I think '42.

AG: And then, what'd you do after that?

LF: Well, I worked. I went to work mostly. Then, I, later years, then I, you know, started taking different courses up at the A's Tonight, taking typing and a lot of other things. I started that computer. Because I bought me a little. I started then, and I've . . . I've been trying to work on it, but, you know, it takes a lot of time. I don't get a lot . . . but, anything . . . I told some of them today, I said, I do need, I'm going. I was with one of my friends, she's always talking about that she should have taken some more classes. I said, you can take them now. [Mimicking her friend] I don't want to go to school now. I said, well you can always go to school anytime. I said, and when you get to senior citizen, you can go real reasonable. All you have to do is buy your books. And I said, you can just go. I said, my schedule now, what I'm doing, I don't have time to take it right now. But, I'm going to though.

AG: Okay. Well, let's talk about . . . What are you doing? Tell us everything you do?

LF: Everything I'm doing? Oh, no! Well, lordy, lordy, where will I start? I am the Daughter Ruler of Madison Temple #392, Daughter of the Elks.

AG: What is your title?

LF: I'm the Daughter Ruler.

AG: The Daughter Ruler?

LF: Daughter Ruler, uh-huh. That's like the president. I'm the Daughter Ruler of Madison Temple #392. I am . . . I belong to the cancer society. I belong to the Red Cross. I belong to the Area Arts Council. Oh, lordy, I'm an Eastern Star. I'm past matron of the Eastern Star, Order of the Eastern Star. That's Phyllis Wheatman, #39. (Sigh; laughter) I'm past grand officer of the Grand Order of the Eastern Star. I was . . . then, I was Grand Electa and Grand Esther.

AG: Okay. Tell me . . . Tell me now, that means beyond the local?

LF: Right. Right. State level.

AG: Is that on a state level or . . . ?

LF: Yeah, that's the state. That's the state level. Oh, I'm grand officer in the . . . even the Elks also. Lordy, lordy. I belong . . . I'm on the executive board of the Habitat for Humanity. That's building these homes around. And I also belong to . . . on the committee of the . . . the selection committee to select people for the homes. I'm on that committee. Oh, gosh.

AG: When you were . . . In earlier days, did you ever belong to any of those social clubs, like the Women's Art or Women's Literary Club?

LF: Yeah. Yeah. The Women's . . . Young Women's Club. We belonged to that.

AG: It was called Young Women's Club?

LF: Yeah. Young Women's Club. Yeah.

AG: What did you do? What was it?

LF: It was something like the literary club. Well, like the white women's club they have here, where a bunch of women get together and they out for the betterment of the city. You know, to try to help with anything that they can help for . . . and help with, and of course, they had their meetings and all. State meetings also. And that was real good. So that kind of died out around here. I don't think any of them's in any of them now. They're not in any of them now. It died out. I was in the . . . Well, that was the women's club that we had. Miss Helen Phelps . . . we was all in that club. That was the club that we was in. And we bought a lot over here where they put in the Habitat House now. We laid the foundation, which we were supposed to have a community center for the black people. Well, we got it on there and everybody died out, and it just set there and set there. So, they sold it and gave it to . . . the organization, you know the, what is that . . . I can't think of it now, to help all the different organizations around in Madison County. United Way. United Way. I couldn't think of it. And, we sold it out. So, they sold it to the city and they took the money and put it in that so it could help all the different things around. But Miss Helen is . . . she's about the only . . . Miss Helen and myself is about the only one . . . too many around here that was in that group. Most of them have died out.

AG: What was the name . . . what did you call yourselves?

LF: We were the . . . Federated Women's Club.

AG: Were you linked to the national federation?

LF: Well, yeah. Yeah, a lot of them used to go. Yeah. They went up to that. Yeah.

AG: To the meetings?

LF: To the meetings and things, yeah.

AG: Is she still living?

LF: Yes, buddy, and she's full of information, I'm telling you. Her husband has been kind of sick. She lives up here on Linden Street. She's very good. She was a Laine. And the Laine's, I know you heard of Allen Laine's poems. That was her brother. I have one of the books here. His books now.

AG: There are some poems of his that are published in this thing that talks about Kentucky, Dr. Ellis, I think it is at E.K.U. and somebody else.

LF: He's probably so.

AG: Some other names that I can remember, because I've seen some poems . . .

LF: Is it Henry Allen Laine?

AG: Yes. Yes.

LF: I've got the book, and now, the one I'm just telling you about, well, that was her brother. That's Miss Phelps' brother. When we were little, this church right up here on Linden Street, we used to walk that sometimes and go to church because we was close to a church. That was the old East End Methodist Church and that's where she belonged. Doc McDaniel is fixing it up as just a community church.

AG: That's what it has become now?

LF: Uh-huh. Uh-huh. It just . . . it's a branch off, and he's doing real good with it.

AG: Okay. But . . . you and your sisters and brothers would go up here . . .

LF: We'd go up there a lot. It was easy to go through our back and right up there to that Sunday school, you know, and all. But, my dad and my mom and all of us belonged to Bobtown. That was a new Liberty Baptist Church, which was in Bobtown between Berea and . . . It's right out from Middletown. Out Big Hill Pike, you go out Fort Estill and all like that.

AG: Is it still there?

LF: Yes, it's still there. Oh, yeah. It's a beautiful church out there.

AG: Okay, is there a community surrounding the church?

LF: Most of them now are white. It used to be nothing but black owned all the land all around there. But, they . . . a lot of them has died out. The children that belong out there, some of them, they all come to town, but they've got a beautiful church out there. And I love it. It's a beautiful church.

AG: Okay. From the way you describe it, there was a lot of land ownership. What happened?

LF: It was. Well, it was a lot of land ownership around here. Most all around here it was nothing but black. Nothing but black always. Miss Lucy Ambrid, the woman that owned this house once, she had a grocery store over there, across the street. It was a corner on there. Her husband had a shoe shop downtown. He run a shoe shop and she ran the grocery store. After they leave town, die out, you know, and then the land is gone. Now, most of the land around here . . . people can't keep it up.

AG: You mean in terms of taxes.

LF: It's taxes and so forth, and you have to have this standard and that standard. You have to . . . They tell you now if you tear a house down on a little old lot, like . . . they'll tell you . . . the city

will tell you this. You tear this down, you can't put another house on there. They say you can't. It's not big enough. Most of the lots were about 50 feet because I've got two or three double right here. But, anyway, they'll tell you can't put one back on there. The people will sell it to the city. The city will go and put a house on that that reaches way back to the alley line and got 8 or 10 apartments on it.

AG: Mmm-hmm. So, it's alright to put an apartment there.

LF: So, it's alright to put that on there, but you can't build a house. I think that's the reason why a lot of them have lost what they've got. You know, I know what happens around here. So, I'd say that's the reason why. Now, out in the county, where all, um . . . that's, uh, Lester Ballew. Not Lester Ballew, but Beatrice Ballew has got a big farm out there at Waco. They've been trying to buy it, but you know what, his daughter, who used to live down on Peg Street, and his sons went out there and built them the finest house out there on that property. Ain't nobody getting that. And, it's a beautiful place out there. See, they had all kinds of money. If you got a lot of money, you can do a lot of things. Alright, when my dad passed, he gave all of us property.

AG: Okay. Out of what was the farm.

LF: What's all around here. Uh-huh, right. My brother and them was a big apartment. My brother, the oldest brother and this one here, has a big farm back over the other side of that thing. Well, this brother here, he's the one that was hurt in the service and he was shell shock like. He decided . . . he sold half of his and run through it as usual. But, he is doing pretty good. He's . . . that's his house and they keeping it up. They doing pretty . . . his wife worked, you know. But, he hadn't worked for years. He had barely worked for years. So, it's a scuffle with that, and you know how he had to do it.

AG: Well, you have to watch out for them.

LF: Well, yeah, you do. Yeah, yeah, you do. So, they keeping it all there. His son has got that corner house. I know you've seen it on the corner. He's got a big house he's fixed up there on the corner and he's got a big nice house over there. One of his sons. Well, now, when I moved here. This was mine. He gave me this one. I got a home down on Main Street because my daughter lives in it now. When I moved over here, my husband was sick. That was a Brooks we was talking about. See, my husband. See, I was married to him almost 30 years. He had cancer. So, after five years, after he had surgery on his lungs, he came back and he didn't last too long. But, he died to get me over here in this house. We had to remodel this. We had to remodel this. We remodeled this and he worked and worked. He wasn't able to do it, but he wanted to get me over here because he knew that if he passed that I would not get back over.

AG: Because you would have preferred to stay (telephone ring).

LF: I would've stayed over there. Excuse me . . . (On telephone). He knew that I'd stay right over there at that house, in which I would have. So, he got me in here and we got settled in here, and he didn't last no time after that. So, I stayed here and tried to keep this. But, it's a hard

scuffle, but I've done alright with it. So, the house over on Main Street, and then I had one up here on Linden Street. Well, the little house I had up here on Linden Street, I was waiting for the city to come, you know, to get this grant to come through and fix it up, so I could have kept it. But, every time, and nobody would see about the renters, you know, and all. It was a job, and I could not do it. So, I told the children, I said I'm going to get rid of that little old house because one night, up in the night, they called me and they had a fire up there. And I said I cannot do it. Now, that's how come that one gone. I said well I cannot keep that up and try to keep that other because my son-in-law, he real good in keeping that over there. But, this, and I didn't have a husband to help me with it, so I just sold it. So, I only had that one over there on Main. So, it needs a whole lot of work though. The government is coming through Main Street this time and so, I'm giving that to her. Then . . . I'm deeding that to her and she can get her house built on it. See? She can build and get her a house built on it. So, I'm giving that to her. So, that'll be hers and this will be the other daughter. I had two daughters.

AG: Do you have two daughters?

LF: Uh-huh.

AG: One is here. Are both of them here?

LF: Both of them are here in Madison County.

AG: What's the one on Main?

LF: That's Betsy. Betsy Ann. She's a Campbell. She married a Campbell.

AG: A Campbell. Betsy Ann Brooks Campbell?

LF: Betsy Ann Campbell.

AG: But her maiden name . . . She married a Campbell. Whose child is she? Brooks?

LF: No, she's a Dillingham.

AG: (Laughter).

LF: Well, you wanted to know about my marriage, didn't you? They are Dillingham.

AG: Both the girls are.

LF: My children are Dillingham.

AG: Okay. The other one was . . . ?

LF: The other one was married to a Rose. R-O-S-E. Chester Rose. They live on . . . over on

Bluegrass Acres.

AG: Okay. What is her name?

LF: Marie. You see, when you said Brooks, I have been married . . . Franklin is my fifth husband.

AG: Five. Alright. Mrs. Franklin, when were you first married and to whom, please?

LF: I was married first to an Irvine. Ambrose Irvine.

AG: Ambrose Irvine. Do you remember the dates?

LF: Boy, that was back in . . . Lord, have mercy . . . I don't remember that. I remember '55 when I married my husband Brooks. [After marrying Irvine] Then, I was married to a Simmons. Robert Simmons.

AG: Robert Simmons. Okay. Were you here in this area?

LF: I always lived in Madison County.

AG: Okay. Then, after Robert Simmons?

LF: Then, Robert Dillingham. They are the children's dad.. That's where the children came in. Then, I married Kennedy Brooks. He was a father to the children. He was there as a father to the children. And then Franklin.

AG: But you said . . . Tell me about . . . you were married to Brooks for 30 years.

LF: Yeah. Mmm-hmm. That's the one that lasted the longest.

AG: Okay. After his death, then . . .

LF: About seven years after that I married Franklin.

AG: And, is Mr. Franklin here?

LF: No, he died. He's been dead about four years. So, I'm alone.

AG: You're not alone. You don't think you'd . . . ?

LF: Yeah, I am. Yeah, this is it. You know, you lose two husbands with cancer, it does something to you. Both of them with cancer. The last one had leukemia which came back on him. He was always sick. I was married to him a year and a half and he was sick one week and two days.

AG: Before he passed?

LF: Mmm-hmm. Yeah.

AG: Oh. Okay. Yeah, it does make a difference.

LF: So, that makes a difference and I don't have any desire. I asked the Lord, you know, if he wanted me to have a husband to send me one and it worked out. I got him. I guess the Lord would give you what you ask for, but sometimes it may not be what he wants you to have. So, I just took it that way, and I have no desire to have another one.

AG: Okay. You're content?

LF: Yeah. Very. Very.

AG: I think that's the most important.

LF: Yeah. I think so too. (On telephone). We're having a sale tomorrow. We are going to bring stuff over. Selling . . . food sale.

AG: For what?

LF: For the Elks.

AG: You going to have it out of your house?

LF: No, we going to have it at the hall. The Elks hall.

AG: Oh. Like cooked food?

LF: Yeah. Oh, yeah, chicken and fish, and baked beans, potatoes, salad.

AG: Is this a way the organization makes money.

LF: Yeah. Makes money. It's a money-making thing. We want to try to entertain the senior citizens on Thanksgiving so we have . . . trying to raise some money so we can defray the expenses of it.

AG: And bring them all to the Elks?

LF: To the Elks, uh-huh, to have it. We have it almost every year. We have the biggest crowd of senior citizens. They really enjoy it.

AG: I need to ask you about your affiliation with the N.A.A.C.P.

LF: The N.A.A.C.P. That's another one I'm in. I'm in that. I'm the past president of that. Oh, I've been in that for years. Even Miss Helen Phelps and them, when they was in, that was years ago.

AG: You know, I told you I'd been looking for you a long time. Because everytime the N.A.A.C.P. came up, somebody said, check with Franklin and I never could figure out who they were talking about. So, there when you sat next to me there at the luncheon, that's when I thought . . . So, do you remember when you got . . . when the organization started?

LF: Here in Madison County. Lord, its been a long, long time. Oh, Lordy, I have to go back some . . . Ooh, wee, I mean, its been around here a long time.

AG: Were you in on the original planning or was it here?

LF: Well, it was here before I got into it. Oh, Lordy, I guess it's been 40-50 years.

AG: Okay. When were you president?

LF: I was president . . . I was president, I guess back in 1987. I was the secretary. I had been the secretary for years.

AG: I saw a program that says something about N.A.A.C.P. and celebration of the black entrepreneurs.

LF: We've had two or three of those programs.

END OF TAPE 1, SIDE 1.

BEGINNING OF TAPE 1, SIDE 2.

AG: Okay. You're saying you have had some of those appreciation . . . or honor . . . ?

LF: Yeah. Yeah. We usually had them at the church but we had one the year before last, the year before that at Eastern, and we had a nice one there. That was when I was the president at that time too. It's been about four years now since that. And our state president was here and all. We had a nice affair. It was real nice.

AG: Oh. Okay. Do you take part in the Richmond High Reunion?

LF: Yes. Oh, yes.

AG: Did you take part this summer?

LF: Yeah. Yeah.

AG: How was it?

LF: Wonderful. Wonderful.

AG: Somebody told me this was going to be the last one. Is that true?

LF: No. I don't think so. I don't think so. We have it every three years. I don't think so. Now, they had a meeting the other night. I didn't get to go, but I don't think so.

AG: Do you remember any of your teachers?

LF: Oh, yeah, all of them. All of them. (Laughter).

AG: Okay. High school? You remember . . . who taught you in high school?

LF: Oh, let's see, that was Raymond Jackson, Margaret Freeman, John Freeman, Maggie Wilson. No, Maggie was in sixth grade. Now, let's see, Andrew Miller. Uh, oh. There's been so many through that school.

AG: Okay. Do you remember the principal when you were there?

LF: Principal was Guthrie. And, oh, let's see, Merritt was one after that. He was there when my children went there. Cabel Merritt, he died in Danville. He was a . . . He may have been the last principal there.

AG: Before it got shifted into . . .

LF: Right, to the white . . .

AG: To desegregation?

LF: Right, right. He may have been the last one under my children.

AG: Okay. Did you engage in sports or the band?

LF: I played basketball (Laughter).

AG: I was just wondering. What kinds of places have you worked in Richmond, in this area?

LF: Now, I've been . . . the woman that I work for now is a private home, and I went to work for her when I was 13 years old and I have been there, still there. I don't do any work now. I was 13 when I went there, babysit and cook. I didn't do no housework or nothing like that. I just took care of children. She was sick and she couldn't take care of them. They in your hand and I raised them. One of the boys is a county attorney here. Bill Robbins, a very good friend of Rhonda Birch. I raised all those and all of them are lawyers and things like that. I go still to her

one or two days a week. I go . . . She's kind of sick and I just go around with her to eat, if she wants to go out and eat, and I go out and eat with her or take her to the grocery store or something like that.

AG: Oh, okay. Basically, that's the main job you've had all your life . . .

LF: Oh, yeah. I worked at the factory for 22 years, now.

AG: At the same time?

LF: Well, I went when I'd go, when I got to go, I'd go at night. I go, I wasn't doing nothing tonight. See, I wasn't doing anything. So, I went to the factory. My husband didn't want me to go. But, I'm glad that I went 'cause I went and retired from there. So, I get a retirement.

AG: What factory?

LF: At Dresser's in Berea.

AG: Oh, okay. And you stayed there for 22 years?

LF: Twenty-two years.

AG: So retirement rose . . . ?

LF: Right, and I retired from that. So, I'm glad I have that little check. It helped a whole lot. So, I was glad of that, that I did that.

AG: Yeah, because you add that to what you have now . . .

LF: Right, right, and it helps. If I hadn't had that, I don't know what I'd done.

AG: You would have found a way.

LF: Oh, yeah, I know I would. The Lord always makes the way.

AG: Okay. I wanted to back up. Your father, what did you say his name was?

LF: His name is Leslie Rhodes.

AG: Did he inherit this from his father?

LF: No. My daddy's folks were from Big Hill, Kentucky. You know what I'm talking about . . . Big Hill is a rough place, and Big Hill now is a rough place. His mamma died when he was real young. His father met another woman and he had a rough time, you know, coming up here . . . he and his brother, Uncle Richard in Cincinnati. They had a rough time coming up with a

stepmother which was real rough. So, they left home and he came here to Richmond. He was a farmer, always would farm. He farmed. He made everything that he had. He built houses. He was even the first garbage man around here in Madison County. He would go to all of these places. He'd garbage and he fed his hogs from the garbage that he would get, slop and stuff, he'd get from these hotels and things. He was a saving man. He just worked all the time. Then, he even worked at the Blue Grass Ordinance Depot. But, that was him. He built all these houses. He built them. Now he didn't build this one. The man Cornelison built this, but all these in the back there, he built them. He had one, two, out there in the back he built and he built all of those houses from scrap lumber and stuff that he would get from the Ordinance. But everything that he made, he made it himself. He did not have anything that was handed down to him.

AG: Okay. So, he was a self-made man.

LF: Self-made.

AG: I'm sure he did not have much education.

LF: Second grade education. He could read. He could write. Nobody . . . I'll tell you an incident that happened to him one time. He loves his Cadillac. He'd always have a Cadillac. He went to Lexington to get a Cadillac. And if you seen my daddy, you'd have to seen him to know what he was. He would go around. He would have overalls with pockets here and pockets there and you wouldn't think he had a dime. And he went to Lexington to get this Cadillac and he went to the Cadillac place. He told them, he picked out the Cadillac he wanted, and he said I want that car. The man looked at him and said how you going to pay for it. He said I'm going to pay cash. While he was trying to count out, my daddy took the money out of his pockets, honey, and paid cash for that Cadillac. The man was so stunned, he closed up his business and came over here and told the car lot man over here that he sold that car, and he said well, that man could've bought your lot over there.

AG: Okay. Oh, the one in Richmond.

LF: The one in Richmond was told he could've bought you out over there. You know. And, he did. He counted that all out. But, he could read. He could write. He could count out of this world.

AG: And save.

LF: A second grade education.

AG: Okay. Okay. How about your mom?

LF: Now, my mom finished school. She was . . . she was . . . Now, she didn't teach school, but her sister did. She went on and she got married, and she ran the grocery store. She was really smart too. They tell me . . . and, oh Lord, I belong to so many things . . . and church, now, at

church, I belong to everything there is in church, in the district. I'm in every kind of board you could imagine I'm in.

AG: Okay, what's your church home again? Tell me again.

LF: My church home was Bobtown.

AG: No, I mean now.

LF: Now? It's First Baptist. Mine is First Baptist now.

AG: Where is First Baptist?

LF: Down here at the corner of Collins and Francis Street?

AG: When you make a right curve?

LF: Right, right, there . . . it sits there.

AG: It sits on a hill. That's First Baptist.

LF: That's First Baptist, uh-huh.

AG: And you're on all the boards and . . .

LF: I'm the superintendent of Sunday School. I sang in the choir. Oh, Lord.

AG: Well, you're part of your community.

LF: Well, I guess, you'd say I am. I guess I am. I'm even on the Ombudsmen for the nursing home.

AG: Ombudsmen at the nursing home for the residents.

LF: Yes, and I'm appointed to one out there now at the nursing home.

AG: Okay, what's the name of the nursing home?

LF: Madison Manor, and they have one at Kenwood and Crestview. They all run that together. And, then we have one out on Parrish Avenue also.

AG: Okay. Well, now, if the resident . . . as an Ombudsman, if they have problems, they come . . . they . . . they . . .

LF: If they have problems, they relate it to me and then they . . . then you go and try to work it

out with them, with the patient and the nursing home. And, I had one lady, one lady, that I'm looking after now. She was at Crestview, and at Crestview, we learned that the keeper over there wasn't real nice, and that may have been the reason that this woman acted as she did, but they got a new one over there, but she . . . they transferred her down to Madison Manor, so when I went over there, she was in a bad shape, bad mood, but I got to talking to her, and we got to find out what she liked, you know, and all, and still the things that she needed. I know her great-niece and I would tell her, you know, as to what you could do, and so we got it down. Now, she has changed so you wouldn't believe she's the same woman. She is just perfectly satisfied, happy, and everything. So, I go up and talk up with her every once in a while. I don't know how I have the time to do all those things, but I do.

AG: Okay. Do you . . . do you have any dealings with the senior citizens center, which they closed down because they are going to rebuild eventually?

LF: Yeah. But, they've built another one now. They . . . they've . . . they out on the other end of town, yeah. AARP, I'm in that. Widows to Widows Club, I'm in that. Don't ask me now . . . because I can name them, but . . . my children say, Momma, you in everything. You going to get into anything else? I said I don't intend to get in anything, but look like it just falls on it.

AG: Now, talk to more about what you're doing . . . where you're going tonight.

LF: Tonight?

AG: Yeah, you're going to the rehearsal.

LF: Going to the rehearsal.

AG: Okay. Talk about what rehearsal it is. I want this on tape.

LF: This is Area Arts Theater. They have it every year. That's to raise money, I guess, for the Area Arts Council and they puttin' on this play. It's called The Crucible and I'm going to be playing the part of Tituba, which is a Negro slave and I'm really enjoying it. I thought at first I wouldn't, but it's very challenging.

AG: Tituba. Is this the story of the Salem Witch Hunt?

LF: Yes, witchcraft, right.

AG: Okay. She was a West Indian or . . .

LF: A West . . . uh . . . Barbados.

AG: Can you do the accent?

LF: I can't do the accent very good, but I guess they think I sound something like her.

Evidently, I must sound near it or something. What is the accent?

AG: Uh, uh . . . I'm trying to think . . . It's kind of British and . . . Spanish . . .

LF: Some man told me that you kind of sing-along.

AG: It is. It's a singing accent. I can't do it. I really (laughter) can't do it.

LF: I know when I said . . . and I try to do it along like that, but I can't either, but I said I was going to go up there and see if they have a record out at the library and was going to try to get on to it too.

AG: Okay. Are you the only black performer?

LF: I'm the only black performer.

AG: So, maybe it is your language. Maybe, maybe . . . they think there is a difference between your language and their language is enough so that you could see the distinction.

LF: Uh-huh. Uh-huh. Well, I think that's the reason why . . . I got to thinking after that, I said I guess that's the reason why that they chose me because I sounded so much like her maybe. So, I didn't mess with it. He said . . . he said, I feel real good about your play, so he was talking about your part. So, I said, well, I guess I'm doing alright, so I didn't pursue it anymore.

AG: Okay. When is the production?

LF: I think it's going to be in November, the second week in November.

AG: Let me ask you another personal question? All the flowers and the fan, did you make . . . ?

LF: Yes. I belong to the Homemakers, the Brassfield Homemakers. I'm past president of that. Don't stop telling me nothing else, keep on talking, you'll find out all that. All these I made. I made my hat on the door.

AG: And the pillows . . .

LF: The pillows. These . . . these were made years ago. These were made years ago in homemakers. They . . . This one was made in . . .

AG: What's the name of the group?

LF: Brassfield Homemakers. Brassfield is the oldest homemaker's club here in Madison County. Miss M.L. Turner, out to Brassfield, started years ago. We've had . . . we've had our 50 year anniversary a long time ago. And, it out in the little school house. She had it first out in the little school house in Brassfield. And, you know how long that little school's been gone.

And that's where she used to have a meeting.

AG: Oh, okay. Because I was noticing all the art . . . and the baskets . . . Are all that's a part of it?

LF: That's part. Well, yeah . . . and some of them I have made, but a lot of them is what we have made. That little one up there, I made it. Then, we got big ones we made too. I give away . . . I don't have time, I don't have room for all that stuff. Yeah, I don't have room for it.

AG: I see you love your flowers.

LF: Oh, I just have flowers.

AG: Real flowers.

LF: Yeah, I've got real. I've had to bring them in. And violets . . . I've got violets galore and everybody . . . I give everybody violets, and they say mine's not blooming, and I say, well, mine just blooms all the time. Yeah, they just bloom all the time. And I've made flower arrangements. I've taken this flower arrangement class at Eastern too. I've taken that too. I've taken that two or three years. I can do that. I like to do things. I just like to do things.

AG: I see . . . I see that. Do you play?

LF: I bang.

AG: Are you musical? Do you play for like a church or just . . . is it an organ?

LF: It's an organ, yeah. This is one the old organ down from First Baptist Church. And I . . . I bought it. I've been trying to get me a smaller one. So, it takes up some much room in the living room. Yeah, it's old. Well, oh Lord, its old. It's a Baldwin and it's real old. Yeah.

AG: Oh! My momma would love that.

LF: Yeah. I said . . . my brother used to come. When he comes, he bangs on it, but I always . . . well, I started taking music once, but the girl had to leave town and I didn't take it no more. I never did find another teacher. I only took it one year or something like that. I went through the first and second . . . but, I can play anything in the first and second book (laughter), but that's all.

AG: Can you play hymns on it?

LF: Uhh . . . back . . . now, my mother . . . we had the old-fashioned organ that had two of them little things and little pedal . . . And it's . . . old Mr. Ben Chenault used to live . . . he'd come over and he'd play the organ, and I used to play by ear pretty good, real good. But, when I started taking music, they made me forget all about it and I can't hardly get back on that to save my life. But, I just bang sometimes, and I guess . . . different moods you're in sometimes, I'll

come in here. I'll open it, and I'll sit, and I'll play. I play to myself (laughter), but otherwise . . .

AG: Okay. Okay. Did you make the doll over there?

LF: No, no, that's an antique doll. It's porcelain but . . . yeah, huh-uh. Yeah, it's an old one. And those . . . that one in that glass is an antique one also. Oh, I made . . . I made . . . I made dolls. Oh, I made the scripture dolls, and I made them, and I made the mop doll that's on my bed in there. We make everything you can imagine.

AG: But, you do stuff outside of the home?

LF: Oh, yeah. Yeah. I just like to be going doing things. And everybody says well, how do you do it to this day? I said I guess that's what's keeping me going. Because if I sit down and not do anything, I guess I wouldn't want to do anything.

AG: So, like . . . If you're working, if you're doing something, uh, 20 hours a day . . . It's better than if you, if you, probably because you are so active, if you'd just stop, you'd just . . .

LF: Well, I wouldn't be worth a nickel.

AG: You'd be sitting here.

LF: I'd be lazy. Wouldn't want to do nothing, you know. I really believe that.

AG: Oh, okay. Alright. Let's see, I can't think of anything else I need to dig into your past (laughter) . . . Listen, let me ask you this: Was there any problem that you can remember when Richmond City Schools, when Richmond High became . . . when students became integrated? Was there any problem that you can remember?

LF: Yeah. It was a problem there then because it got so that the school . . . Well, let's see, how can I put that. You know, a lot of times they say, well, we shouldn't have taken that school away. But that wasn't so. Because I took my daughter, my baby, my youngest daughter, I took her out. Well, they had to teach so well when she went there in the first and second grade . . . well, she passed the second grade, and that year, they had the first and second grade together, and I, um . . . she was a B average reader and she went from a B average to a D average reader. Well, that didn't bother me because I said, well, she gets out of that class, that teacher, and I got the teacher, you know, the woman that I worked for, she got her a book because their books were raggedy. They just got second things, so that's what they did. They didn't, and I worked with the N.A.A.C.P. and all of this stuff. So, we went in and checked on the school. They didn't have hot water. They didn't have toilet paper. They didn't have doors on the bathroom . . . the girl's bathroom. The men's toilet looked like I don't know what and the soap . . . they didn't have no soap, and what they were doing . . . Now, they could get that up there, but they said that [they] didn't know how to use it. The children didn't know how to use hot water. I said, who in the world now doesn't know how to use hot water. That's what they . . . that's what they said. And, and, of course, everybody said, we ought to kept it. No, we couldn't if we hadn't ruined

that. So, my kids went there until about the seventh grade, I believe. Sixth or seventh grade. One of them was in the sixth and one was in the seventh. Well, anyway, when they got up there, they thought that my youngest daughter . . . was changing the school . . . done something to it. [They thought that the daughter was having problems because she changed schools.] Now, they left before the school was closed, and they thought she wasn't getting along with the people or was scared or something. And, Mrs. Jennings and Mrs. Willoughby, they got together and they watched her. When she went to get something off the board, she didn't know what she was getting there and when they had problems on the board, she would miss them. So, she called me up and I went up and she told me, she said this child has been crippled in her first or second grade of school, and [the teacher] said, "I was that way because I had to go live with my grandmother." And, she said, "I thought it was her bringing her up here to school, but she gets along fine with the students and things," but said, "I watched her until she couldn't . . . anything I have on the board, she couldn't get. She'd be so long getting it, she didn't know what she was doing." And, she said, "I don't know whether I can do anything about it or not." Said sometimes it's awful hard. But, that year was the year that they started remedial reading, and so Mrs. Willoughby, Hortense Willoughby, that was a wonderful teacher up there. So, she told me she said, "With you all's income, I can't get her in that class." Said, "But I'm going to put her in it anyhow." Said, "When it's time for that," said, "I'll let you know and we'll put her in there." You know what, they got her. She called me, and they put her in that class, and that child didn't look back. She was a . . . she got on the honor roll.

AG: What was wrong? It's just . . .?

LF: She was just back . . . they just . . .

AG: They just messed with her.

LF: Messed it up. Messed up. And, she went . . . she went right on and went right on through and didn't have any trouble at all. But, we talked, we had a mother's group that was connected with the school. You know how they have something like Parents-Teachers. One of the teachers told us that they have other students grading their papers and all of that. And if the student don't seem like they want to get anything, you just leave them alone, just pass them on. They don't have to get it.

AG: Do you remember what year, what year was . . . was . . . Which is the baby? Betsy or Marie?

LF: Betsy's the baby.

AG: Okay. Should we talk about Betsy? Do you remember . . . what year was she born? Let me figure it out from there?

LF: She was born in '50. In '51. She was born in '51.

AG: Fifty-one. So, by the time she was in first and second was about '57.

LF: Yeah, right. Uh-huh. Yeah.

AG: Okay, '56 or '57. Somewhere in there.

LF: Yeah. One was born in '50 and the other in '51.

AG: Oh, the baby was born in '51 and the other one was '50. Are they a year? Are they a year apart?

LF: A year apart. That's the way my momma was. My momma was a, what the doctor say, was fast breeding. Now, only to the day that my oldest brother and this one here, the oldest one, there is two years apart. The rest of them was every year. She was pregnant. And so he told me when I had her, when I had Marie, he said I'll see you next year. I said, oh no, because, see, they had . . . both of them was cesarean. I said, oh no, you won't because that was rough. And I said, Oh no, you won't, and don't you know, next year I was right there. He said I was a fast breeder. So, I guess I was like my mom.

AG: Okay. What months were they born in? Marie was born in . . . ?

LF: Marie was in February and she was in November.

AG: Okay. But, you just had the two girls?

LF: Just the two girls. They wouldn't let me have anymore. If I could've had more, I'd have had more, but . . . Yeah, I'd probably have a house full like her. But, they wouldn't let me have no more after that.

AG: Are you a grandmother yet?

LF: Yeah, I'm a great-grandma. I have two great-grandchildren. Marie has three kids and Betsy has three kids.

AG: And who's the grandmother? Marie?

LF: Marie. She's the one that's the grandmother.

AG: So, that makes you the great-grandmother?

LF: I'm a great-grandma.

AG: So, how old is this baby?

LF: I've got one that's about six. And then, I got one that's about 14 months.

AG: Okay. Mercy! (Laughter). Okay. Are there families here?

LF: All right here? Uh-huh. They all here.

AG: They're own, but they are still in the vicinity.

LF: Yeah. Yeah. I've got Donna's . . . Sug's [pronounced shoog, as in sugar] oldest girl goes to college.

AG: Who's Sug?

LF: Betsy. That's Betsy. I'm not much calling her Betsy. She goes up to E.K.U. This is about her last year. She'll finish in the spring, I think. Then, Marie's oldest . . . I mean, baby. Marie, my oldest daughter's baby, she's going to college. I think she's going to go . . . she went to Frankfort . . . uh . . . Kentucky State her first year and then she came back and she was going to . . . taking computer out here through the . . . what'd you call that . . . It's not Eastern.

AG: The community center?

LF: No, it's like a Fugazi. What's this here? Business college. She's doing that. And, then, next year, she is going to go to Eastern. And, Betsy's small kids . . . now, after Betsy lost three babies and then she . . . we thought, well, she . . . in fact . . . she'd likely lost her mind, she didn't want to live. She just . . . every year they'd go a little bit longer. So, we talked them into adopting Jeremy. And they adopted Jeremy. Jeremy's about 8 or 9 now. While. . . when she got that baby home, don't you know, she got pregnant again, and the baby was born. Then, they fixed she can't have no more. So, one of hers is adopted. But we don't know it. (Laughter) We don't know it by that.

AG: Right. Right. She relaxed.

LF: Yeah. Is that what it was? And, then she had the other. We had our time with her for a while. But all of the others are Marie's though.

AG: So, you're a great-grandma.

LF: Yeah, a great-grandma. Isn't that something?

AG: Yeah, it's something. Where does the family celebrate Christmas? Do they come . . . all the babies come here?

LF: All of them come here or we go to one of them's house, one of them.

AG: Who does it?

LF: All of us. All of us do. See my dad used to have it all the time when he lived. We'd always go home. So, after he died, well, we had it here. Sometimes, my sister will have it. Or my daughters. You never seen nothing like here in your life. This is my sister, Johnnie.

AG: Johnnie is here. Okay. And, Curtis is there. Do the other brothers and sisters come in for holidays still?

LF: Yeah. Yeah. Well, they come in the summer. My brother in Detroit was here about a month ago. And his wife. His wife is a preacher. She's a teacher too.

AG: She's not a Baptist preacher?

LF: No. No. She's a . . . uh . . . no, they not that. What are they?

AG: Church of Christ? Christian?

LF: They are them . . . talkin' in tongue . . . Faith Hill is a whatever . . . talkin' in tongue. He always talks about that he's talkin' in tongue, get away, but I can talk to him, but he don't have nothing for me. He don't have a thing for me. He talks to me and he don't have anything. He's very satisfied too. 'Cause I can tell him I know it too. You know your bible, you . . . ?

AG: Yeah. Yeah. Right. But, she does . . . does she speak in . . . she actually says . . .

LF: Oh, yeah. She speaks in tongue. Yeah, they do. Yeah, they do. Oh, my girlfriend, when she was here the other year . . . the other Christmas, why she had trouble with her back and he said, did you want your back healed, and she told him yes, and he got it [got in trouble] because his sister, she was always shooting his hand down . . . He can't do nothing, you know. That's the way she is, and . . . but, he laid hands on her, and she said, you know, my back didn't hurt no more. So, I don't know. I got nothing to do with it. I said leave it alone. I mean, I don't have nothing against . . . I don't have nothing to do with it. Yeah, I'll leave it alone because I can't save. But, she's a preacher now.

AG: So, holidays, at any given time, you could be having your family, your babies, and everybody?

LF: Everything, everybody. Even their friends, their girlfriends, and boyfriends, and all of them. Lord, have mercy. We have a good time.

AG: Well, I can't think of anything more I need to ask you right now. I would like to exact from you the fact that if I do, may I come back? To visit you again?

LF: Yeah.

AG: Okay. And, we'll talk some more.

LF: Okay. Yeah, yeah, this . . . this . . . Richmond used to be . . . uh, we used to have plenty of black businesses and things around here, you know.

AG: Well, you called Embry's. That is . . .

LF: That was a store. We had a cousin, A.J. White had a tailor shop, and J.T. Ballew, you know, he just went out here and he had the tailor shop for years. And, they had a . . . Harvard Gentry had a dry cleaning. Yeah, these streets were just full of business people. All Irvine Street used to be nothing but black. The only problem . . .

END OF TAPE I, SIDE II.

BEGINNING TAPE II, SIDE I.

LF: . . . building.

AG: Your daddy's?

LF: Uh-huh. And, so, that was left to my two youngest sisters in Ohio, Clara and Elizabeth. And, the city . . . It was so close, and it was close to our houses, but that's where they were then. But, now, they got all them joined together, the white, and they never said nothing about it, you know. But, they . . . I gave . . . My husband died. I couldn't look after that for the kids. I kinda looked out after it for a while. But, I couldn't look out for that for them, so they, . . . you know, in Ohio, they didn't do a thing about it. So, they tore that building down and they said, that building had the best wood and stuff that you ever had. Now, it didn't have to be down. Because it could have been made a historical place.

AG: Uh-huh. It could be placed on the register.

LF: Right, on the register. Yet, that old creamery right next to it, and it was as old as that creamery or older, and they are trying to restore it. They've restored it. But, that's what I say, these people around here, if you can't do nothing with what you've got, it's gone. So, that's the way that is. And, that's where a lot of 'em got away. Because of that. And I always wished . . . So, something . . . That old man that owned the creamery, he'd been trying to buy it. He wanted to give him \$5,000 for it. I said, boy. I said, now, I tell him . . . I said no . . .

AG: Now, wait a minute, back up. Trying to buy what now?

LF: That . . . that lot up there. We still owned the lot now.

AG: He was trying to buy the lot for \$5,000?

LF: Uh-huh. And I told him, I said no, you all. I said, I'll buy it myself before I let him have it. Now, don't you dare do it. So, they still got it up there. But, see, the city was going to buy it. I don't know whether they're going still do it or not. But, we might get rid of it one of these days. But, they'll keep on until they finally get it.

AG: Until they get . . . what you have? Okay. You had funeral parlors . . . black funeral parlors?

LF: Yeah. We had a black hospital up there on First Street.

AG: What? What was the name of it? Do you remember?

LF: Uh. Uh. I had my tonsils removed there.

AG: On First Street?

LF: On First Street! Yeah. Um . . . Well . . .

AG: Okay, I could find it in the register. But there was a black hospital?

LF: Yeah! Right up there, I had my tonsils removed there when I was about 9 or 10. I was about 10, I guess, when I had my tonsils out. They had the old \_\_\_\_ [sounds like arg] building right across the street from that building I'm telling you about, and it had a plumber shop, a black plumber shop, and they had a hairdresser. They had everything. They had, oh, what else . . . They had . . . John Cobb had a tailor shop up there. He was in that building where we all were. Any my uncle John had a shoe shop. And, my momma and her sister, before she moved out here, they ran a grocery store up there also. It's been years ago. I was a little girl.

AG: Do you, um, do you know anybody who might have a photograph of any part of Richmond, when all those businesses were . . . ?

LF: Well, let's see, I sure don't know. I don't know where they would be or not. They ought to have some somewhere. They ought to have some. Because, see that old building up there. That Miller House, them buildings up there remember old buildings were there, you know. But, they are historical, but they wouldn't do anything for that, you know. Because that was black [that] owned it, and they tried to take it away from us for nothing. That's the reason I told them, I said, you all, just let it set there. You know, and . . . but, as I say, if my husband had lived, we probably, you know, would have done something before it failed, but there's nothing that I can do about it. But, that's what happened to most things around. People just . . . hands tied, and they couldn't do anything. So, there you go.

AG: If somebody is out there determined to take it, you have to fight real hard to keep it here.

LF: Oh, yeah. Oh, especially around here. Especially around here, because this town has always been like it is now. Always. You have to be around a little while to see into it. It's . . . it's, and I don't know, it seems like the black folks don't want much.

AG: I got that impression.

LF: Yeah. They don't.

AG: But, I'm not from here so I couldn't, I don't want to say.

LF: Yeah. I mean, you right. They don't want nothing. We wrestled with the N.A.A.C.P. at everything, but you would think we can get them to belong, do anything? No. Un-uh. I don't

care what you go into. I worked with the Kentucky River Foothills way before Betty Miller was in it. That was in back . . . that was in there. I used to work in there all the time. Reverend Goodlow. A.C. Goodlow, before he was even in it. We used to have a little black . . . what do you call it . . . where you loan them money?

AG: Pawn. Not pawn.

LF: No, it wasn't pawn. Where you . . .

AG: Like a little bank . . . not a bank, but a . . .

LF: Oh, I can't think of it myself. Oh, I can't think of what it's called, but we had that down there. Where people could come borrow money . . . which that building up there on the corner, up there, before you get to the railroad on the right hand side, that big double building. A bunch of the black went and borrowed money and bought that building. But, they had a grocery . . .

AG: They had a loan company?

LF: They had a loan company, something like a loan. They had a grocery store up there, and you take five or six go-getters, they couldn't get along. One afraid the other gonna get her. Honey, it ran right down, you know. That's just what I'm saying, you can't get nothing around. I always wished they would, you know, some go together and have some kind of business somewhere. But, you can't get nobody to do it. They just don't want nothing.

AG: What about a social life? You know, when you were younger and everything. What did you do for fun?

LF: Well, they did have . . . used to have, right. When I was married to Dillingham, we had a restaurant up there on the corner, you know where the Open Concern is? All that big lot was a big old restaurant there. We ran that. I mean, it's just a lot of history around here. They had undertaker's place down there in that bottom where that filling station thing is down there. Across from Kroger's, back there, on Irvine Street. It had a big KP Hall.

AG: Knights of Pythius, okay.

LF: They had a Knight, and then, we had the Crystal Slipper over here on Irvine Street as you going down toward the church. A big Crystal Slipper there, where [there is] a vacancy back there. A big Crystal Slipper sat there. It was . . . they used to have music. Larkin Blythe, around on Hill Street, he had a big restaurant around there. We'd go Sunday and eat dinner. Alma Cavanaugh had a business over there on that street. Buster Blythe had a restaurant and they had a liquor store around there. They used to have businesses, but we don't have anything. And then, when they sold . . . when Buster sold his liquor store to a man, he came in here, and when he got rid of it, and wanted to sell it, they wouldn't have, well, they . . . well, it seemed like he went away, moved it away. Well, when they wanted to put another liquor store there, the city say you cannot put a liquor store here. Right where it was.

AG: They rezoned it.

LF: Because we not going to have . . . No, we not going to have no more liquor stores, and there's been about 10 or 15 liquor stores put up out here, in our . . . in our city.

AG: Yeah. Yeah. There's one of them that's a drive-in right down here.

LF: Right around here. All over there on Main Street there, all of that was black. Where that old white joint is down there. You know where the liquor store on that side over there?

AG: That you can drive in?

LF: Yeah, and the other one over on this side? That all belonged to the Park's. The Park's were one of those teachers up at the school, up at the high school too. He was the history teacher. I don't know why I couldn't, didn't, think of that. They'd been dead for . . . they die out, and I couldn't think of all of them. But, uh, all that used to belong . . . all that was black. All those people up in there was black. Yeah, they were black. And then, there is up that street now is two people there, one of them is in a nursing home. Sydney Stone is in a nursing home, and her house is just sitting there. She has beautiful things. It's just setting. Setting. Then, we had another one die up there, and they just sold all her things out. It set there. She stayed in the nursing home and the hospital so long and then she died, and they just set there. They had a sale. I didn't get to go to it. I used to go to sales but I don't need nothing. I've got enough stuff to nag me the rest of my life.

AG: It didn't make you feel sad or something? You just got . . .

LF: No. Well, I think what makes you feel sad is that people that have things and, you know, have to just leave them sitting and do nothing about it, you know. Nobody do nothing about it, you know. That's what makes me sad, you know. And . . . and, which, I told my kids now, I don't think I'll ever have the trouble of them taking looking after me if something happened to me, but if I ever get to the place that I can't take care of myself, I'm going to get somebody to come in here, and I'm going to get me a lawyer, and I'm going to will everything then, and you take care of me until I leave. And it's going to be in the black family . . . in a black family. That's about it. I'd hate to say that I'd leave this here and it had to be in the hands of white people. You know, they didn't ever give us anything.

AG: Uh-huh. Because your children might get tricked or they . . . might get bamboosaled . . .

LF: Right.

AG: And then wind up and all of this . . .

LF: Will be gone. Be gone. Yeah. And, they'll inch right on into the rest of the property. So, it did . . . that's what I told them that's what I would do.

AG: Okay. Well, what'd they say? What did your children say?

LF: I don't have it, Momma. You don't have to do that. I said you can't never tell. I might outlive you all. You can never tell. Yeah. But, they all, they all real good to me. They look out after me.

AG: Okay. Alright. Let's see, I guess that will about do it. I'm going to need to ask you to sign something for me in a few minutes here. Okay? (Gets up from floor.)

LF: Alright. Now, I bet you done got stiff..

AG: I know, but it's so comfortable on the floor.

LF: I do, but I'd sit on the floor sometimes and watch TV in here. This one has the religious station on it that I can't get in my other one. I set in here sometimes on the floor and watch it.

AG: Okay. Today is the 9<sup>th</sup>.

LF: This is the 9<sup>th</sup>. Tomorrow's the 10<sup>th</sup>.

AG: Okay. All this is is a tape gift and release agreement. You're certifying . . . here's your name and your address . . . that you've given to Eastern Kentucky University, all the rights, title, and interest, literary property rights to this recording made in conjunction with, and this is the title of my project. Uhm, to be use for scholarly purposes, to be administered by the University, through the University Archives. Now, you know, it's not going to just be out there. It's going to be on campus.

LF: Well, wonderful. Wonderful.

AG: And, I've already signed down here, and you're the interviewee and I need you to sign it and date it for me. Did you make this?

LF: No. My brother brought me that. The one's in Michigan. He was out to, uh, that place out there . . . out there where they eat . . . out there by them hotels . . . um . . . Cracker Barrel. No, is it Cracker Barrel?

AG: It's all loose stones?

LF: Yeah. It's stones and he bought me that a long time ago. And it had different kinds of these in it. And they finally, they died out, and I put my others in there.

AG: You put these.

LF: Yeah, uh-huh.

AG: Am I going to kill them?

LF: No, no, they live. They are very much alive. They'll live and live and live. They all tell me I got a green thumb. I said no, I just love flowers. I said you have to talk to flowers.

AG: I don't talk to flowers.

LF: You don't.

AG: No, but that might be why they always die on me.

LF: That might be. You do . . . if they go to acting up and you go talking to them, they'll just straighten up. They do.

AG: Do you talk to your violets?

LF: Yeah, I talk to them, too. They said, they said, after we water them, that they're blooming. I said well, mine's still blooming. I gave so many of them away and they say what're you doing to them. I said I don't do nothing but talk to them. I said if they are getting sluggish, I tell them now, okay, you better straighten up here. I said, now, you can't be acting like that.

AG: Okay. And it works?

LF: It works! Yeah. But I love flowers.

AG: Okay. I've already exacted my promises from you, haven't I? You promise me that if I needed you again, if I needed you again, that I would be able to come back and see you?

LF: Yes. Yeah.

AG: I just need to turn it off now.

(Tape resumes)

LF: . . . Around that section, there ought to be some down there.

AG: Say it again now. You going to . . .

LF: It was one in a . . . in the . . . in the paper where they had the old Coca-Cola place was stored in that building at one time. They had it in there. There was something in one of the Registers one time about it.

AG: About that building?

LF: That building. That building where the old Coca-Cola building usually was stored in it. I

don't know, it was . . . I don't know what it was. I may have it around somewhere. I don't throw away nothing much, too much. But it was in the paper that they was talking about the old places and things around here, and it was in one of the papers, a special section in the Register it was in.

AG: Okay. Do you have any leads you can give me? Some other people I need to talk to?

LF: Yeah. Let's see. You might get a lot of good information from Miss Helen Phelps. I'm sure you can get something from her. And, she's up here on Linden Street. And, also have you ever talked to Beatrice Huguely? Have you ever talked to her?

AG: No, I haven't talked to Mrs. Huguely.

LF: Beatrice Huguely was in the sit-in they had here where they put them in jail. She was one of them that they put in jail for rights around here in Madison County.

AG: For demonstration?

LF: Demonstration, right. And, she's right over there . . . You know that big old stucco house over there on Main Street by the cemetery. It's on the same side as the cemetery. Her address . . . Their's is the same as ours. My daddy's house is 1212 East Main. But she's that little red house before you get that big one. She's right next door to it. That's another one that had family and lots and all that. Because across the street over there where that business is and all the way to that corner, on Maple there, all of that belonged to the Huguely's and all that over there. The Huguely's. My dad's and the Huguely's was the first two homes in Madison County that had basements. They still . . . they've keeping that up over there. That stucco house over there is beautiful.

AG: On, uh, 1212 Main Street. Is it 1212 Main Street?

LF: Uh-huh. Now, 1212 is there, but the . . . Beatrice is in the little house right next to it. Right next to it. He is a . . . fixes furniture. He's a furniture fixer. Oh, Bob Blythe used to be a furniture . . . He'd build anything. We've had his business. We had all kinds of business around here. We had a blacksmith shop.

AG: Who . . . who owned the blacksmith? Is that . . .

LF: Patton. The Patton's.

AG: Are the Patton's still around?

LF: No. The last one, the son, moved to Lexington and he died about two years ago.

AG: Okay. Okay. Anybody else you can think about I need to try to find?

LF: Well, I know that's some good ones.

AG: Hugely and Phelps.

LF: I know they're two who can tell you a lot about this here. A lot of the others that worked in a lot of this, they had done gone to other parts of the state for better jobs. A lot of them that used to work and a lot of that is also gone. But, these new ones in the N.A.A.C.P. now are very new. Alma Cavanaugh, after she left. And Dan, my husband, Dan, he used to be president of it also. But, after they left, almost all of these are new ones in it.

AG: Okay. Did you ever get arrested?

LF: No, I never did. No, I never did. I wasn't here at that time. But, I guess I'd have been with them, but I wasn't here. I was on a trip at that time when they did that. I've gone on marches in Washington and in Frankfort and all of that. I would have been in it. I've kept my children there . . . there when they marched on Frankfort, and they'd be with me for things. They still remember it.

AG: Oh, okay. So, it had to be in the '50s you were doing this?

LF: Yeah. Uh-huh. That was . . . um . . . No, that was when, um . . . now, let's see, when was that . . . let's see, what was that, and who marched . . . um . . . Was it Martin Luther done it? Martin Luther marched! Yeah. In Frankfort. In Frankfort. Uh-huh.

AG: And the march to what . . . to the capitol building?

LF: The capitol . . . Uh-huh. Uh-huh. And, Jackie Robinson was there and all of them was there. Oh, I remember, yeah, that was good. Let me tell that.

AG: Oh. I'll have to find out what that date was.

LF: Yeah. Uh-huh. I . . . I don't know what that date . . . I've got all kinds of things right here on Martin Luther. But, that . . . that was. We went there and marched with that.

AG: We talking about . . . when Junior came?

LF: Yeah. Yeah, Junior. Yeah, Junior. Yeah. Yeah. It was a great thing, and then, in Washington, we marched on the Jeannette . . . Jeannette Rankin Brigade or something like that. We marched in that, but . . . Coretta was there, but, that was after Martin died though, because she was there. It was right after that. It was right after that. They had the biggest thing there. The streets was all lined up with cops and things just of women. These were just nothing but women. It seemed like it was Jeannette Rankin's Brigade or something. I've got papers on it around here some place. Yeah. But, it was . . . it was real nice.

AG: But, that's what they called the parade?

LF: Yeah. Uh-huh.

AG: The march of the Jeannette Rankin's Brigade?

LF: Rankin's Brigade. I think that's what they called it. We went with . . . um . . . I think we went with the United Church Women something . . . United Church Women. And we stayed over . . . we stayed there. It was . . . it was real nice. We stayed at the white folk's house. I slept in the . . . Most of them slept in sleeping bags, but I was a Brooks [her last name was Brooks] at that time, so she was a grown woman, I was a Brooks, so I slept with her children, in their bed, and they slept on the . . .

AG: Okay. This was around 1969 or '68? This was after he died?

LF: It was a little after he died because he was gone. Because she was there and I said, well, you know, when I go I always like to get around where everybody is and I stayed around close to her and that's how come I was on TV at that time. Hey, I got me on TV. I felt I would stay around with them. I go, go, I will be where the happenings are. I don't want to be behind.

AG: And that's what you do, you know, because otherwise, there's nothing much happening up there, except for around her.

LF: Yeah. They had people from everywhere. We rented a big old place, you know, and they had a big . . . it was real nice.

AG: I can't get . . . I can't get a reason for Jeannette Rankin. I'll have to look it up. Jeannette Rankin Day?

LF: It seemed like it was Jeannette Rankin Brigade or something. Oh, we had . . . oh, well, that goes, done there . . . we had two . . . we had three undertakers here. We had three black undertakers here. Then, and back there. We had the Collins and we had the Boyd. And we had the Rankin's. Charlie Rankin's . . . his old . . .

AG: Is this the same . . . Was he kin to or did he just happen to have his last . . . Jeannette Rankin?

LF: No, no, no, no, no, no. That was something way up there. I don't know why that was, but we went with those folks, because I know that.

AG: But the Rankin here . . . Rankin family did have a funeral home?

LF: And that's up there where they are trying to, you know, the corner of Irvine, after you hit the railroad, that big vacant lot all up here . . . That's where his funeral home was. All that big lot that was up there was the funeral home.

AG: What are they trying to do with that now?

LF: Well, one of my nephews and his wife owns it and they want to put a grocery, uh, a grocery center there or somewhere and they are trying to fight against that old Coyle Grocery up here on Irvine Street, right before you get up there. It's trying to fight against it. But, Coyle couldn't stay up there if he didn't, wasn't, in the business that he's in. And, he's fighting so because he don't want to lose that. That's, that's, that's all that old stuff, you know. And everybody knows it. But, they trying to keep him out of it. But, the city done told them they could have it, but they done carried it further. So, I think that they eventually going to get it. Yeah, I think they eventually going to get it. Yeah, because he's a fighter. He's my husband's nephew. (Answers telephone).

END OF TAPE II, SIDE I.