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## Preface

This manuscript is the product of a tape recorded interview conducted by Reverend N. L. McPherson for the Oral History Office in January, 1975. Carolyn Donaldson transcribed the tapes and Sandy Luebking edited the transcript.

William B. Hubbard was born in Sangamon County and raised on a farm near Springfield, Illinois. He relates his experiences as a black man in the Springfield area.

Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that it is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, narrator and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. Sangamon State University is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for views expressed therein; these are for the reader to judge.

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William Hubbard, January 28, 1975, Springfield, Illinois.

Rev. N. R. McPherson.

Q: Mr. Hubbard, I understand now that you were born in Springfield?

A: Yes.

Q: And where was this?

A: Out here southeast of Rochester.

Q: Is that in Sangamon County?

A: Yes.

Q: What was your neighborhood like?

A: Farming.

Q: Oh, farming.

A: My father was a farmer.

Q: And you had other brothers, I know.

A: Yes. Seven brothers.

Q: Really?

A: There's only four of us living.

Q: Yes. What are their names?

A: Carl Hubbard, William B. Hubbard, that's me, Lyman Hubbard.

Q: Now that's Reverend Hubbard, he's the pastor of Pleasant Grove?

A: He was, yes.

Q: Okay. What are the others.

A: Reuben Hubbard, Detroit, Michigan; Frank Hubbard, he's deceased; and then Sherman Hubbard, he's deceased; and Leonard Hubbard, he's deceased; and Orville Hubbard, he's in Jackson, Michigan.

Q: All right. Now so all of you . . . do you have any sisters?

A: No.

Q: So you all worked on the farm then?

A: Yes. Until we were big enough to cope for ourself.

Q: What did you all raise, just about everything on the farm?

A: Yes, wheat and oats and corn and hay and clover and millet.

Q: And what? Millum?

A: Millet, millet. That's a hay.

Q: Oh, millet.

A: Chickens and ducks and turkeys.

Q: Now did you come into town to sell your produce or how did you get rid of it?

A: We had customers we deliver to, yeah. Butter and eggs.

Q: How often did you all come to town?

A: Once a week, Friday or Saturday.

Q: And, of course, you all got your groceries or something like that to last for the week?

A: My father always went to town on Saturday afternoon and did the shopping, him and my mother.

Q: About what size farm did you all have out there?

A: One hundred and sixty acres.

Q: And you farmed all of that?

A: Yeah.

Q: Did you have a mule to . . .

A: Mules and horses. We had six horses and two mules.

Q: And they helped plow up, anything like that?

A: Yeah. Binders instead of combines. Hay baler.

Q: Oh, you all had a hay baler.

A: Yeah, we had a hay baler as horse power.

Q: About how many bales of hay did you all get a year or . . .

A: Well, all the wheat and oats, straw, we baled. Sometimes we'd have three hundred and sometimes we'd have more.

Q: Did you sell some of it or you kept most of it for your animals?

A: Well, my father sold a portion to pay the cash rent. About one hundred and sixty acres.

Q: Now could you explain and tell me a little bit [about] what is cash rent?

A: So much an acre. He started in there paying six dollars an acre for that land to farm it.

Q: Oh, I see.

A: And when he give it up, the landlord was asking thirteen dollars an acre. He should have started to buying it when he first rented it, because living thirteen years on one farm, you ought to own it.

Q: Yes. But he didn't.

A: He didn't think that he could buy it. He didn't have confidence in himself.

Q: Well, of course . . .

A: I don't think people's got confidence in theirselves now far as that's concerned.

Q: But, of course, I guess things were sort of difficult for him to even get a loan to even make a down payment.

A: No, he didn't have to have nobody with him to get a loan. His word was his bond. He could go to the bank, I mean, and tell them what he wanted and when he'd pay it and sign the paper, that was it. My mother didn't even have to go.

Q: Did he ever explain why he didn't choose to buy it?

A: Well, he didn't think he had money enough. He didn't think he had money enough, and he didn't know how crops was going to yield, or he didn't know whether us kids was going to stay with him and he'd have to . . . then he'd be up against the job without help and he couldn't solve that out for hisself . . . couldn't solve that out for hisself.

Q: Well, how . . . you say he stayed thirteen years on the farm?

A: Yes.

Q: And after that, what happened?

A: He bought a home, I mean up here . . . I mean just south of the Wilson Tire Factory on South Eleventh Street and bought six lots and a house. So when he did retire, he'd have somewhere to go.

Q: Now by the time he came to town, the boys were grown up. Most of them were grown up, weren't they?

A: Oh, some of them, yeah. The four oldest were old enough to bout for theirself.

Q: And then the others came in with him. Well, did he continue to do any farming after he came to town?

A: Yes. He farmed eighty acres of his ground that he had rent for thirteen years, but he farmed that on cash rent. I mean, you know, dividing; but other than that why before he . . . he did that in order so that if the season wasn't right, the landlord wouldn't get very much, same as him.

Q: Oh, I see. It was sort of . . .

A: Yeah, you shared.

Q: Yes. This is almost . . . this is not the same as share cropper, is it?

A: Well, in a way of speaking, yeah.

Q: Yes. All right, so when your brothers grew up, did any of them get a farm for themselves or did they go into something else?

A: No, one of them went on to Detroit. I mean, soon as he was big enough to make a day. And Lyman, he went to foundry. And I worked, went to work on construction.

Q: I see. What kind of foundry, for instance [did] Lyman work in?

A: He worked in a gray iron foundry where they made inlets and manholes and all such as that for the streets.

Q: Oh, I see. Yes.

A: And they also made these here spiders for weaver's jacks.

Q: I see. And how long did he work at that?

A: Oh, he worked at that . . . I don't know. He started there before he was twenty-one years old and he worked there to a short time after he married. And then he started a little old foundry up there on Canedy Street for himself.

Q: Oh, did he? And he made the same sort of thing that he was making?

A: Inlets and manholes and things like that for the city.

Q: Now what . . . when he went out did he still make it for the city?

A: Yeah. The city give him orders, I mean, to how many castings they could use, and when they'd want them delivered.

Q: I see. Now who was he working for before he went into business for himself? When he was working in the foundry?

A: He was working for the Illinois Foundry out here south of Springfield.

Q: Oh, I see. Now you said you went into construction. What kind of construction did you work in?

A: I worked on highways and streets.

Q: Oh, I see. And this is what you did?

A: Until I retired.

Q: Until you retired. How long has it been since you retired?

A: Little over three years.

Q: What do you do with your time now?

A: Monkey around.

Q: I'm sure you find enough to do, though, around.

A: Oh, I work when I want to; and when I don't, I don't.

Q: You go fishing and all that?

A: No, I ain't guilty of that. I ain't got no patience.

Q: What about hunting? You don't go hunting?

A: I used to go hunting until the calves in my legs give away so I don't get out there and make . . . I usually go hunting by myself.

Q: Oh, I see. Really?

A: Sure. Ain't no danger of getting shot then.

Q: Oh, I see.

A: Whole lot of people don't know how to handle a gun.

Q: Now when you worked on construction, they didn't pay as much as they pay now?

A: No, I started to worked on construction at forty cents an hour.

Q: Really?

A: I worked six days for \$21.60, nine hours a day.

Q: Wow. And were you married then?

A: I got married in 1926, yeah.

Q: How did that take care of you and your family?

A: What? Pretty near as good, better than they do now. You didn't owe nobody. And you could get a fairly decent house for twenty dollars a month and get a number three washtub full of groceries for five dollars.

Q: Oh, yes.

A: Five dollars wouldn't much more than let you get in the store now.

Q: Get you a couple of loaves of bread. (laughter)

A: Couple of sweet potatoes.

Q: Well, how long did you work at forty cents an hour before they raised it?

A: Oh, 1927 or 1928 when they started building Illiopolis.

Q: Oh, I see.

A: I got a dollar an hour, thought I was getting rich.

Q: Were you able to do any saving?

A: Oh, a little.

Q: Little bit.

A: I had three children to look after, and a wife.

Q: What were the names of your children?

A: Robert Porter, he was my stepson; Billy Hubbard, he was my oldest boy; and then Victor Hubbard.

Q: And they . . . but you were able to maintain them and your family at the work? Did you have to go out of town to work on construction?

A: Yeah, we went back and forth to Jacksonville and down to Beardstown several jobs.

Q: But you came in in the evening?

A: Sure, they wouldn't furnish you board down there. They'd say, "Read and run, Mr. Nigger."

Q: Oh, is that what they'd say?

A: That's what they used to have a sign down there.

Q: Where? In Jacksonville?

A: No, I said in Beardstown.

Q: Oh yes, Beardstown. Could you go anyplace and eat while you were down there or did you take your lunch?

A: Yeah, they treated you just as nice as if you were white.

Q: Well, when did they take this sign down, do you know?

A: I don't . . . I know . . . I mean the last job we were down there they said the sign had been down quite a long while. I don't know what they consider a long while, but they were as nice as your brother or sister, I mean, to offer you something they didn't think you had.

Q: Now these were the white construction workers that were working . . .

A: No, the white families that lived there in Beardstown.

Q: Oh, I see.

A: And they even asked you to come back and visit them.

Q: Oh, is that right?

A: Yeah.

Q: Did you ever go back?

A: I went back down there on the road where they had these markets for their crops and they'd sell sweet potatoes, strawberries and what have you, pumpkins and watermelons. Yeah, I went down there. I worked down there about three months. I got kind of acquainted. And I went in the dime store and they come meet me, they're so glad to get your business.

Q: I see.

A: I guess they thought you'd bring everything with you that you need, but sometimes you'd buy something there. There's only one colored lady lives there in Beardstown.

Q: Is that right?

A: She's dead now. I've only known one colored lady . . . her husband passed away a long, long time ago. But she was . . . and then folkes idolized that poor old woman. She didn't have to want for nothing, didn't work. That's better than me.

Q: Well, in this construction work were things so well, did you have off time? For instance, in the winter months what did you do?

A: You'd get relief if you hadn't had none and if you wasn't able to get relief, it wasn't too long before they had unemployed compensation. You get on that, for a long time they didn't [have] any unemployed compensation. If you hadn't saved none, you didn't do none.

Q: I see. Now, did you have a garden?

A: Yes. I have one yet.

Q: You have one about every year then?

A: Sure. Might as well put in a garden to cut weeds.

Q: Yeah, that's right.

A: Which is the hardest?

Q: Well, I think the cutting the weeds is harder . . .

A: You don't get nothing from cutting weeds, not if you hire yourself out.

Q: That's right. Now what did you do when your garden come up? Did your wife do canning and things like that?

A: Her and I together, not her by herself.

Q: Oh, you help her.

A: Yeah.

Q: Of course, before you had deep freezers and all this sort of thing, you just had to can the things and put them . . .

A: Well, when we were on the farm with my folks, they buried everything.

Q: Oh, is that right?

A: Put it in the ground in the apple orchard and put straw and leaves down and then put a rail down the center, I mean, and put shock fodder up around this here and then cover the shock fodder with straw. Made a ground cellar. Just leave one end kind of open so you could go in.

Q: And you got in and took the . . .

A: Get your produce out of there.

Q: Is that right? And it kept like that all the . . .

A: Sure, just like in these warehouses here. Sure. Never worried about it freezing. It didn't get wet, why could it freeze? And no air would go through that shock fodder.

Q: It's amazing.

A: Huh?

Q: That's amazing.

A: It's real, though. And white fellow come over and said, "Stoke," I mean said, "Show me how to build one of them." I says . . . my father says, "Nothing to it, just look at mine. Go back and put you up one." I don't know whether he done it or not, he didn't come back to get anything. Guess he must have saved some that he raised. But white folks is funny; when they see you prospering they want to know how you do it. Because they knowed Papa had all eight of us boys and that was quite a . . . that was a threshing gang the year around.

Q: Yeah, that's right.

A: Well, there was ten people. I just often wonder why I have such a hard time and only had three to bout for and my wife, and there was five of us and Papa had eight boys. He never did go lacking.

Q: Well, for one thing. Things were . . .

A: Cheap.

Q: Yeah, were cheaper than they are now.

A: Yeah. And you didn't have to mortgage nothing to get anything and pay that interest. And when you got paid, if you didn't get but three dollars a day, all of it was yours. And now if you make three dollars a day, that's just for Uncle Sam.

Q: That's right, that's right. I imagine that's the way progress . . . I guess that all drains our pockets but sometimes you actually wonder.

A: And another thing, my father never bought sugar, I mean, buy ten and fifteen pound at a time; my father'd buy a twenty-five pound sack of sugar. And a fifty pound sack of flour, and made homemade bread all the time. I didn't know what a loaf of store-bought bread was until I got married. Didn't know what it was. I'm glad I didn't. I wouldn't have been living today if I'd ate store-bought bread all my life, because I'd [have] had a ruined stomach.

Q: You have a point.

A: I know it. I don't have to take no medicine to keep my stomach straight.

Q: Of course, you ate a lot of fruit and all that . . .

A: Vegetables and meat. And we had . . . and my father would butcher two hogs to shuck corn off of and then during the Christmas holidays why, he'd do his main butchering and he'd butcher eight hogs.

Q: Is that right?

A: Didn't have to go to no butcher shop. What for?

Q: What did he . . . did he sell some of the meat or [did] he store it?

A: No. He'd put it in a smokehouse and put the key in his pocket.

Q: Yeah. Why, because he didn't want you boys to go in there?

A: Well, he'd know whenever it left who was responsible for getting it. But white folks were pretty decent at that time. If they didn't have it, I mean, and had a big threshing bunch, I mean, to come up on them, and they didn't have ham or didn't have chickens or anything, they'd come over and borrow it. Yeah, they'd come over and borrow it. And when they butchered their first butchering in the fall of the year, they'd pay you back.

Q: I see.

A: And you didn't have to pull their hand or their coattail to get it.

Q: That was a sort of a neighboriness that they had.

A: That's right, that's right. Neighborhood agreement. Anybody could come there. And they wouldn't ask us kids or wouldn't ask Mama, they'd ask him.

Q: What were your parents' names? Your father's name?

A: Stoke Shadrack Hubbard.

Q: Stoke? That's S-T-O-K-E?

A: Yeah.

Q: Sedrick?

A: Shadrack, yeah.

Q: Oh, Sedrick.

A: No, Shadrack, Shadrack.

Q: Oh, I see. And what's your mother's name?

A: Mary Amanda Hubbard.

Q: Mary Amanda. Now, your mother took care of the home while you all went out in the field and so forth?

A: Yeah. Whenever she got sick, I mean to be confined, why some of us kids had to do the cooking. Or if my father couldn't do it, I mean, be able to stop and do it. That's the reason I can burn grease now.

Q: Oh, is that right? You do pretty well at it?

A: I don't scorch no water.

Q: Oh, I see. What was a day like? For instance, you being . . . were coming up on the farm, I know you had to get up pretty early in the morning to get the animals fed and get your chores all done and all that.

A: Papa would get up at four o'clock in the morning. And he'd get the horses in and then he'd come and call us. And my mother'd be already up preparing breakfast.

Q: About what time did you all eat breakfast generally? About five o'clock?

A: [At] 5:30, anyhow. 'Cause we'd be in the field at six o'clock. Have a half a day's work done at 11:30 because he always quit for noon. Give the horses a hour and a half to eat their dinner.

Q: And then?

A: Go back to work at one o'clock.

Q: You worked how late?

A: Until six o'clock in the evening.

Q: Oh, I see. Now did you have any . . . you all didn't have much time for recreation and playing then?

A: Played horseshoes an awful lot. Where did we have any money to buy any recreation? Huh? Nobody sent it to you.

Q: That's right. What . . . did you have other neighbor children out there . . . out . . . ?

A: Colored?

Q: Yes.

A: There's one family. He was here from Taylor County, Kentucky.

Q: From where?

A: Taylor County, Kentucky.

Q: Oh, I see.

A: And he worked by the month for one of my great-uncles.

Q: What was his name? Do you remember?

A: Edwards.

Q: Edwards.

A: Yeah.

Q: He was your great-uncle.

A: He worked for my great-uncle.

Q: Oh, oh, I see. Edwards worked for your great-uncle.

A: Yeah. My great uncle lived up here on 15th and Cass.

Q: Oh, I see. What was your uncle's name?

A: Nate Smith.

Q: Nate Smith. I see. Now, did this Edwards, did they have a family of children?

A: They had four children.

Q: Did you all play together as . . .

A: We didn't. They were so much younger than we that we didn't have time to play with them kids. We went to school with them.

Q: I see.

A: Out here to Hazel Dell School.

Q: Oh, Hazel Dell.

A: Hazel Dell. It's the only school I ever went to. They had one room then and the teacher'd teach plumb up to the ninth grade.

Q: I see. Did you all have to spend a lot of time on the farm helping, that's why you didn't go further?

A: That's right. He wasn't able to hire a man year-round. I mean, people wanted assurance of their work in the spring. If he couldn't start them early, they'd get somebody else. Yeah, nobody waited on him. If he wasn't ready, somebody else was.

Q: What . . . away from playing horseshoes, what did you all do . . . for instance, did you all work on Saturdays, too, on the farm?

A: Not Saturday afternoon, no. We could have recreation if we wanted to or . . . Saturday afternoon.

Q: Did you all come to town then, I mean?

A: We went over to Burn Park.

Q: Burn Park.

A: That's where our recreation accumulated.

Q: And what did you all generally do over there?

A: Oh, some Sunday School would have a picnic every now and then out there. We'd go over, but we'd always be home 4:30 or something like that because we had a bunch of cows to milk.

Q: I see.

A: And we had to walk, didn't have no transportation.

Q: Now, where was that farm located you say?

A: You know where the old WMAY station is out here on the bypass? Well, it's right across the road from that on the south side of the road.

Q: Oh, I see.

A: All that is built up in addition now. That was a house back there, four room house, and we lived on one hundred and sixty acres.

Q: What was the name of the owner for those one hundred and sixty acres from whom your father rented?

A: Mrs. Merritt.

Q: Mrs. Merritt.

A: Yeah.

Q: All right. And all your brothers went to Hazel Dell School?

A: That's right.

Q: All of them. Okay.

A: And then when my father left the farm out there, some of them, three if not four of them, went to Harvard Park.

Q: I see. All right. Let's talk now. I take it then that you were grown when your father came into town so that you didn't come to live with him?

A: No, twenty-six years old. You don't live with your parents.

Q: All right. Now what . . . do you remember what the neighborhood that your father lived in was like when he came to town on South Eleventh? Did they have other colored . . .

A: Yeah, three other colored families lived out there.

Q: Okay. Now, where did you live when you came into Springfield.

A: Where did I move from home?

Q: Yes.

A: Out 2020 East Stewart.

Q: I see, 2020 East Stewart.

A: That's where my wife and I learned a house . . . right across the street from where my wife was raised.

Q: What was that neighborhood like?

A: Oh, just in general, I mean, poor class of people getting by, raising families and so forth. Coal miners and like that.

Q: Have you ever worked in the coal mine?

A: I was down there about three times. I don't want it, too rich for me.

Q: Is that right? What happened?

A: Huh?

Q: What happened about it?

A: Whenever you go down over three hundred feet in the ground, anything can happen. That's the reason I didn't stay.

Q: What, you just went down to . . .

A: On an affidavit.

Q: Oh, I see.

A: My uncle went with me and whenever he went down, wouldn't get on the cage when I did go down, they'd send me back up on the next cage.

Q: Is that right?

A: 'Cause he's supposed to be responsible.

Q: How old were you? I mean, you were a man when you went down there?

A: No, I was eighteen years old.

Q: I see. And how long did you . . .

A: Work? About three weeks. When my uncle went off, I mean, . . . when my uncle went off, I mean, visiting around down there amongst his friends and left me alone, I come home and told my father and he stopped me from going.

Q: I see. What specific work did you have to do?

A: Huh?

Q: What did you have to do in the coal mine?

A: Help him, I was his helper I mean, drill holes and he did all the putting the powder and stuff in the holes to shoot the coal, and load coal and then we'd have dirt, so much dirt that we had to load out and into . . . to get room for further coal. Sort it out.

Q: Where was this mine?

A: Out at Spring Creek.

Q: Oh, I see.

A: Right out here west of town.

Q: And after your father stopped you, you didn't go back?

A: No, what for? I didn't lose nothing down there.

Q: Well, didn't you make good money?

A: Yeah, I'd guess you'd call it good money, any money's good just so it's not bogus. I ain't never received no bad money.

Q: What time did you have to go to work? I mean for the coal, now.

A: When we were out there, my uncle worked on the night shift. We'd go down in the mine about 7:30 in the evening and get out about twelve or one o'clock. We had to go back into where our work was in a car pulled by a mule.

Q: Is that right? And then when they loaded, the mules pulled it out, pulled out the loads, also?

A: The mules . . . that's what the mule's for, yes. Pull the coal from those entries, I mean, and moves to the pardon and then they had an electric motor that hitched on to them at the pardon and pulled them to the face of the mine.

Q: I see.

A: Where they loaded them on a cage.

Q: And then from there they take it to the railroad car?

A: Well, they bring it up and it runs over shakers, you know, and separates them.

Q: Oh, I see.

A: Big stuff goes into what you call lump coal and, and had "A" coal, and then they had what you call mine run, just bring it up as they dig, don't run it over the shaker. That mine run was cheaper than what your other coal was.

Q: Was that the finer grade coal?

A: Yeah.

Q: All right. Now how long did you live on Stewart Street.

A: I don't know, I was out there during the Depression . . . I don't know how long I did live out there, quite a while, I'll say that.

Q: Now let me ask you this now. How did the Depression, you mentioned the Depression, how did that affect you and your family?

A: Quite a bit. When they wouldn't give you clothes and shoes and things like that, that would affect you, let alone me. And they give material for you to make clothing, shirts and things like that, but to give you something already made, they hardly ever do that.

Q: All right. You were working on construction during that time?

A: No, I mean, see, I mean during the Depression, the construction workers wasn't doing nothing but receiving relief.

Q: Yes, this is what I understand, so . . .

A: Quite awhile after the Depression before you could get on construction, they didn't have no unit. All they had to do was sit out on the job. I mean, somebody'd burn out or get sick, and the man would pick you. You didn't have to go to no union hall and get a card or nothing like that. If you was able and available, you had a job.

Q: But that meant you had to go down there and sit and wait until they called you?

A: Well, I mean, that's the way we did do. We didn't have to, but you either do that or starve, I guess because they ain't going to send for you.

Q: And about how much did . . . you said you were on relief then. Who was paying this relief, the state or the county?

A: County and city combined.

Q: How did they pay you, according to the size of your family or according to how much you were working?

A: Yeah, they had allotment for five and six in the family. You get so much. And you work it out, whether they allow you money for what you work.

Q: What kind of work would you be at?

A: They built this lake out here with help of my kind. Sure. Work out orders and things like that and set that shrubbery out there. That was once a farm, altogether farming ground out there where that water is.

Q: I see.

A: And the city took it upon theirsself to clear it off and have a lake to furnish their own water.

Q: And they took the labor of the people who weren't on their regular job or most of it to . . .

A: Support that.

Q: Now of course you didn't have any money to lose during the Depression then?

A: No. Where would I have made it?

Q: Could you get commodities to buy during this time or . . .

A: The Federal Government used to have a truck go around and have commodities on it, potatoes, oranges, apples and like that. And some weeks they had meat. And they'd issue each family so much.

Q: Now, you had a garden then so some of these things you didn't . . .

A: I didn't need but I got them anyhow; somebody else needed them. 'Cause you got something mean you don't shut the door and buy it all; always leave it open. Yes, sir. People who couldn't get that and was needing it as bad as I was . . . When I went down to ask for relief I went down there three days without going in to see anybody 'cause I didn't have the pride to go in. I was to . . . just hated to humble myself. You looked like you were plumb helpless.

Q: Yeah, but you couldn't help yourself because . . .

A: I know that, but that wasn't the way I looked at it. That wasn't the way I looked at it. Don't want to be compelled to nobody.

Q: And that lasted for about two or three years?

A: About two years, little bit over.

Q: Then after that you were able to go back to work on construction?

A: My brother was working on construction for Sangamo Construction Company, and he found a place for me. The brother I mentioned that was name Frank.

Q: Frank. And then you worked on this straight through until you retired?

A: No, I mean, you see, I mean, if you get dissatisfied with one contractor, you don't have to die with him, you can go to somebody else.

Q: Yes, but I mean you worked with construction; you didn't work with Sangamo . . .

A: That's right.

Q: . . . until, but you worked on construction.

A: On construction. I wish my age wasn't so high now. People tell me, say, "Wished we could knock your age off some."

Q: Well, you'd go back to . . .

A: Sure, why not? Made more money on that than I ever did in my life. When I finished up, I was getting about \$7.00 an hour.

Q: That's too bad it couldn't be earlier.

A: Yeah. When we first started in, it was 40¢ an hour; I considered that quite a bit, \$21.60 a week. But you had to work nine hours to get it.

Q: And when you were getting \$7.00 an hour, you worked what, eight hours a day?

A: Yeah, eight hours a day.

Q: Eight hours a day. All right, what then . . . what about this . . . the riot. Do you know . . .

A: I was eight years old.

Q: Eight years old when the riot came.

A: People come to our house that had never been there before. I don't think they've been there since, to get shelter.

Q: Is that right? Which house was this now?

A: Out there on . . .

Q: Out on the farm.

A: Out there on that farm. They walked out there.

Q: And these were black people?

A: Yeah.

Q: What do you remember about it besides people coming out? Did you hear them talk of what was going on downtown?

A: No, I wasn't interested then. I didn't know enough to be interested. I was interested with thinking of Papa going to town every day, have to get different things, I mean, 'cause these people was there and we didn't have it. He went to town every day during that riot.

Q: Did he say anything to you children when he came back about what was going on?

A: Well, we was getting the paper then. We could hear them read if we didn't get the paper ourself. 'Cause older people took the paper first. Kids would get it last.

Q: But you remember even after later years, anybody talking and saying anything about it?

A: Oh, they said . . . different ones said how it started. I don't know. They said they hung a colored fellow over it. I don't know. I wouldn't say how that went by. I know there's a man killed, I mean colored fellow, that was hung, they said he had a white woman. I don't . . .

End of Tape

Q: . . . came to your house, how long did they stay?

A: Oh, we had them people for a solid month.

Q: Really?

A: Sure. Some of them hadn't never been to [a] farm.

Q: Is that right?

A: They slept in the hay loft and anyplace they could get to.

Q: Really?

A: Yeah.

Q: And then after this month, they went back home?

A: Some of them were scared to go back home. Others were more bold and they went and broke the ice, see, they weren't going to be disturbed. My grandfather on my mother's side sat there at Fourteenth and Cedar in the yard with a .30-30 rifle laying across his lap and never did leave.

Q: Is that right?

A: He was a coal miner. His father was a slave and my grandfather on my mother's side was a slave and my grandfather on my father's side was a slave, so they wasn't scared. They'd been through the clinker before.

Q: And nobody bothered them?

A: No, they didn't bother them. And he didn't have to bother nobody, 'cause they seen he meant business. He had a horse and buggy and the only time he'd leave that front yard was when he'd go down to the barn to take care of this horse that he had. We'd go up there, I mean, and take food

and stuff to him and then 'cause he didn't want to leave the place. Ride a horse up there. My mother'd put it in a sack and ride a horse up there and leave it for my grandfather and go on back home. He'd instruct us to go straight home.

Q: Yeah.

A: Out there.

Q: So you'd leave from the house where you were living . . .

A: Yeah, out here at this farm and take it right over there to Fourteenth and Cedar.

Q: Fourteenth and Cedar.

A: 1528 South Fourteenth, where grandfather and grandmother lived.

Q: What were their names?

A: Chandler, Buford Chandler.

Q: Buford?

A: Chandler. His wife, my grandmother's Atisha Chandler.

Q: With what?

A: Atisha.

Q: Atisha.

A: Yeah.

Q: Were these men and women who came to stay out on your farm . . .

A: Out there at the farm?

Q: Yes.

A: Would they do what?

Q: Were they men and women and children?

A: That's right.

Q: Did you know of any or hear of anybody who had to leave town because of the riot, and leave the city I mean?

A: Well, people were in an uproar. They were taken that into their best thought, I mean, what to do. 'Cause they were combing the town.

Q: But they didn't come out that far?

A: No, no. They didn't come to the farm. I guess people that came to the farm, I mean, never left no tracks behind so they could trail them, 'cause they come busting out of the cornfield there while the corn was green in roasting ears and like to have scared my mother to death.

Q: Is that right? Who did, the people?

A: These people that fled their homes in town here. It was awful. Uncle Frank, I mean, Frances Strange's father, I mean, he never rushed out of town. He stayed right over there on Seventeenth Street where he owned a place.

Q: But did . . . wasn't it in the area of Mason and up in Randolph and Madison, Washington, up in that area most?

A: Over there by the Centennial Building, too.

Q: Oh, I see.

A: Yeah. Over there by the Centennial Building.

Q: Did you have . . . did you hear anybody say about how many people got killed?

A: It was in the paper, but I don't recollect it. But there were people killed that they never mentioned, 'cause they were big, big shots.

Q: I see. Now what about church? Did you all go to church on Sunday?

A: Yeah, but we didn't join that riot.

Q: No, I'm not talking . . .

A: Yeah, we belonged . . . my folks' parents belonged to New Hope Calvary Church.

Q: New Hope was way up north?

A: On Eighth and Miller.

Q: Eight and Miller.

A: That's where they both was buried, Eighth and Miller, New Hope Church. My brother Frankie, he was buried up there, too.

Q: And all of you came to church on Sunday?

A: Yeah.

Q: Now, when you went back home, you all had to milk the cows and all that?

A: That's right.

Q: Well, I take it then you all didn't have time to go to movies and all that sort of thing?

A: That's right. If we had time, where'd we have the money?

Q: Now when you were . . . when you came into town, did you eat anyplace downtown other than your home, any of the restaurants or anything like that or try to eat there?

A: No. Most we ate was my grandmother's and my uncle's, Frank Chandler. We didn't go to no restaurant.

Q: Frank Chandler was your uncle. So you really wouldn't know then whether or not they wouldn't serve colored people there?

A: Well, for me, other people I couldn't speak for them, what they . . . but that's the reason I'm so funny now. I don't eat every place where I go.. 'Cause I don't know who fixed it, therefore, I'd rather go a little bit hungry than eat at the wrong place. Wasn't taught to. When Thanksgiving was and they had dinner up at the New Hope Church, I mean, I wouldn't eat hardly unless Mama fixed my plate.

Q: And then you'd have to know who fixed it?

A: Mama knows. She was in the kitchen, she'd know. She knew what we liked and what we didn't like. And I wouldn't want no seconds at no place, 'cause it would appear somebody else's meal. I'm that way yet.

Q: You eat at home, basically, then?

A: Sure. I know where it comes from and who fixed it. I see many a person have ptomaine poisoning. That's from not being clean or mixing up something that's pretty near spoiled to begin with. Don't do that. When you're feeding other people's children, you give them the best.

Q: That's right, that's right.

A: If you can't do that, don't offer them to eat.

Q: I think that's a good point.

A: I know it is. It worked with me, done seventy-four years and if I live to see the 6th day of September, I'll be seventy-five. It ain't failed yet. That's a pretty good record. Dr. Lee, he's my best friend, and a doctor, I mean, he asked me, said, "I know there's an operation whenever I see you stick your head in my place." And I said, "Well, why? Why ask you? Only thing that you know is what I tell you." Why tell him if I can do it myself? He said, "Well, you're infringing on my profession." I said, "You're infringing on my money." (laughter) We're even. You don't need to tell me that I don't know when I'm infringing on him.

Q: He's your doctor, though?

A: Sure. He's a good one. That Doris Robinson is his nurse. She told me said, "Mr. Hubbard," said, "you said you stopped the bleeding yourself. May I ask you how?" I said, "You ought to know, you went to school to stop the bleeding. I wouldn't ask you how to stop it." And finally she said, "Yes, sir, for curiosity sake, would you tell me?" I said, "I guess you want to go tell Dr. Lee." I said, "I'll tell him when I see him." And finally told her. No sooner than I got the last of it off my lips, she went and told him. I know she told him, 'cause she couldn't keep it.

Q: She wanted to know too badly?

A: Sure, she has to start out with a dumb nigger, that's all, 'cause she'd been in school.

Q: Now what did you have, a cut or something?

A: Sure, I had a cut. Said, "How did, you said you stopped the bleeding, how did you do it?" And I said, "That don't come before you, Doris." And she said, "Laying all jokes aside, how did you stop it?" I said, "Soot and cobwebs." That's all I said.

Q: Soot and cobwebs.

A: Sure. It'll do it everytime. There ain't any doubt, either. And when we went in Lee's office and she went in there and said, "He said he stopped the bleeding hisself." He said, "This boy's of the old school. Leave him alone." I knowed it.

Q: But he's from the old school down home there, too.

A: I know he's from down home. I told him once, I said, "Doc, I got the employee and I don't need you. How much do you charge to be on this case? I'll guarantee you that you don't have to do nothing. If you do anything, just hire and fire 'cause all I get to do is pay."

Q: What did he say to that?

A: He said, "I've took so much money off you, I'll do that for a hundred dollars." I didn't expect him to let me off that light, 'cause I needed him. But a hundred dollars was no money to me then 'cause I was making it.

Q: I noticed that your brother Lyman was pastor of Pleasant Grove. Do you remember when he stopped working at the foundry and went into the ministry?

A: . . . he told me said, "Do you think I should work?" I said, "Yeah, anybody should work to earn their living by the sweat of their brow. You're no better than nobody else." I said, "Yeah, I think you ought to work. My father was your father and he never told you not to work."

Q: Now was this when he was . . .

A: When he was living out there at Riverton. Don't never do nothing to keep you from working.

Q: This was when he was pastor in the church.

A: Yeah. Thought he shouldn't work. I ain't seen the color on a person that I don't think should work, not one. Root, hog, or die, that's my belief. If you don't root, you don't get no acorn. Why take care of anybody? Anybody to take care of would be a pimp to my estimation.

Q: But he was pastor in the church, wasn't he?

A: Yeah.

Q: Well, isn't that work?

A: No.

Q: You don't think it's work?

A: No.

Q: Really?

A: No, I don't. If they get dissatisfied, they quit, and you get another, just like you do on a job. If you get dissatisfied, you don't have to stay there, change contracts. If he's dissatisfied with what they're paying him there, get out and get him another church. Don't stay there and be on us and zooming.

Q: But what would you do, Mr. Hubbard, with the thing, with this scripture that says that he who serves at the altar must live . . .

A: Who told him that?

Q: The scriptures.

A: I didn't say his name, but who told you that?

Q: The scriptures.

A: You rely upon all the scriptures, and you'll go hungry. And I can see you're hungry.

Q: Would you help me if I were hungry?

A: Not if you feel you're too good to work, no. Why? I went down there I told you to the City Hall, I mean, to get relief and went there three days and the woman told me, "Mr. Hubbard, I don't feel justified in giving an able-bodied person as you and your wife any relief." I said, "Well, don't do it then." She said, "What do you do?" And I said, "That don't come before you what I do. Just refuse me and we'll . . ."

Q: Did she refuse you?

A: She waited her own good time and then she said, "Do you still think the same." I said, "Yes, just refuse, I don't humble myself to nobody, you

included." I said, "If it wasn't for the poor people on relief, you wouldn't have no job, and I'll bet you're stealing."

Q: You told her that?

A: Sure, I told her that, and when her caseworker came knocking around, I had a brand new Maytag washer setting in the dining room with the cellophane still on the wrapper. My wife said, "You ain't gonna get nothing." I said, "I ain't got nothing so what have I got to protect?" That woman would desire a Maytag washer that cost \$85.00 herself at that time, and the people trust me with it, seeking to trust me with \$6.00 down and \$5.00 a month, why couldn't I have one? I can steal that much. He said it wasn't making him nothing there sitting in the warehouse. He'd just bring me one out. And he did. And I kept the \$6.00 a month, I mean, to pay him down and paid \$5.00 a month until I got the washing machine paid for. And he asked me if there was anything else I needed when I got the washing machine paid for. No, you don't stop with one thing, you go to another. Just like you go to a scripture to tell you that you don't have to work. So scriptures say to earn yours by the sweat of your brow.

Q: That's correct.

A: Why you skip then?

Q: Well, there are various kinds of work, though, Mr. Hubbard. You see . . .

A: You mean, you don't want to put a shovel in your hand?

Q: Oh, no, if I had to do that, I would do that.

A: I'd just as soon see you with a shovel in your hand as anybody.

Q: What did you say?

A: I say I'd just soon [see] you or any other minister with a shovel in his hand as anybody else.

Q: Yes, well, if I had to do it, I'd do it, but then . . .

A: I can't do things to prohibit him from getting a shovel in his hand. I can't see it.

Q: Well, if it's become a necessity, yes.

A: Anytime you are living, is a necessity to have a living.

Q: Right.

A: Regardless of how you get it.

Q: Right. I agree with you, but the thing is this, that if a person is pastor in a place, a church, and if he's doing his job that he has to go to the hospital and he has to counsel people and he has to see that things go

on at the church and he has to do some studying and all these sort of things, this takes up a lot of time.

A: I know, but he knew that before he took the job.

Q: That's right.

A: So if he didn't have money to work, why did he take up the ministry?

Q: Who's supposed to do the ministry, Mr. Hubbard?

A: Huh?

Q: In your thinking, who's supposed to . . .

A: You always tell me that God sends the people. It don't look like that God sends very many.

Q: But you're right because there are many, many called but few chosen.

A: That's right, and it'd be less the way they're carrying on.

Q: I agree with you, I agree with you.

A: Be less.

Q: See everybody who calls themselves a minister isn't really . . .

A: God sent. I mean God didn't send nobody. They took it upon theirself.

Q: Some of them.

A: Most of them.

Q: Well, there's still some . . .

A: 'Cause why didn't my brother want to go to the Army to be a man in the Army to conduct ministering? 'Cause he didn't have to work, that's why.

Q: Chaplain?

A: Chaplain, is what he wanted to be.

Q: But, Mr. Hubbard, there are a lot of people who need guidance and need counseling and a man like you could give a lot of counsel a lot of younger men.

A: I know.

Q: And so there are men who did counsel some of these soldiers out there, they are so frightened, dreadful, and need encouragement. So somebody has to do it.

A: I know. And help to pay you to do it.

Q: Yes, yes.

A: I can't. No, what for? I can counsel as well as you can.

Q: Well, in some areas.

A: 'Cause you got ministering, you want somebody to pay for your tuition, I know.

Q: Well, I had to pay.

A: It's nothing to me. I didn't tell you to go ahead.

Q: That's correct.

A: And I won't tell you to stop.

Q: Right.

A: So if you make out with it it's all right, and if you don't it's all right.

Q: But you will offer a prayer for me, though?

A: Yeah. Do you offer a prayer for somebody else besides yourself?

Q: Oh, yes.

A: Once in a while.

Q: Every day.

A: Once in a while.

Q: Every day.

A: Lyman asked me, said, I mean, "You look after my place. I got to go away to some meeting." How he'd know that I had time to look after his place? He had children and he couldn't trust them, but he could trust me.

Q: Well, that's what a brother's for.

A: He didn't pay me for it, like he got paid for going away to carry on a meeting somewhere. He didn't pay me for it. I know, I know. He tried to be slick, but he got six feet same as I will. And he's look up at the roots today.

Q: Yeah.

A: No, I don't feel sorry for him. Why? 'Cause he didn't feel sorry for me, told me, "Do you think I should work?" And I was stepping on that hot asphalt every day making money and him mooching me. No, he ain't right.

Anybody carry the shoulders of being a moocher ain't right. They lack something. And they ain't gonna find it in the scripture. No, they won't find it in the scripture. I know that.

Q: And so I'm taking it then you are saying that a person who gives his full time into the ministry of pastoring is not working?

A: No.

Q: You don't consider that work?

A: No, no.

Q: What about a school teacher? You consider that work?

A: Well, he get, I mean, a diploma and give you a diploma, what do you give I mean for people, I mean, that you say, I mean, that you are qualified to oversee.

Q: What did you say?

A: What do you give? I mean, like a student or a member of your church is qualified. You don't give them a word of thanks. I know that 'cause I worked there at Pleasant Grove Church on programs and everything like that, and didn't even get a word of thanks, so I know.

Q: Yes, but your thanks is in heaven.

A: I don't know. I should get it here on earth.

Q: Yeah.

A: I don't know that I'm going to see you there.

Q: No.

A: And you don't know that you're gonna see me.

Q: That's correct. But then there's one person you're sure that you will see there.

A: I'll see God.

Q: That's right. And if you deserve it, He's going to give it to you and that's what's important there. Okay. Now let's get back on this, and this here. On your job, or the places that you have been, have you come up against much discrimination?

A: Yes.

Q: What . . .

A: I've had white people that'd rather work for me when I was a foreman getting that \$7.00 an hour than they would for their own race, 'cause they

believe that I'd pitch in and show them what to do and not leave them standing there not knowing how to go at it, to make it so's the boss wouldn't fire them. And when I went into this labor, I took an oath that I wouldn't work against a brother, and that's what the contractor wants you to do. And I told them, "I didn't raise my hand to the congregation there at our union hall, I raised my hand to the Almighty that I wouldn't do nothing against a brother to cause him not to have a living, regardless of what he'd done there. That's more than what you'll say." I said, I mean, "Just like a man comes here with a big head on him, you're liable to have the big head and nobody know it, 'cause you'll have blue Monday and I know your blue Monday is 'cause you don't come on the job when you got a hangover." He said, "Bill, how do you figure? Who told you that?" I said, "I can figure you out by looking at you. If you was, I mean, a man of God, would you give a person a day's work if they hadn't sweat from their brow like you thought they ought to?" I'd say, "No, you'd want blood from everybody that works for you. I know it. I worked for you thirteen years for nothing, just to learn." And you know, now they want me to come over and visit them.

Q: What company was this?

A: Sankey Brothers.

Q: Sankey Brothers.

A: Yeah. I worked for Sangamo, Sankey and I also worked for Broughton.

Q: For whom?

A: Broughton. Bill Broughton. I don't believe . . . I know what size, and I think you do, too, what size collar you'd wear. I don't have to look down your collar to tell whether you doing anything. I don't have to stand . . . run up and down . . . I can put you to do so much work and then I can come back at your place where your work and tell whether you've been working or loafing.

Q: And that's the kind of foreman you . . .

A: I was. I qualified before they give me it.

Q: How long did you work before they made you foreman?

A: Oh, good long while. I had to be the last, but they found out they'd given the foremanship to the wrong people. They wouldn't stay on the job, so if a man got hurt, he couldn't even tell how it was from the word "go." And you'd make them applications out, I mean, whatever happened or what time it happened or how serious it was or whose fault. And they'd give me that credit. Said, "Bill, I never come to a job but what you ain't there." I said, "No, when you pay me \$7.00 an hour, you ain't paying me \$7.00 an hour to be in the ten-cents store." Said, "I hardly ever go in the dime store, I mean, when I ain't working for you, 'cause they ain't got nothing; bunch of women." I said, "Anybody that would hang around the dime store don't mean much. I seen superintendents hanging in the dime store; you couldn't find them at the office or call them or you couldn't call up no job where

you might catch them, 'cause they'll be down at the dime store." Man said, "How did you know so much? How do you know?" I said, "I know where you park your car and everything, but I don't know how to get hold of you."

And I said, "Another thing, I worked for you when you was out here at the Illini Golf Club, I mean and you were standing under a big umbrella and your father was parading up and down Chatham Road there trying to see you and you had a boy holding an umbrella over you so he couldn't detect who you were." I said, "Did you?" He said, "Bill, you're digging too close. Lord!" I said, "Well, your old man's riding me, I gotta ride somebody." He said, "You know where them boys are at, don't you?" I said, "No, I don't, Mr. Sankey." And if them boys were in the grave, there's a lot he could hurt him. But I wouldn't squeal on nobody. No, what for? I don't get no credit of it. They wouldn't be asking me to come over there and visit with them if I'd squealed on them. They wouldn't say very much nice words to me for me adding two and three hours on my day's pay for taking that rap. I know that. I told them, "You know this gonna cost you." He said, "What do you mean, Bill?" I said, "About three hours today and it ain't gonna be straight time, it's gonna be overtime." He said, "Don't tell or nothing."

So he go on back there and keep watching for the old man to come by and they could tell his car when it was a block and a half away. And if he'd stop and say anything to me, no sooner than he went on they'd come over there and ask what'd the old man so and so say? I wouldn't tell them what he said. Why?

Q: Now . . .

A: They was making it possible for me to have money. If it was hush money or what not.

Q: What . . . you say that people that they had gotten to be foreman, they found out that they weren't foremen so you were passed over sometimes?

A: Yes, several times, several times. Not only sometimes, several times. Once they had a job that we'd done out here on the road going to Riverton and they come up, I mean, the timekeeper lost his papers for what the material was used on and how many trucks and how many men, this, that, and the other, and how large the job was, and one evening I come here setting in the drive-way. Bob Sankey and his father was in that station wagon. He said, "Bill, they tell me that you've got a record of that, have you?" I said, "Why, ain't you?" He said, "Yeah, but we lost ours." I said, "No fault of mine."

Q: Did you have a record?

A: Sure.

Q: Did you give it to them?

A: I didn't give it to that Bob, I give it to his father.

Q: Oh, Bob was the son?

A: His son. 'Cause he'd kept me from getting a raise two or three different times. I wouldn't give him the time to die.

Q: What did he do?

A: What?

Q: Bob, to stop you from getting the raise?

A: Why, he said if, I mean, what was I able to do more than any other laborer? I said, "Carry responsibility." Whenever you're able to carry responsibility, you're worth more money. And I said, "You held me down and I went over your head." And old man Sankey said, "Yeah, he was up there pitching in my office." I said, "Yeah, I'd been still there if I hadn't got a raise." You don't cause they tell you no, you don't stop at the kids. You know who's the proprietor there, the foundation of the thing.

Q: That's right.

A: And you talk to the foundation and you'll get some consideration. And old man Sankey said, "Another thing I like about you, Bill," he said that sitting right there in that drive--he said, "My wife said that you waxed the stairway better than anybody she'd every had." I said, "Well, you trying to hand it that you're gonna send me back over there again? I'll go home." No, I don't . . . . I said, "You don't wax people's house, I mean, for the same wages you work on construction. Don't you think I know that?" He said, "Would you rather go home?" I said, "Yeah." He didn't send me over there when it was raining, neither, no more.

Q: Now this is what they would do sometimes?

A: Yeah, to keep you from going home, and let you get a full week. Send you over to his house and let his wife work you. Why would I want to work under her? I didn't hire to her. No. I told him, "I didn't hire to your wife, I hired to you. And if I'd knowed it was gonna be run by a woman, I wouldn't have wanted the job." No. Why? A woman never gets tired of pouring work on you.

Q: Well, but suppose she was the boss of the construction company?

A: She wasn't.

Q: Uh-huh. But if she was?

A: She had a little bit of money in it, but she got an allowance. I learned that, see. And she'd have me working over there and making him pay for it and wouldn't pay for it out of her allowance.

Q: But they would pay the same rate?

A: When she'd have to pay, I got more, when they paid through the . . .

Q: The company.

A: . . . the company, I only got laborer's wages.

Q: I see.

A: I knowed to differ, and she tried to show me that it was no difference. I told her, "Mrs. Sankey, you can tell that to somebody else. I know different." I said, "If I worked for you, I mean, you're gonna pay me your own self. I don't want it through the company."

Q: And, of course, she didn't want to do that?

A: She didn't want to do that, but she said, "I'll talk to the old man about that." She talked to Mr. Sankey. He said, "Bill, my wife said you didn't want to work for her no more." I said, "No, not when you have to pay me, 'cause you hold my wages down. Working for the same pay I'd get, if I was working out on the job somewhere, but when I hire to her, it's a different story." He said, "You're getting awfully independent." I said, "I was born that way. Ornerly." Whenever you come up from the way you was born, you can do anything.

Q: So you were foreman then actually under Sankey.

A: That's right.

Q: And how long did you work as foreman?

A: Thirteen years. I was there about five years as just common labor, and the rest of the time I was foreman.

Q: What did they pay you as a common laborer?

A: I got six dollars an hour.

Q: What did they pay you as a foreman?

A: Seven dollars and fifty cents at last, but seven dollars to start with. When I raised a lot of disturbance up there in that main office, then's when I got fifty cents on an hour, 'cause I attracted his timekeeper and she come to the door, see who was talking to the old man so straight.

Q: Now, about how many people you had working under you?

A: There were seven or eight. Lots of times they'd send another man's crew over to me to keep from sending them home, and they knowed I'd get them to do something. It might not amount to a whole lot, but it'd be something, it'd be something. Keep them from going home or keep them from having a short week. Gene Lasley used to be a foreman over there.

Q: Oh, is that right?

A: Yeah, Gene's worked for me, and I've worked for Gene, when he had something that he didn't know about, 'cause I was working in construction long time before Gene. A long time.

Q: What chiefly did Sankey or Broughton do, blacktopping and things like that?

A: Yeah, and they did concrete work and wrecking. Yeah, they did contract working, wrecking.

Q: As foreman, you weren't called upon to make any estimates or anything? That was Mr. Sankey's job, wasn't it?

A: He had a superintendent and all he was supposed to do was go around and measure up jobs and go back and fix out a bid on them. And present it to whoever . . .

Q: To the owner.

A: And then you see, they'd come and ask you, "Do you think you can come under that? There's somebody bidding against us awful strong, we've got to cut our figures." I said, his name was Johnny Mayfriend, I said, "Johnny, the work can be done in less time than you estimate. That's the only way you can get that job, it can be done in less time than you estimate." He said, "Well, you know, I don't know." I said, "You're paid to know." I said, "Well, how'd you get that superintendent's job, as a figurehead? That's all you are." He didn't like for me to talk to him that way, 'cause he knowed I knowed more than he did.

Q: Do you think if you weren't a black person, that you would have been improved up to the superintendent?

A: What I put in an application for since I've been retired: Inspector on the streets; don't do nothing, just see that the other people do it. But they haven't never had a black inspector, and it don't set so well with them. 'Cause inspectors is supposed to be right and when it comes up any other way, he's liable to lose his job. Not I mean with Sankey, but lose his job if he's working for the county or state or what not. Man asked me, said, "Bill, you know more than a whole lot of these people down there's forgotten, don't you?" I said, "Don't wake them up, don't wake them up. I ain't suffering. Why wake them up? Let them sleep on." He said, "Why? You might as well have some of that money." I said, "Yeah, and give up my social security. And then they get me off social security and then find some fault with my work. You ain't gonna trick me, I'm too old a dog to be tricked. No, I'm too old a dog to be tricked."

My brother, Frankie, poor boy's dead, been dead about twenty-three or twenty-four years. He worked for a straight salary, so much. I never would work for no contractor at a straight salary, rain or shine, getting paid. But they'd always have something for you to do that didn't make you nothing. I told them if I didn't work but a half an hour a day, I was gonna get union wages. Don't be no tool, use your own tools. And he said, "Bill, how come you haul these tools in your truck?" I said, "Are they yours? Did you get a bill for them? I went to Black's Hardware and got them."

One evening I was over there on the bypass going to the dam out there, and he said, "What are you trying to do, bruise in some overtime?" I said, "I

picked up eight round-point shovels right after dinner." And I said, "Your so-called superintendent worked the men up to 4:30 and they threw the tools down where they was working; didn't even clean them or nothing. I put them on the truck, but if you don't want to pay me for gathering up these, I'll throw them off." I said, "Don't make no . . . I ain't got a nickel in them; I can throw them off." Old man Sankey said, "Is that the way you feel about it?" I said, "Yeah, you don't seem to be satisfied and neither am I." If he don't want me protecting some of his money and you give him the bill what them six round-point shovel--no, they was eight round-point shovels. He said, "They done raised on it?" I said, "You can read." He said, "Bill, you take that truck to your house tonight, will you?" I said, "What for? I ain't got no insurance for that truck to sit in my driveway, and if it burned my house down, all this fuel and stuff on there," I said, "what part are you gonna cover? I know you ain't gonna give nothing and I ain't gonna set it in my driveway."

Q: What did he say?

A: I said, "I'm gonna unlock that gate and pull that truck in the yard over there and lock the gate back up and get in my vehicle and go on home." He said, "Bill, I'll never say nothing more to you about picking up tools." I said, "It don't make no difference whether you do or don't, 'cause they're not mine. I ain't got a nickel in them." But he really did eat that superintendent out, 'cause you're supposed to allow the men five minutes to put their tools, clean them and put them away and he didn't.

Q: He didn't do it.

A: He said, "The reason he got canned, I didn't want you to hold it against yourself."

Q: The superintendent?

A: Yeah. You just don't do these things without a cause. Said I was too much of a union man. I said, "No. Your old man signed a book. I got a book of what he's supposed to do and I say when he don't come up to that, I'm gonna tell you." 'Cause one of his sons when they settled the contract, I mean, what to increase in wages is and all that, he put his book in . . . his name in this union book and naturally, me being foreman . . . It don't make no difference to me whether he considers me anything or not, I can get a living when they can. I get over two hundred dollars a month social security and so much from that local now. And I ain't paralyzed; I can work if I want to. You have to separate all that.

Q: Social Security.

A: Yeah. If you happen to run over, you gotta pay interest or get cut off.

Q: Yeah. What was the name of the father Sankey?

A: John Sankey.

Q: John. Okay. After you left there, did you go work for Broughton?

A: No.

Q: Or you worked for Broughton first?

A: Yeah. 'Cause I went from Sangamo to Sankey and then from . . .

Q: Sankey.

A: From Sankey to Broughton, Bill Broughton.

End of Tape One

A: But they learnt more out there at Hazel Dell in that one room than they do in Iles School, because they went from the Primer up, learning your A,B,C's. There's kids going over here now and graduate can't say their A,B,C's.

Q: That's right, that's right.

A: I know. I asked my granddaughter Nina, "Cookie, can you say your times table?" [She said,] "I wasn't learnt; I wasn't taught."

Q: What grade were they in?

A: They graduated from Iles School.

Q: From Iles School. That's the sixth grade.

A: And then she went to Feitsan . . . .

Q: Fifth grade. My goodness.

A: I said, "Cookie, I thought you was intelligent." And she looked at me just as sad. I said, "I give you credit as knowing more than what you really do." Just throw it down there. I'll put it in the wastebasket.

Q: Yes, I'll put it in my bag. [They must be referring to paper since it sounds as though some paper has been crumpled.] Now, and so then if you really weren't a colored person, you really could have no doubt been a superintendent before you retired?

A: Sure. That's the reason I applied for this here job of being inspector.

Q: With the City?

A: No, with the County.

Q: With the County.

A: For the highways.

Q: What happened to it? They didn't respond?

A: Our precinct committeeman said that the Governor ain't put on no Democrats yet. I told them, "Well, maybe he will further down the line." He said he's put on more women than he has men, but he said your name's still up there. He ain't never discarded it.

Q: How long has your application been in?

A: About a year and a half.

Q: Under this present Govenor?

A: Yeah. Yeah, I should say so.

Q: What about in some of these other jobs, did you meet discrimination on them, too?

A: Well, the most discrimination that I come in contact with is 'cause the superintendent will give you equal as the man that you're working with. They want you to be under them. I mean, the superintendent even now wants you to have to ask him to demonstrate how to do this and how to do that. And when you pick up a shovel or a rake or anything like that and go ahead without him taking the rake and thing and setting the example, they don't like it. 'Cause my brother Frankie, he's dead and in his grave and has been for twenty-three or twenty-four years, he said that he was only gonna teach I and this other white fellow to learn to rake, for us to not to teach nobody. 'Cause he said, "You'll get the rough end of the stick. Undermine you for your job." And they will.

Q: And you encountered much of that?

A: That's right. I went right off of relief, WPA [Work Projects Administration], and I went to work at that. And you know how long ago that's been?

Q: Yeah.

A: It's been over thirty years, you know that, don't you?

Q: Yeah, it's closer to forty.

A: I should say so, I should say so. I'm just giving you a rough estimate, and I know it's a long time, 'cause I've walked to work, I mean from right out here at this house, plumb out there to Sangamo Construction Company out on North MacArthur.

Q: Is that right?

A: Didn't have no transportation and no money. Soon as I got on my feet, I got me some transportation, but I walked 'cause the bus wouldn't put me there so that I could catch my brother to go out to Riverton. Or even when we're working down in Jacksonville. I wouldn't have asked him to come by

here. He'd bring me by in the evening, but I didn't ask him to come in the morning. I'd go out there myself, catch him out there.

Q: Out where?

A: Out there at the Sangamo yard.

Q: Is that right?

A: On North MacArthur, sure.

Q: And he was coming from Riverton?

A: He's was coming from out here south of the Wilson Tire Factory.

Q: Well, that wasn't too far out of his way for him to swing around here and get you.

A: I know, but he had to get there, I mean, get material and everything to take to these jobs. He had a truck of Sankey's, and I knowed it, that people was trying to get his job, and if he'd take it upon hisself to make transportation for me, they'd be somebody else squeal on him. I wouldn't have anybody squeal on him, even you. I knowed the fact, I wouldn't have nobody squeal on him. That's the reason I ain't working under Leon, Leon wants you to squeal.

Q: Yeah, you worked for him for some time.

A: A long time. And he asked me, he said, "You're unionism." I said, "I knowed this before I ever knowed there was such a thing as a union. You'd have been better off if you'd had the heading of a union. You'd been better off also if you'd had a father when you were twenty-one years old to tell you the necessary things to get along in life. Your mother did all she could for you, and I realized that, but you didn't be graduate for a father." I said, "When your father set you down when you become twenty-one years old and tells you the things that you have to expect in life that does more good for you than another year of school." And I said, "You ain't had that." He said, "No comment." I said, "The truth, that's what it is. It kills you. I don't mind seeing you die." I told him that and he said, "You wanting to go home?" I said, "I got a home to go to."

Q: And you left?

A: Sure, sure, why not?

Q: Because you told the truth; that's the truth.

A: I said, "If you're setting around a table and having a discussion, and then when you become twenty-one years old your father sets you down and tells you the ways of life and what to expect in life, it's a give and take. But all the parts that you learnt was to take." He said, "Don't talk to me before my customers." I said, "Well, you brought the subject up. Whenever it gets so that I can't talk to you, it's time for me to leave, 'cause who are you?" I said, "If it wasn't for you belongin to an

order or something like that of Frontiers, you wouldn't have no friends. I see that. And they didn't tell me they're not your friends."

Q: Yes.

A: I said, I mean he said, "Bill, you've brought me some customers since you started working here." I said, "Well, I know how to treat the people. That's one thing that you're short of." But I said, "Just like you tell me to take my niece's car inside and put on whatever you think is needed. I told you if you do it'll be over my dead body." And I meant that. I said, "You ain't gonna get her car on the inside, 'cause you'd think to take off things that are working to put some of your things on to get a sale." I said, "That's the reason you don't sell me nothing but gasoline."

Q: Yeah, that's right. I see.

A: "I know you." He said, "Don't talk to me that way." I said, "Well, who are you?" I didn't say it in that sort of manner, but I said it in an earlier manner because he made me mad right at the spur of the moment. Leon knows . . . he accused the help up there of stealing the candy. I said, "Why, I don't eat that stuff. If you want a good piece of candy, you come down to my house and I'll look in the ice box and offer you some candy that's candy." I said, "That's nothing but trash that you're selling. You couldn't sell it to nobody else but them school kids." I told him, "No, you've got the wrong opinion of me. Unionism didn't learn me this." I said, "Now folks, instead of talking things about Dick, Tom, or Harry, or see what they're paid or whatnot, my folks'll tell you something to help build." I said, "You haven't had that." That fellow that works down there, Willie Hill, said, "He don't like for you to talk," and I said, "I know it. I know it, 'cause he's so crooked he couldn't get in a . . ." I told him right to his teeth. I said, "Leon, you're so crooked, you . . . you got a good wife and as far as I know about your sister-in-law, she's all right. But you ain't nothing." 'Cause he asked me to haul his wife down to Doctor Young, the foot doctor, and old Dr. Lee, there, and I said, "Mrs. Stewart, I ain't got no money extended on my insurance to haul passengers." She said, "Don't you worry, Mr. Hubbard, if you have an accident hauling me and my sister over to this place over here, we'll pay for the damages." I said, "Well, Mrs. Stewart, you're a sure-enough woman, but I'm sorry I can't say that about your husband."

Q: Is that right?

A: Sure. I don't . . . from biting my tongue 'cause I know that's all he can do. That's all he can do. And one day I wanted to go up to Sykes to get a haircut, and it was raining, and I wasn't going to come home to dinner. I was gonna just go up there and get . . . I said, "Leon, can I use the truck to drive up there Monroe Street where Sykes is barbering?" He said, "Call your wife." And here I'd been hauling his wife and sister-in-law. I told him that's all right. That's all right. I didn't know whether my wife would be in shape to get in that car and come up there to take me 'cause she had that nervous attack and I wasn't gonna disturb her. And if she'd get out and have an accident he wouldn't give me nothing to replace my car, the cheap . . . And so I got out and walked. I told him, "I'm neither sugar nor salt; I won't melt." And he seen I didn't like

that. His wife must have told him a night or two after that that I didn't have any insurance to go out to . . . to haul passengers, I said whenever you're hauling passengers, you've got to have insurance to cover them.

Q: That's right.

A: I said, "You think I don't know it? I went out there to Lamphier and picked up your sister-in-law and never thought nothing of it," 'cause she said, "You're more prompt than Leon when he's supposed to . . ." I said, "Leon's and times are rolling on. He don't watch nothing but Leon." She said, "Thank you Mr. Hubbard, could I pay you?" I said, "No, I'm bruising in time with Leon, and he's paying and don't know."

He thought he was too good to shovel snow and it was raining and freezing on you up there and had them two boys out there and he said, "You'll help me a little bit longer, won't you?" I said, "You do. You do. They take mules and horses out of weather, and I ain't neither one. My papa wouldn't let a horse stay out in the rain for nothing, 'cause they have aches and pains just like you and I and get stiff and they can't walk."

Q: Yeah.

A: And Leon said, "He sure got a lot of union in him." I said, "No, I just got too much facts for you." I said, "All this ain't unionism. I've talked before crowds and I wasn't never set down." I said, "I knowed when you were putting a man's tires on, changing his tires on the truck here, the man said that you give him one price over the telephone and when you got the tires changed, you raised the price, and he said you cut yourself off from a lot of business." He said, "I guess I did hurt myself." I said, "Don't guess, I thought you knowed. The man said he wouldn't be back." He'd just as soon a white elephant walked through there knocking us over for that man to tell him that, before us. That's the reason Leon, he's got people he'd let have gas when that there tight time was with gas, and the men that were working there all they could get is four or five gallons, and I told him I didn't want any just as same as them people that he had . . . To go to show you, I said, "You're only gonna let me have four gallons, I'll go fill my tank up with some and have the people make out a slip," so I can show it to him how much I got.

Q: I think he lost a good worker when he lost you.

A: A lady told me, Dr. Lee's wife, said, "My car ain't been serviced since you did it." I said, "Why, Mrs. Lee?" [She] said, "They got a young man out there that neglects so much." And one day Dr. Lee came up there and he couldn't --we get them cold days--and he couldn't get it to operate, and he was late. He said, "What I owe?" I said, "I'm just working." Mrs. Lee told me, said, "Doctor said that you know more about how to operate than Leon does, 'cause he said you'd brought him through places that he didn't know how to start." Of course, Dr. Lee was mad. Boy, did he--I can tell he's pretty mad but he wasn't mad at nothing that happened there. He's mad because he couldn't get his windshield wipers to work in a brand new car. Who wouldn't [be]?

Q: That's right.

A: When I got it working, he really rejoiced.

Q: Did you . . . I notice your church up there that was built, you did some work on it?

A: Yeah, I did quite a bit. I didn't do it all. I didn't charge them nothing. Didn't charge them nothing. They asked me, "How could you tell where that cornerstone should be? I know you ain't got no blueprint." I said, "No, I passed by it." Anytime that you count the courses of brick from the level up, you can tell where the cornerstone is supposed to be, and sure enough that brick mason come around and marked right over my pencil mark that I put there.

Q: Is that right?

A: [They] said, "This man said that that cornerstone went here." I worked on the New Orpheum Theater when it was built here and that city jail that's about ready to be tore down over there, worked all through that, and then worked down here at Seventh and Cook at the Townhouse. Shoot, I worked too many buildings here, I ain't . . . trusted to do, no. Won't never forget it, 'cause it's each and everyday the same thing. When you go to school every day like you say you did, to let them know that you're worth something ministering, maybe you could see it, but I can't.

Q: Yeah, it's a different kind . . . see, but . . .

A: Qualifying.

Q: And this is what really qualified you for what you are doing that you . . .

A: Thought it out and had something different.

Q: . . . put yourself into and did it.

A: Yeah. 'Cause a man was putting in a wall down there, he was a plumber, and he said, "Hubbard, how will we do to make this here so that we know this will stand up?" He was going to put a footing underneath the pipe. I said, "Don't you know?" I said, "You must be [an] apprentice." He said, "Why?" I said, "Any simpleton would know what to do in a case of that sort. Dig out underneath like that and widen the footing at the bottom and then bring it back to its natural thickness and set it all like that and it can't creak." He said, "I'm going to see the old man if he won't put you on to stay." I said, "I don't want it, 'cause all I'll get to do is dig it where other people failed to dig." That's fine. There was a man working for us up there, I mean, on Fifth Street where Warner Reel is selling Reel trucks, and a man was a plumber there, and every day at 11:30 he said he had to go get him a Falstaff sandwich. Yeah. Went off at 11:30 to get a Falstaff and come back at 12:30 just the same as he'd just been to dinner. I said, "You ain't had that. You don't know that that exists, do you?" My brother, Frankie, poor boy, he said, "Well, I know what time it is." I said, "Why?" He said, "'Cause that plumber's took off. Get him a . . . "

Q: Falstaff sandwich.

A: Of course, I didn't get to do that. I didn't have no money. I would have liked the Falstaff, didn't have the money. Money keeps you from doing a lot of things. Most of them.

Q: Did any of your . . . you say you had three children?

A: Yeah.

Q: Were they girls and boys or what?

A: All boys.

Q: All boys. Did any of them go into construction business?

A: My baby boy worked on construction some. He worked for Sangamo Construction a good while. He could have worked on there. He just got in with the wrong bunch and they led him to drink. He'd rather drink than to work. I got a son that's trying to be a minister. But I don't advocate that.

Q: Where is he now?

A: Cleveland, Ohio.

Q: What is his name?

A: William, Jr.

Q: William, Jr. What's your other son's name?

A: Victor Dean Hubbard.

Q: And the other one?

A: I told you, Robert Porter was my stepson.

Q: Oh, yes, yes. Now where . . . what's Victor doing now?

A: He was in a government hospital up here at Danville. He ain't there no more 'cause he was down here about three months ago. He told me that he was leaving up there. I don't know whether he went to Detroit or where he went. He never did write. I never did learn where he went. All I know when I asked . . . we heard, I mean, he was in Danville, whether he's there yet or not I don't know. If he don't think enough of home to write and let us know his whereabouts, ain't no use of me worrying.

Q: Yeah, that's right. That's right.

A: Well, I did what I could for him. Gonna let somebody else be with him to do what they want to do, and he didn't have resistance. I can't help it.

Q: Have you done much traveling?

A: I lived in Michigan, Jackson, Michigan, three years and a half. I've been to Denver, Colorado.

Q: All right. Let me ask you this now. How and where did you meet your wife?

A: [At] 2016 East Stewart.

Q: Oh.

A: Out here in Springfield. I wish I hadn't met her.

Q: How come?

A: 'Cause I said it.

Q: But what's the reason behind it? I'm asking.

A: Do you want to record that, too?

Q: Well, if you don't want to . . .

A: I don't ask you where'd you met your wife 'cause it's none of my business.

Q: Well, this is just a part of . . . I mean, if you don't want that on your thing. I mean that . . .

A: It's washed up.

Q: How long you been married?

A: Forty-eight years.

Q: Forty-eight years. Would you have any word of advice for the young man?

A: No, I . . . all I want is just get free. They can pick out what they want to, how they want to live. But the young people ain't gonna listen to you no how 'cause mine ain't listened to me. And I know that. Ain't no outing for them, and I ain't gonna try to build up one.

Q: How would you compare the . . . I mean I know there's a lot of difference between teenage and young people today than when you were coming up. What would you think is the basic difference, why they are like they are today?

A: 'Cause they got too much range. Their parents don't know where they're at at no time. And they come to Sunday School and they won't listen to the teacher and they won't be still so that the children that would be interested in what you're trying to teach them, they won't let them listen. 'Cause I'm a Sunday School teacher up here at Pleasant Grove, and I have been for some little bit, and I asked this Harry Hale, who's the superintendent, when he got me to take that class down there in the basement, and I asked him, "When did you qualify?" Harry Hale, he told me, "Yesterday." And I asked some of the school teachers, Sunday school teachers, that were down there when I went down there, when would I know whether I qualified? I said, "Who do you ask?" My brother was minister there. I asked him and he didn't tell me. So I don't know when you qualify. I don't know when you

qualify. I know there's quite a bit to do. Don't look like it's gonna be all done, 'cause you can't hardly get people to teach Sunday School.

Q: Right.

A: If a teacher . . . if parents don't teach their kids, they won't believe nothing that you tell them that happened in Sunday School. That's the only way you can get down to a founder of anything is consult their people, 'cause the kid ain't the fault of him being the condition he is. He just ain't been raised to know. They got too many babysitters, 'cause my mother raised eight and didn't have, I mean, more than a woman to do the cooking and ironing like that, I mean, when she was down sick and then finally Papa decided he couldn't afford that. That's the reason we learnt to cook. Money matters.

Q: Yeah.

A: And I'm glad things was like they is, not that I didn't think my mother was worth having somebody to wait on her, but it give me experience. Make homemade bread or anything, cakes, pies, or anything. Wash dishes, wash clothes, I can do anything, sweep, clean and scrub. I ain't too good to do that. You ask a person about that now and you're talking Latin. I asked a kid, I mean, "Why didn't you comb your hair this morning?" He said, "How can you tell if I didn't comb my hair?" In Sunday School.

Q: Oh.

A: I said, "Anybody knows when your hair's combed. You know when it's combed and when it ain't. Your face ain't been washed 'cause there's matter in the corner of your eyes." He got fresh and I just left him alone. He got fresh, awful fresh. My wife said I didn't have the education to be a Sunday School teacher. I said, "Maybe you've been better off if you'd took some of that, instead of learning the things that you did do. She used to sing in the choir. You could tell people that tried to do something in life whether they succeeded or not. That's right.

Q: That's right.

A: My folks are unionism where nobody else told them that. I seen that myself.

Q: Right.

A: You don't make altogether a failure. Some things that you do is all right.

Q: That's right.

A: I heard our pastor talk, I mean, I believe he's all right 'cause he told me, "I'm gonna be away. I'm going on the 14th to a teachers' meeting." I said, "You know one thing, Reverend? You said anybody have anything to say. Yes, I got a comment on it." I said, "No, one monkey runs this show. They usually have two monkeys to an act, and they'll try the monkey that was prepared for the act and if he don't do what they want him to do, they

go get another one out of the cage and if he don't do it, then they take him back and throw him in and out of the act. We won't miss you."

Q: Is that right?

A: That's right. That applies to anybody. The show will not go down 'cause one monkey don't perform. I told old man Sankey that. He said, "What do you mean, Bill?" I said, "If a man gets too hot, give him a chance, let him go to the shade and if he don't come back in a length of time, go over there and see how serious he is and then if ain't so that he can come back, send him home. Don't fire him 'cause the man may sure-enough be sick." I said, "You want me to have the credit of the know-how to fire. I've raised my right hand and I wouldn't see nobody fired." I mean it. I said, "That goes for any contractor, not only you. No, you're supposed to give a dog shelter. My father always had a dog, it was a German Shepherd, and he'd put it out on them hogs out there [that] he butchered out there on a gambling pole in the yard. You know, he never put nobody out there to keep the people away from them hogs. Just throwed down a pallet there by that . . . pretty close to that there scaffold, and that dog laid out there and watched that stuff, wouldn't let nobody, cat or nobody else. The next morning my father'd go out there and cut that dog off a good piece of meat that we could eat ourselves, and give it to him. Wasn't scared of nobody taking nothing. Now you'd put it out there, they'd take you, dog and all. If you don't believe it, hang something out.

Q: They will; they will.

A: A man told me, "I hear you talking and I believe you're all wet." I said, "You come down to my home and I'll make an example out of you." You know he shut up. I said, "I ain't gonna come to your house and say what I'll do. I ain't coming to your house with the intention of taking anything. You come to my house with the intention of taking anything, they'll have to take you. 'Cause I believe in standing up for your rights. If you don't think, you come down there and show some signs, and I'll show you better than I can tell you."

Q: He didn't come, did he?

A: No, he didn't come. Why? I don't want to kill nobody, but I'll fix him so he can't walk. I know how to do that. He always remembers me when he sees me, 'cause you don't monkey with other peoples' children. Don't chastise them. I told our pastor that. I said, "You're getting up pretty rough with them kids, and people'll have your hide. 'Cause they don't allow the principal at school to chastise their child, now how come the pastor? You're doing it on your free will, and they'll pay on your free will. If you don't believe it, just keep it up."

Q: What did he say to that?

A: He was telling about the kids, I mean, they oughtn't to do this and they oughtn't do that, be presentable and so forth. If his folks hadn't made no reservations for him to be presentable, why would he mention it?

Q: But after you told him that, what did he say after you told him?

A: He said, "Well, I guess I'm wrong." I said, "Well, I know you were. You talk to one of mine that way, and you and I'll mix up."

Q: But don't you think that could be one of the problems now why young people act the way they do, because no adult can talk to them?

A: That's right. And no police can talk to them. Can't arrest them, or if they see them committing a crime, I guess they got their whole force out there to witness it. When you and I were kids, I mean, just somebody'd tell our parents and that was all it was to it.

Q: That's right, that's right.

A: Parents took the law in their hands, and they executed it.

Q: And they believed what the adults said.

A: That's before they'd believe you.

Q: Yes.

A: And I think that'd be a good thing to present today, 'cause the kid told me, "You're not"--I heard him tell one of the lady teachers there-- "You're not my mother." Talked like 'cause she wasn't their mother, she couldn't teach them nothing. I said to myself, I'd give up that class. I couldn't endure that, where my voice wasn't nothing.

Q: Well, the school teachers in the public school meet up with that everyday.

A: I know it. I know it. The lady that, Mrs. Thompson, she was telling how she met up with that thing everyday. More responsibility. And it has to be some money to take the ribbing that these kids can give you now. You can't smile at them 'cause they think they got the upper hand.

Q: Right, right.

A: And if people would do like they did when I was a kid, I mean, when you didn't have to say nothing, just conduct yourself right and your parents would know that you're all right. I mean, if you'd conduct yourself bad, they'd know that, too.

A: That's right.

Q: Where do they have a parent that will tell on another child? I don't know what they're gonna do. They can't build reform schools for them all.

Q: They sure can't. I think the . . . it's going to have to go back to the home, where the parents start to act like parents.

A: Yeah, one or the other of them be at home all the time to see how the kid performs or who he brings in the house, 'cause there are a lot of kids go in the house and get the lay out of things and then come back that night

and go through and get everything. That's the whole upshot of the thing. They know who's who. Just like a boy asked me, said, "What's your dog's name?" I said, "What do you want to know . . . what do you care what his name is?" He said, "I can feed him now." I said, "I don't want you to. Whenever I can't afford feed for him, why, I don't want you to feed him." I said, "Well, you want to do something to him so you can get his attention if you want to do something."

Q: That's right.

A: And I said, "I want him to do something to you if you get on these premises, 'cause I feed him gunpowder to make him hate you. He ain't got no friends." He said, "Does gunpowder work?" I said, "You come on the yard, and me not being there, and we'll know."

Q: Is that right? Is that good to feed him with?

A: Huh?

Q: To make them be good watch dogs?

A: Make them vicious. You got to give it to him, not regular, 'cause he'll get too mean. I told him, "My dog's bitten me four if not five times." He said, "Well, I'll kill her." I said, "No, what for? I want him to be vicious, so when you come down there, he'll act on you." I said, "That's just the reason--been given me, 'cause he didn't know how to provide for the dog." And I told him he's just what I want to keep the cats out of here. He'd break that chain in a minute if a cat passed through there by him. I know it, 'cause he bit me, and I never even slapped him, 'cause I was doing something to him that I didn't have no business, getting them old burrs out of him. Should have given him a bath and got his hair soft and could have took them out with ease; but no, I had a comb taking them out in the rough. Pulled his teeth across my shoulder, and I didn't even slap him. Whenever you're pulling a dog to do something, don't pull him to do nothing else and don't try to chastise him. No. You don't chastise a dog, and he'll be your best friend.

Q: But how do you get him to stop doing something that's bad?

A: Ain't nothing bad when you want him to protect you.

Q: He digs up your yard and things like that?

A: No, they don't do that.

Q: I mean, if one does, what would you do?

A: Ain't no dog getting up there close to him, 'cause he'll throw him down, wallow him and turn him every way but loose. I have to go out there and make him loosen up. That's right. I put some dirt in there yesterday, two wheelbarrows of dirt so if he had a bone, he could bury it in that loose dirt and not in it [the yard]. When he digs in the ground a whole lot, you got to take him and get his toenails trimmed, 'cause they get pointed-like.

Q: I see. How long have you lived in this house that you're in now?

A: [Since] 1942.

Q: Since 1942. What was this neighborhood like when you moved in here?

A: There were four colored families here, five . . .

Q: It has changed tremendously now?

A: Yeah. There's more colored out here than you can shake a stick at. They thought there wasn't no freedom out here, thought it was all hatred, but they found out different. Everytime one can get hold of his down payment, he wants to buy a house. And I'll bet you can't guess within a hundred dollars of what I paid for this place. I ain't so much.

Q: You bought the house or you . . .

A: Bought the house, the lot and the vacant lot.

Q: The house and everything. Well, I would think--in '42? I would think you may have paid about \$7,000.

A: I paid \$2,500.

Q: Is that right?

A: Yeah, and it had a coal furnace in it. \$2,500; and I only had \$200 to pay down on it, and my wife said I couldn't buy it. I said, "You ain't buying it. Leave that to me, I'm buying it." [She] said, "If I'd seen the inside of it before we wouldn't have accepted it." I said, "You mean that you wouldn't have accepted it. Don't say that I wouldn't 'cause it was my two hundred dollars." I said, "I accept anything I want, if I put my money. I think you should learn that yourself." There's a retired mail carrier, maybe you know him, Thornton. I mean Frank Cole.

End of Side One, Tape Two

Q: . . . out on the farm near you, where your farm was?

A: No, out here off . . . you go out towards . . .

Q: Oh, going towards Clinton?

A: Yeah. That there Clem boy bought that place.

Q: Oh. Who?

A: Harry Clem. He used to be a barber.

Q: Oh, I see, I see. And he did his own financing of it for you?

A: Yeah. He balanced the books every six months and checked the interest off that I'd paid him. All I had was the principal.

Q: I see. That was a pretty good deal.

A: That's the reason I took it. I knowed I ought to be able. You know, I told him I could pay twenty-five dollars a month on the place, working. He said, "No, Billy Hubbard, I'm going to give you a piece of advice." I said, "Yeah?" And I listened. He said, "You sign the papers for twenty dollars a month and anytime you can pay twenty-five, it's acceptable." I was so glad I bought it then, in 1942, 'cause he was waiting on a man by the name of Wiley, Howard Wiley, to get seventy-five dollars together to pay down so's he could close the deal. I had two hundred and my wife said I didn't have enough money to interest nobody. See, that's how much women know. I guess that's the reason they put men in front of them.

Q: I think you have a point.

A: I know it. Man told me, said, "I'll tell you what this place is gonna cost you a year taxes." I told him, "You're pretty smart; go ahead and tell me." He said, "Sixty-six dollars a year."

Q: Is that right?

A: Ain't that pretty good? Twenty dollars a month, I mean, payments; sixty-six dollars a year in taxes, and then I had it reinsured. Of course, it wasn't enough to put it back, about half of . . . And I kept their policy, too.

Q: What have you done to it?

A: Put a roof on it and fixed the basement and not much else, because I've been loaded down with sickness. Yeah. I can tell you who has got the money. Dr. Caldwell, Dr. Lee, and St. John's Hospital. I took over my wife's aunt once, trip that I told you that I hired Lee and didn't need. When I took her out of there, I owed them over eleven hundred dollars. And here me making that light money. And I've almost . . . I don't owe Lee, and I don't owe Caldwell. I never will owe Caldwell no more of my money. No. 'Cause when I was taking my wife up there, he said, "Mr. Hubbard?" I said, "Yeah, that's my name." He said, "I think you need treatment." I said, "Yes I do need treatment, but you'd better not start. Anytime I step on that hot asphalt, it's money that I'm making, and give you a dollar a minute for your service, I need treatment. But don't you start it."

Q: Is that right?

A: Sure. The man done got all the money that I intend for him to have. Whoever gets upset just gets upset. I will not have Caldwell. Who wouldn't be a fool to pay a man a dollar a minute for his services and him not even put his hand on your wife? He's the one that needs treatment.

Q: Is that right?

A: Sure. I witnessed the whole--and I'm not making this up either, 'cause I got receipts. There's a lady down there at the unemployed place told me said, "Mr. Hubbard, you keep all these receipts for ten years, 'cause they won't believe that you paid me."

Q: Is that right?

A: I'm well-heeled on his receipts. I got enough to cover this floor.

Q: You've kept them.

A: Sure. It ain't ten years yet, why not keep them?

Q: Yeah, that's right. Because you may have to go back to them. What . . . when you moved into Springfield per se, in the city limit, what was it like then? Did they have . . . did the streetcar come all the way out to Stewart Street?

A: No. It come out Twentieth and South Grand and went up Eighteenth, I mean, way later. It went on in South Grand and went plumb under the subway and went up Eight Street. They had a streetcar up there on Capital Avenue.

Q: How far east did it go?

A: Out there about Matheny School, a little bit past.

Q: And then if you wanted to catch it, you'd have to go to Twentieth and South Grand or go up there to Capitol?

A: That's right.

Q: Now at that time then, the streets then weren't paved? They were brick?

A: No, dirt street.

Q: Dirt street?

A: Dirt street. That's what I'm thinking's gonna hit this street here. It's gonna knock the socks off us if they improve this into town and pave this, put black top on this street like they did on Laurel. That's gonna upset a whole lot of people.

Q: Is that right?

A: Sure.

Q: In what way?

A: 'Cause you have to pay so much, I mean, a foot for in front of your place and out half of the street.

Q: I know that's what we had to do down at our church here.

A: Yeah, I know it, I know it. That ain't donated to you. But it's a mighty nice thing. I don't know whether to tell them not to pay it or not. I hope I don't lose the place on account of improvement in the street.

Q: Do you think they're going to do it sometime?

A: Oh, there's people around with a petition for you to sign to do that now.

Q: I noticed this garage next to you here. Do they interfere with your rest or anything with making noise over there or anything?

A: Got high-powered electricity over there, I mean, machines . . .

Q: He's been there for some time now, hasn't he?

A: Yeah, built that in about 1942 or 1943. He was across the alley there where that Johnson boy lived. That's where he first . . .

Q: As I was beginning to ask you about Springfield and the streetcars that were running and so forth, at that time most of the homes used coal and all that?

A: That's right, yeah. You could go to a house now and then and find that they had nothing but a wood stove.

Q: Is that right?

A: Yeah. And there's houses down here on Cornell [Avenue] that had dirt floors.

Q: Really?

A: Sure. Yeah. People ain't been so as they could have wood to put their feet on all [the] time.

Q: Now you . . . do you still carry your membership with the union?

A: I pay so much mainly just to get the death benefits.

Q: Oh, I see. And what union was that?

A: [Local] 474.

Q: Local 474. Now do you have any of your . . . I think you told me that some of your brothers died and one [is] living in Detroit and one in . . .

A: Two living in Detroit and one in Jackson, Michigan.

Q: Jackson, Michigan. And any other in Springfield?

A: I'm the only one.

Q: You're the only one in Springfield.

A: I got a cousin here, several cousins. Frances Strange is my cousin, did you know that?

Q: When I heard you mention Chandler, I meant to ask, because I know she grew out of a Chandler family. Ao Nate Chadler is your . . . what?

A: Cousin. Frances is, too.

Q: Now this is something I found out about Springfield when I came. I've been here thirteen years and I've learned something that the people in Springfield, for one way or the other, seem to be related somewhere. I mean this is one reason you have to . . .

A: Be careful.

Q: You have to be careful. If you cannot say good, I've found don't say anything.

A: Because you'll uncover it.

Q: That's correct, because they are very closely related. (tape stopped) Was there any . . . what about special holidays when you were growing up? What kind of special holidays did you . . .

A: Celebrate?

Q: Celebrate.

A: Fourth of July, and then we had Decoration Day and Columbus Day and Valentine Day and, let's see . . . .

Q: Christmas and Easter, of course.

A: Yeah. Christmas and Easter. Thanksgiving.

Q: What about Emancipation? Have you . . .

A: Oh yeah, they got together on that.

Q: Do you remember when they celebrated Emancipation, what time of the year?

A: I'm pretty sure Emancipation Day was celebrated in September.

Q: In September.

A: Yes.

Q: During these holidays, what did you all do? I mean how did you celebrate?

A: They had a big feast out here at Bunn Park. Or they'd go out here to this park that . . .

Q: Washington.

A: Well, I guess it was . . . Lincoln Park.

Q: Lincoln Park.

A: That's the one most of the colored people came to. Washington Park didn't celebrate it much out there. White folks had that.

Q: Oh, I see.

A: And we had these other two parks.

Q: You had Bunn and Lincoln.

A: Yeah.

Q: Now, did many white people come to . . . .

A: To celebrate?

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Oh, we couldn't keep them away; couldn't keep them away.

Q: But yet coloreds couldn't go to, or they didn't go to Washington as much or what?

A: That's right. People from out in here, not from out in the west end of town, would visit these here turn-outs that we had here; but you know that was for the aristocrats out there.

Q: Now did they have a basket dinner, each family bring the food?

A: That's right, that's right. And the church would furnish the ice cream, the Sunday School. Yeah. Everybody that had a wagon and some that didn't have a wagon would bring a basket that day so they could eat some that you brought. You didn't bring none, they'd let you eat anyhow.

Q: They'd let you eat anyhow.

A: That ain't half bad proposition, is it?

Q: No, it's not.

A: Just so you could eat.

Q: That's right.

A: Just like when Jimmy Hubbard was here Sunday, we had a big dinner and everybody was welcome to eat, and they had food left for me to give them people to take home with them on the bus.

Q: I saw the bus.

A: Did you?

Q: When I was on my way to Sunday School.

A: Why didn't you come in?

Q: I was on my way to Sunday School.

A: I know, but Sunday School let out, didn't it?

Q: No, no.

A: Maybe Sunday School was all day.

Q: No, on my way to Sunday School, I saw the bus.

A: Yeah. Well, we were there all day. You could have made it back.

Q: No, but I had to go to Elder Rose's church that afternoon.

A: You know, I've known Elder Rose a long time, and you know what he told me? He said, "You've just acknowledged of being seventy-four years old." He says, "You're about seventy-six years old." And said, "Don't hold your age, man, you oughta be thankful you lived this long." I told him, "You don't know me that well. Watch your step." (laughter)

Q: Yeah.

A: He knowed me before I ever went to church or, I wasn't hardly going to Sunday School, and him and Lyman were studying together out there at the Illinois Foundry, working and at noon instead of doing very much they'd be trying to learn the Bible. Studying.

Q: He said next month, 25th of next month, he will have been in Springfield fifty years.

A: He's counting the years he went barefooted here. He ain't counting them.

Q: Well. And did they have any parades then downtown during any of these holidays, Decoration Day for instance?

A: Most of the parades they had was on Labor Day.

Q: Labor Day.

A: Yeah. Most they had was on Labor Day.

Q: Did they have people who . . . from the black community who participated in these parades?

A: Why, everybody was walking. I mean, you know they had Dr. \_\_\_\_\_. He is pretty prominent. He always spoke on behalf of the colored people.

Q: Colored people.

A: Yeah. We used to have what they call, I mean, culture clubs here. I mean, over at Union Baptist Church.

Q: Yes.

A: And people used to go hog-wild and pig-scratching to get there, and they had to stand up.

Q: Is that right?

A: When they were up on Twelfth and Mason.

Q: And Mason.

A: Yeah.

Q: Reverend Manuel was there then. Did you . . . what did you all do at these culture clubs?

A: All the churches came around I mean, they had somebody on the program. Different ones. Had what I'd guess you'd call now is a song-fest, different choirs from different churches would perform. All denominations would come to just have somebody on the program.

Q: This was really to give the young people . . .

A: Somewhere to go.

Q: Somewhere to go and something to do and . . .

A: Yeah, keep them out of the street. Yeah, I went to a culture club many a Sunday and had to leave early 'cause we had to go back to the farm to milk the cows and we didn't have, only a nickel for a streetcar fare, ride out here to Bunn Park and walk from Bunn Park out to where we live.

Q: Now from Bunn Park, you would cut through the field down there?

A: No, go out the dirt road.

Q: Oh, I see. Is that where Fifteenth Street is cut now?

A: Yeah.

Q: And then what is now Stevenson Drive, then you'd turn up there?

A: Yeah, turn and go east. Yeah.

Q: Now it's all built up.

A: Yeah. If Papa and them would be back on earth, they couldn't tell where that farm was at, 'cause there were some trees removed that was close to that house where we live, maple trees and walnut trees, and that was the marking so you'd know where we live.

Q: Now, so then this hundred and sixty acres, your house was sitting on that?

A: Back off the road.

Q: Back off the road.

A: About two blocks off the road, and there's a colored man by the name of Nate Smith who owned eighty acres of ground next to that. He's Harrison Smith's uncle.

Q: I see. Nate Smith.

A: Old man Wes Smith used to belong to your church.

Q: Who?

A: Old man Wes Smith.

Q: Wes Smith.

A: He was a great uncle of mine, too. He married my grandmother. They lived at 1528 South Fourteenth Street. She wouldn't leave that place. He wanted her to go to the farm and she wouldn't do it.

Q: I see.

A: He wanted to live out there hisself so he wouldn't have the expense of going back and forth, but I don't think it's a whole lot of expense 'cause he had old buggy and a horse. He drove out there twice a day to milk a cow to keep from buying milk. You know, he was pretty tight.

Q: Well, I guess he was just trying to economize.

A: And a nickel box of matches would last him a year, kitchen matches. Couldn't last you a week.

Q: Now, I want to ask this now, I know you mentioned the hospital. Have you ever known or heard of them having discrimination in the hospital as to where colored people could go as a patient?

A: Well, it's according to what your sickness was, but there was parts there that they wouldn't give you a room. If they was crowded, they wouldn't put you out in the hall; they'd put you in somebody's place before they'd make a bed for you in the hall. But I have seen people out in the hall, white and colored, with just canvas around.

Q: Around.

A: But it's been a long time, when my father was living I mean, they had bed pans and my father, I believe he died from constipation 'cause he couldn't use a bedpan.

Q: Is that right? And he was too weak to go to the restroom?

A: They didn't want him up, I don't know why. And he told me to go buy him a commode. He said, "Ain't you got the money?" I said, "Yeah, I got the money." He said, "Well, I said go get it." And I'd go, and they wouldn't let him use it after we got it.

Q: Is that right?

A: He never did use a bedpan. I mean, he didn't know how he could use one, and I really believe my father died from constipation 'cause they'd put him on the bedpan, but he never did do nothing.

Q: How long was he in the hospital?

A: Oh, Papa was in there quite a little while. He had prostrate glands.

Q: Yeah. What age man was he when he died?

A: He was 74.

Q: Oh?

A: And my mother was 68. I got a little while yet.

Q: Did she die before he or he went first?

A: He went first.

Q: What about politics now? You participated in politics or . . .

A: You mean now?

Q: Now or . . .

A: Then?

Q: Then or anytime.

A: Oh, a little bit, not nothing to crow about, 'cause people double-cross you so often. I just can't stand to be double-crossed. One man, I mean, he told me, "You was the first black Democrat I ever seen." I said, "You ain't been very far." That's what I told him. I said, "I've been fooling around the tea cup looking for a handle and you ain't been busy."

Q: Why? Because in this area here a lot of the blacks are Republicans?

A: Staunch Republicans.

Q: Why is it so? Did you ever find out?

A: Well, they claim Abraham Lincoln freed them, and Abraham Lincoln didn't free them. They freed themselves. And one woman told me, said, "Who told you that?" I said, "I can read, Lady." Yeah, I can read. And my mother, she told us that, too, that Abraham Lincoln didn't free the colored people.

Q: What . . . how did she explain it, I mean, that they freed themselves?

A: 'Cause they fought, I mean, to get freedom. They fought to get freedom, and they won the battle. If it'd been left to what-you-call-him they wouldn't have won no battle. They'd been still slaves, but they fought to be free.

Q: It was just a really political thing, really?

A: Yeah. My own cousin Herschel White, he told me when I went to his house, he said, "I mean, Bill, what caused you to be a Democrat?" I said, "'Cause, I mean, my folks had raised eight children and voted the Republican ticket all their life and when we got old enough, I thought, maybe I'd be a Democrat 'cause all Papa got to do was have a team of horses out here at the fairgrounds and get \$8.10 a day for raising eight boys up here to be eligible to vote. And I said, "I just detained that I was going to do a little different. You know Papa had a hard time raising us up and he never did get nothing but \$8.10 every year to take a team of horses and a wagon out here to the fairground to work them eight days or whatever it was that they wanted, eight or ten days." He'd get that every year. Once in awhile the road commissioner would have him to take a team and drag the roads when they--Springfield, but very seldom.

Q: Very seldom.

A: Why, they couldn't deny that he didn't raise these eight boys, 'cause we was all there to speak for ourselves.

Q: Quite visible.

A: Yeah. That's one thing I got against the Republicians. They will not give our people a show, or whatever it is. He sent out this relief and social security, I mean, they started my father in at seven dollars a month. Now what could you buy with seven dollars a month?

Q: Not much.

A: I told Papa to give them that piece of paper back, and if the Democrats got in, they'd put money in his hand. I said, "If you don't believe it, Papa, just keep giving your strip of paper to them until the Democrats win. They're gonna win. You can't stop them by voting your Republican ticket or nobody else," and you know, when he seen that the Democrats was gonna . . . did have a majority, he told me, he said, "How could you see that?" He said, "How could you see that?" I said, "Well, Papa, they ain't put nothing in your hand but a piece of paper to tell you what to get, I mean, on this piece of paper." And I said, "The Democrats are gonna put money in your hand and you can buy it up in clothes . . ."

Q: Yeah. And it happened.

A: And it happened.

Q: Do you remember under who was this first Democrat that . . .

A: Who? I mean what . . . Roosevelt.

Q: Roosevelt. Oh, I see. Roosevelt.

A: Yes, Roosevelt.

Q: Now, have you held any position in politics, precinct committeeman or anything like that?

A: No, I run for precinct committeeman and I got beat by three votes, out there in the 74th precinct.

Q: Is that right?

A: And it'd cost me fifty dollars to have a recount, and I didn't have the money.

Q: Who did you run against?

A: Fellow by the name of Bill Sidner.

Q: Bill Sidner?

A: Yeah. And that Pete Roster was the county central committeeman.

Q: Pete Roster?

A: Pete Roster, yeah.

Q: I see. Well, at that time when you came into Springfield, did you . . . were there many colored people living here?

A: Quite a few.

Q: Where did they live basically? What section of town?

A: I mean, on the east side, I mean, from Miller Street back to Madison and then they were kinda separated a little bit, white folks were--Jews were kind of in there--and then colored people started again.

Q: Where did the Jews live, on Capitol?

A: On Jefferson.

Q: Jefferson?

A: Yeah. They was running businesses.

Q: Who lived on Monroe and Capitol and Jackson and all that?

A: Well, there were quite a few colored families, quite a few.

Q: So basically, for a long time, most of the colored lived on the east side?

A: That's right. Yeah. One would get stray and get out in the west once in awhile, I mean, get a chance to buy him a piece of property, or somebody he worked for would buy it for him; and then he'd pay him. They've been tricking them ever since I was big enough to know anything, tricking them like that, but they didn't trick them enough. That's the bad feature about it.

Q: Well, in order to survive you have to plan strategy how to . . .

A: Get ahead.

Q: That's right. You see because you take--there's a long . . . for a long, long time there were people who were saying all the colored can do, they can . . .

A: Shine shoes.

Q: Shine shoes and they grin and they just laugh, but this was a strategy of survival.

A: That's right, that's right. You know that you can do something else besides shine shoes, and I had a chance to work out at the fairground. And I took cleaning restrooms out there, I mean, instead of shining shoes, 'cause I can't stand a white man to call me nigger. He goes through me then. He's got to do it twice, got to do it twice. And the only place you could make any money, up there around the racetrack or around them horse farms where them people that had money. You couldn't make no money if you put you up a stand out there. 'Cause a white man, I mean, he wants, you know, to be an Uncle Tom and then he's liable to give you twenty-five or fifty cents. I can't Uncle Tom.

Q: You're too straight.

A: Well, I wasn't brought up that way.

Q: That's right.

A: No, my father if he thought that we was out there Uncle Tomming we wouldn't get to go anymore. That's what I liked about Dr. \_\_\_\_\_. There was a colored boy by the name of Herb Jackson [who] was caseworker here and he told me if Herb didn't treat our people better, I mean, when he was caseworker, he was gonna get rid of . . . have to get rid of Herb Jackson and he was going to put his son on that caseworker job and if he was an Uncle Tom he'd get rid of him.

Q: Get rid of him.

A: Yeah. That's right. 'Cause you're colored, you don't have to be Uncle Tom.

Q: That's right.

A: Just because he was born that way wasn't no disgrace.

Q: That's right.

A: Was no disgrace.

Q: You centinly don't have to do it to keep your job, because if you can do the job . . .

A: That's right.

Q: . . . then just go ahead and do it.

A: The only thing, if you're gonna recommend somebody, you want to be very sure that he'll do what he says he'll do.

Q: That's right.

A: If he don't, just forget him.

Q: That's right, that's right.

A: Just forget him.

Q: What about Negro businesses? When you came into Springfield, were there many Negro businesses?

A: About three colored grocery stores. Yeah. Fellow by the name of Johnny Thomas run a little-bitty one-horse store out there on Stewart Street and another man by the name of Mr. . . . what is his name . . . he's down there on Twelfth Street . . . I've forgotten his name. Anyhow, he had a grocery store. There was a lot of carpenters here. People who had learnt, knowed trades, but they wasn't very apt to get a job on these big buildings. They'd pick up work, just like you'd have them do something you need, but no big business.

Q: One thing, they weren't in the union.

A: That's right, that's right. Had a hard time geting in the union. Had to go to some other place and get in the union and be transferred here.

Q: That's what this man was that died here; he was a plumber, this black plumber.

A: Banks.

Q: Banks.

A: He had to go to Chicago and get in the union.

Q: How did you get in the union?

A: Well, I was telling you my brother was a foreman for Sangamo Construction and in order--after I went to work out there--in order to hold a job, why they had to give me permission to join the union, or else they'd have to lay me off.

Q: And so he was in the union?

A: He was already . . . he was a charter member.

Q: I see. Was there any other businesses besides grocery stores?

A: You mean furniture?

Q: I mean, Negro businesses? I think you named some grocery stores, three.

A: Well, several people was trying to run a restaurant as [a] business. A pool hall, and Amos Duncan run the Pekin Theater.

Q: Amos who?

A: Amos Duncan.

Q: Uh-huh. Now, is he related to the Duncan that they named the Legion Post after? Amos Duncan? You know, the . . .

A: The Legion? Yeah. And, well, Major Duncan was a Colonel in the Army.

Q: Oh, he was Otis.

A: Otis Duncan was a Colonel in the Army, 'cause this Amos Duncan, his widow lives there on Twelfth and Monroe in that big white house, frame house. You know, Mrs. Phoebe Duncan.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Well, that's his widow. He had pool halls, and that Pekin Theater, too. And was you here . . . I know you wasn't . . . I was gonna . . . was you here when Mrs. Feniwade run that funeral home there where Walker's . . .

Q: No.

A: And they had a fellow by the name of . . .

Q: Who was that? Feniwade?

A: Feniwade.

Q: Wade.

A: Wade, Wade.

Q: Wade, Feniwade.

A: And then, you know there was another one here by the name of Carpenter?

Q: Yes, I was here.

A: You remember?

Q: Yeah, I remember Carpenter.

A: Well, he was in business.

Q: And the white came in?

A: Yeah.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And there was one down on Second Street, I mean, before you get to--right at the alley on Second Street after you leave Washington by the name of Roden.

Q: Roden.

A: He was a colored undertaker.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: But that's about all I know, really.

Q: Uh-huh. And what about . . . when did Leon start his filling station, because so far as Springfield is concerned now, I think his filling station is the only black filling station that they have that's doing any kind of business now, isn't it?

A: Yeah, that I know of. I worked for him in 1914, so it's been quite a while.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: I didn't work for him long, but I worked for him in 1914.

Q: Is that right?

A: But he didn't never pay nothing, reason he couldn't keep no help. That's the reason. He wanted you to sing a song and dance, too; and no pay. So I decided to just sing and not get no pay.

Q: I see. And, of course, you have doctors and you have barbers and so forth?

A: Yeah. And we did have a lawyer, a fellow by the name of Lawyer Gibbs, and Lawyer Williams. Yeah. Gibbs would put you on the bricks, too. He was a lawyer, wore a big straw hat like he was going to a hayfield every day in the summer.

Q: Is that right?

A: Sure. And he had pig grease from here to the door. But he knowed his law. But he learned his . . . studied to be a lawyer in the coal mine.

Q: Oh?

A: He got his the hard way.

Q: What about Lawyer Davis? Clarence Davis? He was a lawyer here, too.

A: Would-be lawyer.

Q: Is that right?

A: 'Cause when my wife got injured out there at the fairgrounds, he sold us out, and I ain't never had no use for him since. 'Cause she didn't have no job, I was on relief, he sold us out. He acted like to me he was hungry. That's just the way I told him. I said, "You sold us out. I know it." And the hospital wasn't paid, and then they tried to make me pay it. I told them I never signed no papers to put my wife in the hospital and amusement at the state fairgrounds put her in there and paid one hundred dollars on the bill. And then they thought they'd pin that other on me.

Q: And you didn't pay it?

A: No. I didn't owe it. Why would I pay it? I realized they'd done service for my wife, but why would I pay it when somebody else had signed to put her in there? They didn't have nothing on me, and I kept my shirt clean all the way through, didn't pay nothing. No sir, I didn't pay nothing. I knowed it should have been paid, but how in the world was I gonna pay it?

Q: Well, you didn't owe it. Well.

A: She was in there very near three months.

Q: Is that right?

A: Very near three months.

Q: Well, I certainly thank you very much for this time that we have spent. And I am going to make up this and if I think of anymore, I'd like to stop in some other time and talk with you.

A: Well, you see, I belong to Patton Turner now. I'm sorry, but that won't work. I might get a job now and then, and that's like you asked me when I'd be home, if you can ask me that again.

Q: Yeah.

A: Let these young folks know what the older folks has went through.

Q: Yeah.

A: Everything that ain't glitters wasn't gold.

Q: That's right.

A: Im glad it ain't. I'd let them know the valuation of the dollar.

Q: That's right.

A: Huh?

Q: That's right, that's right.

A: Everything that glitters ain't gold. I know when there was only two colored children in this Hazel Dell School out here.

Q: Is that right?

A: Two. Had one room, two colored people. Me five and a half years old and my oldest brother was just about six years old. So you know white folks has been on the top a good while, but Papa bought Carl a twenty cent baseball bat and he told him, "Whenever they got too thick, thin them out with that baseball bat." I mean, you only had to knock one boy cold.

Q: Is that right?

End of Tape