

# Transcript of OH-00141

James Milton Washington

Interviewed by

John Wearmouth

on

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## Typographic Note

- [Inaudible] is used when a word cannot be understood.
- Brackets are used when the transcriber is not sure about a word or part of a word, to add a note indicating a non-verbal sound and to add clarifying information.
- Em Dash — is used to indicate an interruption or false start.
- Ellipses ... is used to indicate a natural extended pause in speech

## Subjects

African American teachers  
Charles County Board of Education  
County school systems  
Education  
Farm tenancy  
Rural conditions  
School discipline  
School integration  
Segregation in education

## Transcript

John Wearmouth [J]: This is John Wearmouth interviewing Mr. James M. Washington at his home near Pomonkey on Maryland Route 227 just about half a mile from the point where it runs into Maryland Route 224. The Post Office box number here is 2333 and this is a La Plata address believe it or not even though we are geographically in old Pomonkey. We are interviewing in the Washington home tonight and the date is February 27, 1988. The interview is part of the Charles County Community College Oral History Program and the main subject will be education in the public schools of Charles County. We're going to go back to Mr. Washington's boyhood days in Virginia. He was born near Middleburgh and I want to get some picture of the forces that helped shape him during his young years and helped turn him out to be the adult he is from which you can't ever go back right? How many brothers and sisters were there in the Washington family?

James Milton Washington [M]: 14 in the family.

J: And there were just the one husband and the one wife?

M: One wife yes.

J: Neither married a second time?

M: No.

J: So that was a very, very big burden.

M: Four girls and it was 10 of us boys.

J: Where did you rank in age?

M: I was number...number nine.

J: Do you remember how old was your mother when you came along?

M: About 33.

J: About 33 and how old was she when the first child was born in that family?

M: I really—I'd have to figure that out—I really don't—

J: Roughly so she was a youngster?

M: Very young, very young.

J: Did you ever here your mother and father say what age they were when they got married?

M: No.

J: Okay what did your father do to keep that family going?

M: He worked on a farm.

J: Okay he was a professional full time farmer?

M: Farmer yeah.

J: Did he own? Was he tenant?

M: Tenant.

J: He was a tenant?

M: Yes.

J: Okay what sort of a deal was this considered to be for a farmer in those years? Did they consider that better than sharecropping?

M: I would say yes because he was on a salary regardless of what the farm was doing he was paid on a monthly basis.

J: What—do you remember the name of the family who owned the property?

M: Yes I do.

J: Anybody still around over there?

M: Yeah the family that owned the farm still owned the farm although the person that my father worked for he's been deceased quite some time. But the sons still run the farm.

J: How old were you when you went to school for the first time?

M: Eight.

J: Eight. Was that considered to be rather late?

M: Yeah.

J: Was there a reason for it? Health, distance of the school?

M: Distance of the school. We had to walk to school and we just—you know I just waited until I got big enough and old enough to stand the walk, you know.

J: About how far was it?

M: About four and a half miles.

J: Do you remember your older brothers taking you along?

M: Yes right.

J: Were you a good student from the beginning? Did you really enjoy this.

M: Yeah I thought I was a good student. I mean when I first went to school I always got the feeling that I knew what was going on because at that time I had learned to write my name, learned the alphabet, I could count, I could add, I could subtract.

J: Even before you went?

M: Even before I went to school.

J: Who was responsible for this?

M: I guess my big brothers and sister [inaudible phrase]. It was a time at home we all read, we all did numbers, we communicated fairly well with each other.

J: Were you pretty much encouraged by your mother and father?

M: Oh yes very much so.

J: In the bookish type pursuits?

M: Oh yeah. [Inaudible] we read.

J: Do you remember how many years of school your father was able to finish?

M: My father went about five. About five years in school. Five or six at the most.

J: And your mother?

M: My mother probably went one or two years at the most.

J: Were they raised in that same neighborhood?

M: Yes. My father was raised a little ways away from where my mother. My mother was raised very much in the place where I lived in Virginia.

J: Okay what county is that?

M: Well my—it's Loudoun County.

J: Do you remember when schools were integrated in Loudoun County? You weren't even living there then were you?

M: No I wasn't. I was living here at that time.

J: How close was that date to the date they were integrated in Charles County? Was Virginia ahead or behind?

M: I don't know. I think it was close to the same time. You know I don't...it was very close to the same time.

J: Okay how far were the other brothers and sisters able to go in education? Did any of them match you?

M: Yes.

J: And did any of them also go to Virginia Union?

M: No none of—I was the only one at Virginia Union.

J: What were your favorite subjects in elementary school?

M: I guess I majored math in college. I guess math was my favorite subject.

J: Okay so rather early you began to develop a special liking for mathematics?

M: Not necessarily special liking. I found it kind of relatively easy to do. I have, see I have a defect in my voice and I would do better if I could just sit someplace and do rather than have to express myself in the world.

J: Well you've done very well and I would imagine becoming a teacher forced you to be a communicator? No teacher can sit in the corner anywhere at any time.

M: I think my teachers, my high school teachers, helped me quite a bit in the communication line. They were very instrumental in helping me to speak.

J: What was the name of the high school that you graduated from?

M: Douglas High School in Leesburg, Virginia.

J: And this was a segregated school?

M: Yes a segregated.

J: Looking back now how do you feel about the quality of the education you got there in high school?

M: The quality of the teachers I think they were excellent. The school itself was nothing—

J: The physical facilities?

M: Right. Was nothing compared to the say Loudoun County High School.

J: Which was all white?

M: Which was all white yes.

J: Did you notice any feeling in the black community at this time? Any special awareness of this? Was there at least within the community criticism or a building criticism of unequal facilities? Did your parents ever comment?

J: No they never commented but we were aware of the fact that it was unequal. We didn't hear of any conflict or any type of thing, [but it wasn't necessarily] talked about. We knew it existed but it wasn't talked about.

J: Do you remember where some of your teachers went to college?

M: Yes very much so.

J: What were their schools?

M: Well I had two teachers and a principal from Virginia Union.

J: So that's helped shape your attitude towards—

M: That helped quite a bit of that.

J: That's odd you know. Right here in this community you're about a mile from the Kane's aren't you?

M: Yes.

J: There are three graduates of Virginia Union. That's incredible. Did you know any other teachers here in the Charles County system that graduated from Virginia Union?

M: There used to be some. I don't know if any—well and I can't think of anybody. Used to know some.

J: What sort of a life did your mother have at home there? What was her work load? What did she have to do to keep 14 children clothed, in decent health and fed? She must have run herself ragged. Do you ever wonder.

M: No she did not. When I came—see what's happening I'm number nine but there was quite a few ahead of me and they had reached the point where they were taking over household. My mother was kind of a queen bee like.

J: She managed?

M: Yeah. She used to sit there, say, "You do this and you do this and you do that."

J: This probably increased her life. How well along in years was she when?

M: My mother died very young. My mother died when I was about 16 I guess. My father never remarried. She was the queen. She said this and she said that and it wasn't any repercussion because my big sister and my bigger brothers backed her and my father he backed her. [So we didn't have] no problems.

J: If we had more of that today life would be happier for a lot of people. So your father let her manage the household pretty much?

M: Yeah.

J: Do you recall handling the money? Did he give her money outright? I'm asking you now a lot. You may not have known anything about it.

M: I don't know. I never heard her ask nor did I ever see him give.

J: It's quite a personal thing between them. Okay did you feel that your family the Washington family was a little better off than some of the other black farm families in the neighborhood?

M: I knew of families that I thought at that time that we were better off and I knew of families that I thought at the time that they were better off.

J: It's a relative thing. Were you and your brothers and sisters fairly well contented with life there at home and school?

M: Yeah I don't know of any discontent.

J: You didn't fight it? Went along with it and made the most of everything?

M: Right.



J: Never got into drugs either did you?

M: No I haven't. The only habit I picked up was I learned to smoke which eventually I stopped. I guess because my father did.

J: Was he a cigarette smoker?

M: Yes.

J: The worst.

M: Yeah.

J: And you had to try it out.

M: I mean I was a pretty big boy before I tried it out I mean. At that time I didn't know it was so detrimental to your health. Right so I did it as an enjoyment.

J: And it was. I'll be the first to admit. I just stopped [inaudible phrase]—

M: I did to. I did too.

J: And it hurt. [Inaudible sentence]. What did the young people in that community do for fun? What did you consider having a really good time?

M: I don't know I guess a chance to go to the movie. When they had things like outings and Sunday school trips. We could go out and play ball you know away from home and play ball, team sports. We played right there among ourselves in the field when the other kids would come by and we would have a game.

J: Was this what we used to call just pick up games? Whoever was available?

M: Oh yes whoever was available.

J: And seldom have a whole team. You're lucky to have a whole team.

M: We didn't have too much trouble getting a whole team because after all we had enough Washington family to make a full.

J: That's true. Did the girls play?

M: All the girls played too yes and we had it was other people that lived close not too far away that kind of a gathering type.

J: Walking distance?

M: Right walking distance. Well I don't know if you call it walking distance now but at the time it was walking distance because you had no other means of transportation.

J: That would be what anything up to three or four miles?

M: Two or three miles that's right. We had some friends who lived about a mile away.

J: What impact did this society have on courting where as often as not a young man had to walk to a girlfriend's house? Was there a lot of within the community mating? That is marriage, marriages.

M: Yeah I think—

J: Young people had known each other all their life.

M: I think so. I really do believe that was true.

J: It's an important thing even here. You know [inaudible] didn't go beyond [inaudible].

M: And it was old custom when you'd marry the girl you know [don't] [inaudible] you don't know a thing about type thing.

J: Did your mother and dad keep a vegetable garden every year?

M: Yes.

J: Who was responsible for overseeing that?

M: Mother and father would be. The father, the father was. He decided well we are going to plant a garden. We are going to do this, you weed the garden and take care of the....

J: What sort of discipline was there in the family? Were they equal disciplinarians your mother and father? Was one a little tougher than the other?

M: [I don't like a toughness, the word tough doesn't....]

J: More strict? Or rigid as far as behavior's concerned?

M: Well both of them met about the same. The adults were equal. It wasn't one of things that my mother would let me do this but my father wouldn't let me do this. No it wasn't that. Everything was the same. If he didn't let me do it she wouldn't let me do it type thing. It wasn't one of those kinds of things where he was a little more relaxed on certain things but she would [inaudible]. They were both about the same. I never thought about any differences.

J: I suppose then as you were growing up you and the other children always had a feel for what to expect? To how far you dared go.

M: Oh yeah I mean that was—

J: Before you got [inaudible] stumped.

M: That was, well—

J: That's what—there's this hidden discipline. It's there but only when it's absolutely necessary. You just happen to know you can only go so far.

M: Oh yeah and this was true with both parents. And also almost equally true with say with my—I had, see two of my sisters older than I am and two of my sisters younger. Also true with my sisters and also true with my older brothers that you had a limit to what you could do around them.

J: To what extent do you feel that your childhood family life to what extent did that extend over into the later married lives of the children. Were there carry overs?

M: I think so. I don't think there's any difference in the lifestyle of the families. There's a little difference in say one of my brother's family and another brother's family and my family is a little different but I think the life style of my brothers is all about the same.

J: So they were able to as a result of their background establish normal comfortable family relationships when they married and moved away?

M: I think so. Of all of my brothers and sisters who are married we only had one who was divorced and that's my baby brother.

J: That's impressive.

M: Course not all of them got married. I got one brother who's not married.

J: Is he still in Virginia?

M: Yeah he was an Airforce—he stayed in the Airforce about 27 years. Then he retired and he just never got married.

J: At about what time in your life did you begin to think seriously about college education? Were there any teachers that kind of pushed you or inspired you?

M: Yeah I had one particular teacher that I thought was great and she was the one that really—along with the principal of that school. Now the teacher that was from Virginia Union and the

principal was also from Virginia Union. This teacher was very instrumental in getting me to go to that particular college. She was my math teacher.

J: What was your high school point average out of a possible four do you remember?

M: I think about a three.

J: A good strong B?

M: I would say yes.

J: What were the grade requirements of Virginia Union? Did they have a limit?

M: Yeah they had a limit...your rank in class.... One thing they asked do you know anybody who went to Virginia Union. I remember that. They had certain—

J: Of course you did.

M: Right. Interesting thing I was turned down when I first applied but the principal says to me, "Come on go with me." So he took me to Richmond and he knew the president of the college so he got me in school. I was in and out of the army before I went to college.

J: Oh really? Were you drafted? Did you volunteer?

M: Oh drafted.

J: When did you go in?

M: 19 I think 42. [I went April.]

J: I see your father was born at Marshall?

M: Yeah Virginia. I'm only guessing on that one. I really don't know.

J: So you were pretty well set on what your major was going to be in college?

M: Yeah see I was influenced by this teacher who told me. By the way her brother—the teacher's brother—was also head of the math department at Virginia Union.

J: So she had a little something going for you there at this school.

M: I don't know whether it was good that I had this going for me or not because he was pretty rough on me when I first got [inaudible].

J: How did your mother and dad feel about this when you were accepted? Was this a source of considerable—

M: My mother wasn't living at that time.

J: Oh that's right.

M: I had [inaudible] left home. Of course my father was happy.

J: Were any of the others in college at this time? Were you the first to be enrolled?

M: No I had another brother. In fact I...two brothers that were enrolled before I was.

J: Was there any scholarship help available in those days.

M: No I was GI Bill.

J: Okay so you graduated about what year? 49?

M: 50.

J: And where was your first teaching job?

M: Right here in Charles County.

J: Now this was sort of a forgone conclusion that you would be a teacher? Did you ever have any other thoughts about a career?

M: Not really but you know if I had found something else I wouldn't have been a teacher. It was mostly all teaching, teaching of mathematics.

J: As you look back on it now was it a good career?

M: Oh very good. Very good.

J: So you, your first year teaching here was the fall of 50?

M: 50 yeah. Yeah right 50 or yeah 50.

J: Who interviewed you? Who was most responsible for determining that you were going to come here and teach? Did you have to come for an interview?

M: Yeah no I was sent to the principal of the school at that time was at Virginia State in Petersburg. When I was in summer school at Virginia Union. A friend came by and said that they were looking for a teacher for here and I contacted Mr. Parks, J. C. Parks, and he told me to go

over to Virginia State and talk to the president. So he interviewed me over there. Then he sent me back to Mr. Parks and then I got a letter stating that I should come to Charles County.

J: And this—what was the school actually? Your very first school?

M: Bel Alton.

J: Bel Alton.

M: Right. High School.

J: Okay right there on 301. That was a segregated black high school?

M: Oh yes right.

J: How does it rank in terms of its founding? It was more recent than Pomonkey I gather?

M: Yes. Pomonkey was first and then Bel Alton.

J: I remember recently Mr. Charles Woodland—do you know him by any chance? Lives on near Ripley.

M: Yeah right.

J: At the age of 16 drove the school bus Rock Point every day to Pomonkey High School to bring the black students all the way up here. Two and a half hours each way. He dropped out of high school because he was off at the job driving the school bus. And he took—it was quite an experience. So that Bel Alton school meant an awful lot to young black kids down in that neighborhood.

M: Right.

J: What a trip. Way around by way of La Plata, Port Tobacco. If they could've come by boat they'd have been better off. They really would. What were some of your impressions not necessarily of the school system but of life in Charles County? Were there any surprises for you coming into a new community? Anything that upset you a little that you wondered at that wasn't really quite what you had been used to in Virginia?

M: No I didn't see that much difference between Charles County and the neighborhood that I came from in Virginia. The only difference that I had was I only knew one black Catholic in whole all of Loudoun County and I came here and I guess almost 90 percent of the blacks were Catholic.

J: That's amazing. That's something that people elsewhere don't realize that in the United States I would say in this community it's a very, very [religion that goes way, way back well over 200 years]. And it's [inaudible] the Catholic church insisted on at least as far as church is concerned. We all pray together. They may sit in different seats but we go to church at the same time and we listen to the same [hymns] so I give them a lot of credit for that. They laid the law down in the seventeenth century. So were you a lifelong Methodist to this point?

M: No. I was Baptist before. I joined the Methodist church after I got here.

J: I see. In your boyhood neighborhood were the Baptists stronger than the Methodist church?

M: Oh yes. In Northern Virginia it was for the black people it was predominantly Baptist.

J: What changes were there if any between those churches? The Methodist here and the Baptist there. In liturgy did you notice any church disciplines that were different?

M: Oh yeah but I don't think it made that much difference.

J: Didn't take you long to fit in?

M: No it didn't take me long to fit in at all. Because really you didn't—there's really not that much difference. The only thing about it you know a few rules and regulations. The Baptists operate a little more independent than the Methodists. But see I had no connections—I wasn't that well connected with the Baptist church to know about the conventions and the rules and regulations. I just went to church.

J: Now at Virginia Union did you keep going to church there [were you still a Baptist]?

M: Oh yes it was a Baptist school.

J: Oh well yeah you would have.

M: It was compulsory type thing and it was—

J: What was the size of your graduating class at Virginia?

M: I was a summer school graduate but the class I guess around 150, 200.

J: Do you know what's happened to that school since you left? What sort of student body do they have today? Larger? Is the school still going?

M: It's still going yeah. I doubt very seriously if any larger.

J: Is it predominantly black today?

M: Yes without a doubt. There's a quite a few—there were some white students when I was there. About one or two especially those Religious ed. Majors, ministers.

J: Now that you've been here and you've sort of rubbed elbows with the black college level education system I'm thinking of Bowie State, Salisbury State, and a couple of others that don't come to mind. How did they rank with Virginia Union as far as quality of teachers concerned?

M: You know it's difficult to say a rank of school as far as the education of the people. You're really teaching more or less on personality. You can have a good teacher coming out of a bad school or a bad teacher coming out of a good school. So therefore it's difficult to rate.

J: Everything being equal do you feel that the schools in Maryland that were turning out the majority of black teachers were about as good as Virginia Union?

M: Oh yeah I can see no reason why to think that they wasn't as schools in Virginia.

J: And today which schools in Maryland do you think are doing the best job preparing young people to teach? I'm asking you some pretty tough questions.

M: Yeah but here again it is difficult to answer not knowing or not being concerned about where a lot of the teachers came from. See in teaching you have to build what I would consider a concern about your job. It doesn't make any difference what school, it makes a difference to some extent, what school you came from if you have that concern because teaching is more or less a technique. Not necessarily what you learn but it's more or less a technique of how you handle kids and your personality and all kinds of stuff.

J: And imparting what you know to them.

M: Yeah see a lot of teachers they are teachers when they are five, six, seven, eight, nine years old and they add a little bit to their skills. A lot of people are not teachers at 22 or 23. It's just like any other thing. You can tell by the ministers. A lot of ministers probably think he can know how to deliver and get along with the people [and how to prepare] when he's real young. Some ministers never learn. They preach for 10 years, 12 years and still have problems with it.

J: Do you feel now looking back on it that this period was a good one for you to be in the teaching industry?

M: Oh yeah.

J: Everything considered. The challenges, the rewards, the heartaches.



M: Yeah I do believe that it was a better grip on education but not necessarily...you produce more than you produce now. You do a lot of, you miss, you hit a lot of students now and you produce but so many you miss. We didn't miss quite as many.

J: What is causing this? It's very complex and I have never been a career teacher.

M: I think one of the things is that it was control of the community. The school in those days had control of the community. School was important. The emphasis was placed on the school. Not necessarily the school [inaudible] the church, the school, and community. These were the emphases that were placed on the community. A teacher had a place in the community. Right now a teacher is Joe who lives down on the corner. In those days a teacher was oh that's Mr. so and so, Mrs. so and so she teaches in the school. Had the emphasis.

J: They received more respect from the community at large and you think that picture has changed for the worst?

M: See it hasn't completely changed but it's not necessarily recognized be a lot of teachers are not necessarily present or known to the community. When I was at Bel Alton the community knew every teacher in the community. You check Port Tobacco today you can't get anybody in Port Tobacco to name one tenth of the teachers at La Plata High School. So therefore when you see a teacher you don't recognize them.

J: And there are so many new students coming in each year and new teachers to serve those new students.

M: And new people.

J: We can't possibly go back to what it was.

M: But we do, this day and time, we do produce some relatively good students.

J: To what extent is the student today more responsible for his own achievements than he was let's say 25 years ago?

M: I think the students today is a little more quote on his own. He is not as well guided I would say. 25 years ago you guided a kid through school. Right now you come and you put him in school and he's kind of on his own. [Inaudible] the education level of the parents in Charles County has raised quite a bit. Especially among the black community. I taught school for 15 years and I never taught a kid whose parent had a college education.

J: 15 years?

M: I have had two students whose parents were—one parent was a teacher at one time but it was just a matter of going to a normal school and receiving and you taught until my family came by then I quit.

J: So that much has changed?

M: Well the community has become a little more educated.

J: To what extent is that a result of an influx of new families from other parts of the country?

M: I don't think it has too much of an influence at all. We do have some that come in yes who have. But I think the students after they had gone through school I would say education a little more available to them then they have increased their education. Now they can get out. You know there was a time when I came here there wasn't any you know. There wasn't too much of a way out of Charles County. Went up 301 and couldn't hardly go up to [inaudible]. So that's all you could get out. See Charles County was kind of an isolated place. Now the, when they opened up the bridges and the highways. You know Charles County still don't have very little public transportation out of the county.

J: I commuted to Washington for 18 years. I was taking buses up.

M: Right so that's what—I think that's what's happening. All at once they found out—they started getting out and they became a little more educated.

J: To what extent do you attribute this to the nearness of the very, very large federal job market? Not only in Washington but on the outskirts?

M: I think one of the better things that ever happened they made in Charles County was Indian Head. They had a lot of job openings and this increased the income for a lot of these families. They were able to send their kids to high school. They also set a kind of meaningful thing for the kid to become educated because he knew that—

J: He had a goal.

M: Right.

J: He knew what was down there at the end of the road if he turned himself around and prepared to meet that opportunity. He knew it was there.

M: Right.

J: This is, so this motivation is big.

M: And it became kind of a motivating thing too. When I came here the motivation at that point had been picked up to send a lot of these kids away to school. They had a kind of a unique program at Bel Alton when I went there. We asked teachers or—we didn't have a guidance counselor—that we interceded for all the students. We took them to colleges for an interview. We'd check scholarships. As a teacher I was putting a bunch—

J: What you might call a full service [inaudible]—

M: Right I think this was the big thing. Other teachers did this too. I'm pretty sure you picked this up from Mr. Kane and Mrs. Kane. They were very instrumental in helping kids go to college.

J: Wasn't this good though in as much as these students relied on you, they depended on you, they respected you, and they listened to you from start to finish.

M: And also the parents responded in a proper way. They believed in [and hoped] the teacher. That was our only purpose we had was to help them.

J: Now when you began here in Charles County were you teaching math then?

M: Yeah I was kind of a physical ed coach and math teacher at that time.

J: Okay the usual two assignments [and you were responsible for three sometimes].

M: Yeah that's right.

J: Who was the principal there when you started?

M: A Mr. [Sweatt].

J: Mr. [Sweatt]?

M: Right.

J: How is that spelled? Is it spelled with an E?

M: A-T-T.

J: How long has he been in the county? Was he one of the—

M: Well I think he'd been in the county maybe two or three years. He was also a math teacher here and then he became the principal about maybe a year or two years before I got there. Year or something like that.

J: Where was he from? What was his academic background?

M: He was from Virginia but he was down in the southern part of Virginia.

J: I see what school was there down there preparing teachers?

M: Oh you know Virginia is one of these places where you got a college. I think he went to Hampton Institute.

J: Hampton, Virginia?

M: Yeah right Hampton, Virginia.

J: Okay where did you live? You had to find lodgings pretty fast didn't you?

M: Yeah well see when I interviewed with the principal he was in the same predicament that I was so we lived together for a year or so.

J: In a rooming house?

M: Yeah we lived with another family.

J: You ever walk to school?

M: Oh yeah I lived right across the road.

J: Did you know the Hamilton family at all right behind the school? Did you ever meet any of them?

M: No.

J: Because they originally owned that land. [Inaudible sentence].

M: No.

J: He was a [CV].

M: My roommate was a [CV].

J: As a new teacher in Charles County you felt that you got good cooperation from most of the parents? Did they like and respect you after you had been here a little while.

M: From the beginning I think that they liked me. I felt a part of the community as a teacher. I grew up with the teacher being an important person in the community.

J: So you just carried that over into your profession.

M: Right and I felt important. The parents I mean and the students gave me—

[Tape Interruption]

J: Alright now we're starting the second side of this tape. What were some of the interesting experiences you had communicating with parents of your students down there at Bel Alton? Do you remember some of the trying times or heartbreaking times?

M: One of the biggest things is having people to understand what you were talking about and being able to understand what they were talking about. It was being from Virginia you used certain terms and being from Maryland certain other terms than you. You had to understand. For instance, if a mother was going to give birth to a child they would say she is going to be sick on May the 15th.

J: In Virginia?

M: No in Maryland.

J: In here really?

M: Right. That was a term that you—

J: I've never heard that.

M: Never heard that?

J: No.

M: So that's for—this is the way they termed whether somebody was going to give birth to a child. She's going to be sick. So you have to think real [fair] because I'd never heard that.

J: Isn't this kind of a sad way to look at it.

M: Yeah.

J: Did you find that as an educated black in a community where there had been so little that you possibly at times seemed kind of formidable to these parents? Before they really got acquainted with you? Was there a sort of a standoffishness when some of the parents came in?

M: No. I didn't find it because see you as an educator you had to present yourself to the people. And in presenting myself to the people they—you know this is who I am. I didn't find the standoffishness.

J: So there was a warmth there and appreciation of what you meant to the community?

M: Oh yeah very much, very much so. Right it was very much so and it was—it just. It gave you a good feeling to know that you're.

J: Did you find that there were some teachers that weren't able as you were to elicit this feeling from the parents? Are you able to criticize without naming?

M: No see I can't say that I knew any teachers who could not or did not communicate from the setting that I was in. I found that the teachers were very good at communicating. It was kind of a community. The turnover ratio or turnover of teachers at the school I was in was almost zero type thing. You stayed there 10 or 12 years. You know a teachers comes the teacher stayed 10 or 12 years.

J: That's unlike today.

M: So therefore it wasn't a lot of turn over with teachers. New teachers came in but it wasn't a whole lot—

J: Who were these teachers? Do you remember them? Those that were at Bel Alton your first couple of years?

M: Yeah I remember. You mean to name them?

J: By name yeah.

M: Mr. Garrett next door. He was there. There was the sister of the teacher that I had in high school was there and her husband. There was a Ms. [Martley] who lived right across the road from the school. She was there. The principal's wife was teaching there. There was another teacher Mrs. Treadwell. And my wife was teaching.

J: Oh was she? Is that where you met?

M: Right.

J: Oh for heaven's sakes.

M: And several other teachers.

J: Now how many of those teachers are still with us so to speak?

M: Still living I would say about 80 percent of them.

J: That's remarkable.

M: I don't know. A lot of them were there when I got there so they retired and they left. But so therefore [inaudible phrase]. Few of them I know did.

J: Did any of the more senior teachers there ever take you aside and try to brief you? Help you get started? Help you feel more comfortable in this new community? Who were some of those you felt grateful to?

M: It was the kind of a thing that you went—I went to them type thing. And I would say [hey]...and I know very well that the principal's wife [I was working side by side with her].

J: This is Mrs. [Sweatt]?

M: [Sweatt] yeah very helpful. [Inaudible phrase]. They were very good. I would say, "I got a problem here what do I do?" You know at the library and teacher down the hall. It was very good. Very seldom they would call me aside because I would always go to them mostly you know.

J: So this helped you?

M: Oh helped quite a—oh that was a wonderful thing.

J: How old were you now in 1950?

M: 28.

J: Still a little wet behind the ears for a teaching job.

M: Oh yeah right I was very wet behind the ears. I guess I had a little maturity being 28 years old.

J: Now when you graduated from Virginia Union did this give you a baccalaureate degree? A full baccalaureate?

M: Bachelor's right. I had a full degree.

J: A B.A.?

M: B.S.

J: B.S. Okay. Who were some of the older teachers there at Bel Alton. Let's see maybe a couple that were senior like older brothers and sisters?

M: That was Mrs. Martley. She was probably the oldest teacher there. And then there was Mrs. Treadwell who had taught quite a few years.

J: Is she still alive?

M: Yes she's still alive.

J: Probably I should talk to her.

M: She lives in Washington DC. She don't live out here.

J: Did most of the teachers then have their own transportation?

M: No. Most of them had—some of them had transportation but they had what we called a [place inaudible] for the teachers to live. Had a kind of right across the road from the school they had a kind of a rooming house.

J: Who ran it? Who was the?

M: Lady teachers. They lived in them.

J: Sort of a co-op?

M: Yeah right, that's right. So therefore they stayed there and they walked across the road to the school.

J: Now in 1950 was US 301 completed down past Bel Alton?

M: Yes.

J: Was it dualized?

M: No it wasn't dualized.

J: Did you have a car that first year?

M: No.

J: [Stuck up].

M: Right.

J: What on earth did you and the other young teachers do for diversion on weekends?

M: Oh I went out and played ball. Went [inaudible phrase] to play ball. And then the principal he had transportation. I would ride with him to Washington.



J: Was there ever any open—that is open within your faculty there—criticism of the way the school system was being run in Charles County? What were some of the major gripes let's say when you first arrived?

M: I don't know whether there was any major gripe. People there went about doing their job with what they had. I think you had a gripe about materials and books and kind of stuff like that but...the school wasn't big enough the gym was too small. You know little gripes like that.

J: When was Bel Alton built do you remember?

M: I think it's something like 1929.

J: Okay I had a good photograph of it taken. I would guess I'd date the photograph about 1935. What was the condition of the building? Was it kept pretty decent?

M: Yeah.

J: What kind of heat did they have there?

M: They had a regular furnace.

J: Steam, radiant?

M: Radiant heat.

J: Did you have a cafeteria?

M: No. [Inaudible sentence.]

J: The youngsters brought their lunches? If they ate at all.

M: Yeah. There was soup and sandwiches made [inaudible phrase].

J: That you can take [inaudible].

M: And then later on, later on they got the cafeteria.

J: About what percentage of those children during the 1950's went on to college? The average year during that 10 year period, 50 to 60?

M: I don't know I'd say about 10 or 12, 20 percent.

J: So that was a big change from their parents would you say?

M: Oh yeah.

J: In one or two decades. That is significant. And what were some of the schools that they were going to?

M: Maryland State on the Eastern Shore, Bowie, and Morgan State.

J: Were you getting—and where? Temple. Okay up in Philadelphia? Right and Temple.

M: Okay.

J: Okay a great uncle of mine went to Temple.

Unidentified Voice [U]: I used to teach there.

J: Oh did you? When were you there?

U: From 48, 49....

M: So you want to come in?

U: Sit down okay.

J: I'll catch you later.

U: No, no [inaudible phrase].

J: Okay now you listen. [Check to pick him up]. That's great. Okay so in dealing with the parents what sort of activities did the school try to get the parents into to support the school in general?

M: Mostly it was through the PTA.

J: Okay was that a pretty active group?

M: I thought they were very active.

J: And what sorts of things were they doing to raise money?

M: Well the—one of this biggest things was the social activities like the dances. And they'd have cookouts.

J: Picnic type things?

M: Yeah.

J: Bake outs?

M: Bakes yeah, dinners.

J: Bake sales, cookie sales.

M: Yeah and they would have fair food that they'd prepare food.

J: I wanted to just say one thing when Mayme—or Mary Ellen Ransome—began teaching in 1912 she said one of their big jobs was trying to raise money every year. The teachers had to do it. Put on plays, programs, to buy pencils and crayons and art supplies and music supplies. So some progress had been made. Did you know Mr. J. C. Parks?

M: Yes I did.

J: A pretty impressive gentleman?

M: I found him very impressive. He was the one who gave me the job see. He was a supervisor of schools for colored or black.

J: Were you able to determine from your conversation with him what he was looking for in a new teacher? Did he indicate what his greatest concerns were as far as character's concerned and academic background?

M: Yeah he was a great believer in being prepared. Or teaching within your field and what you prepared. So you got the feeling that if he wanted a teacher to teach math he got himself a math teacher. If he wanted a teacher to teach science he got himself a science teacher. If he wanted a social studies teacher he got himself a teacher with—

J: With some qualifications, technical.

M: Yeah he was a great believer in being qualified for the job.

J: How many men teachers were there there when you joined? Was it what percentage of the faculty?

M: I guess about 20 percent I guess.

J: Were you ever able to make any determinations as to which sex was more effective as a teacher?

M: No, no, I never thought about one being more effective.

J: Again as you said before it kind of depended on the individual personality and ability to think, control?

M: Yeah and see when I started teaching these things never occurred to me to check the effectiveness of the teachers as to whether this teacher was male or female. You might have checked the effectiveness of a teacher because that was a teacher not because of male or female. I never thought about it. Maybe someone else.

J: So you served as coach?

M: Yeah Right.

J: From that first year?

M: Yes.

J: And for how many years did you continue?

M: Oh about a couple.

J: And what were your—what were the strongest sports there? Men's stuff sports.

M: I guess basketball. That's all they had, basketball, and a track team. And they had a what they called touch football too. No regular tackle football or anything like that.

J: Baseball?

M: Well later on they got baseball—

J: Which was your favorite sport? Which sport were you best at?

M: I wasn't good at either one of them you know. I would have to coach. I wasn't that good at either one of them [as a coach]. But I did more in the basketball than I guess I did in the others.

J: Did the school turn out some pretty decent basketball players? Did you have some good raw material?

M: You had good raw material but they never produced to the scholarship level because we didn't have the much of a gym. Didn't have that much participation and the kids lived so far away from the school. We couldn't get a chance to practice and perfect. You know right now in order to be a player you have to be—you know you got to have the basketball court in your backyard or you got to be able to take a run in the gym all the time. We never had that.

J: Was in 1950 was the county on a 12 year school program?

M: That's the year that they started the 12 year program for the—I don't know about the white—for the black they started it.

J: I think whites too [inaudible phrase].

M: That's when they started because in 1950 they did not have a graduating class.

J: So how long were you at Bel Alton?

M: 15 years.

J: 15 years, [19]65. Do you look back on those as being good years?

M: Good years right.

J: What was the size of the student body your last year?

M: I think about 432.

J: All grades?

M: All grades yes.

J: Okay Bel Alton was grades one through 12?

M: Yeah but we had—it was separated now. The elementary school was [cut]. Although the things were [touched] together they were separated. Had different principals and everything.

J: In the same building?

M: Yeah.

J: But everything else was separate.

M: When I first started off the little elementary school was out in the yard type.

J: A second building?

M: Yeah.

J: Were most of these children bused in?

M: Yeah. I guess 90 percent of them.

J: How was the county split? Along what line? From what point on did they go to Pomonkey and from what point on did they go to Bel Alton?

M: You know it's difficult to draw that line.

J: Was it irregular?

M: Very, very irregular because it ran from Pisgah to Benedict. The line did so therefore if you lived in Malcom and Benedict and Hughesville you went all the way around. You went to Pomonkey all the way over to Pisgah. Then Pisgah say from Welcome to La Plata to Wicomico and Cobb Island [inaudible phrase]. It was a line that's drawn up across the county like that.

J: I suppose if it hadn't been for integration there would have been an immediate need for at least one more black high school in the county.

M: Oh yeah I think it wouldn't been.

J: Maybe in Waldorf to Hughesville.

M: Well [you nailed it]. I think you would've needed it in the Waldorf area.

J: By 10 years ago.

M: Yeah or the Malcolm area. That's a pretty populated black neighborhood.

J: Aside from your academic responsibilities and activities, what were your concerns there as a teacher? Let's think of things like health services, security in the home, home conditions? Did you somehow find yourself getting drawn into extra academic areas of concern, social concerns as a teacher?

M: Yeah. My concern was to find a way to get the people out to explore other fields because it was kind of a stagnant type thing down here. You grew up, you sharecropped on the farm, you raised tobacco, and then you sold your tobacco, and you went back and did that again. We saw a lot of good students and this is the way they were headed to. All they'd do was to raise tobacco and when the fishing season come in they all took up fishing. You know and it was kind of—I could see kind of a rut type of thing that people were in down there. They never—for my thing it was if I could just find a way to get them out of this type of stalemate type business.

J: Were you able to make some inroads?

M: Well I'll say what I [inaudible]. I won't answer that one but I think the school was able. The school was able to make a lot of inroads.

J: I can see this now has been perhaps your greatest challenge and maybe the source of your greatest reward. You were able to do something. Can you remember back to some of those students now that really were able to turn themselves around and get themselves out of that rut?

M: Yeah.

J: Are you in touch with a few of them?

M: One thing about living in Charles County now is that you're in touch with quite a few of them.

J: They're still here or are they retired and come back?

M: They are some of them left and come back and when you meet them or see them you know [inaudible phrase]—

J: You're still Mr. Washington to them?

M: Oh I'm still that. Even some of the people—some of the parents that I knew they're say 10, 15, or 20 years older than I am I'm still Mr. Washington.

J: I'll tell you a story.... So it must be very gratifying to you from time to time to run into these young people who are now almost middle aged?

M: Right and some retired.

J: Some retired.

M: And they're—

J: That's not too great to know either.

M: And they're very, very nice. In fact I'm still Mr. Washington and how're you and check the family. You know what I'm saying.

J: What were some of the careers that these young people got into sooner or later? Those who didn't go back to the farm?

M: Well most of them went for the government. A lot of them went to Indian Head to work. Some went away to school and became...a couple doctors and [inaudible phrase].

J: What do you think the impact was of the easy to get second hand automobile and better roads? Did that help get them places?

M: Yeah that helped quite a bit. In fact I think the Naval Ordinance Station helped a lot because—not [them kids] but other high schools and went to the Naval Station to work where they had a regular income.

J: The closest thing to true equality they had ever run into.

M: Right. And now I see some of these young men now who went to Indian Head and worked 12 years, or 20 years, 30 years and are retired. [Inaudible sentence].

M: Able to enjoy a life their parents couldn't even dream of?

J: Right that's right. And like I'm saying they were able to build their own house and get off the farm.

J: Do you think the average young black that you helped in school feels that he has made some gains in his lifetime? Economic and social?

M: Oh yeah.

J: Have you ever discussed this with?

M: Oh yeah. They all feel—most of them feel—feel that they are far better off than their parents. And they feel much better. Most of them have transportation.

J: What about that next generation? Their children. Do they ever discuss the plight of the next generation of people?

M: Yeah some of them are a little disgusted in the next generation. They don't feel that they are doing what they should. Some of them are very proud of their children but some of them say, "I didn't have that opportunity but he's not taking advantage of the situation."

J: Can they put their finger on some of the causes? Everybody tries.

M: Yeah I think that sometimes the finger pointing is just different from family to family. Too much freedom. They get a chance to go somewhere. Transportation is too available for them and the crowd they run with you know. Most of the thing [inaudible phrase]. Then I noticed that one thing that I found out was the blaming. The next generation had someone to blame. And I found that a lot of blacks blamed it on the white teachers because a lot of whites blame it on the black teacher also. See I didn't do so well because she didn't like me because I was black.

J: That's true. We may be seeing the results of the first years.

M: Yeah right so therefore but it wasn't necessarily a true statement but the idea that there was someone to blame for their failure. And I think the exposure to being able to get out and do. They never had to stay home and prepare themselves with school as much.

J: As bad as the job market is now I suppose for most people down here it's never been much better.

M: It is. There was a time it became very good but now it's slacking off. Although there's a lot of availability of jobs but they are not paying at what. To get a job it's the easiest thing now. It's easier now to get a job. But to get a meaningful job it's very difficult.

J: About what time in your teaching career did you and your wife begin to feel that integration here in Charles County was really coming about and was just around the corner? Was there a point when things were happening rather fast?

M: Yeah right.

J: Faster than you thought they might?

M: I don't know about faster than I thought but it seems to me that you know this happened in 1954 when the law—

J: Supreme Court decision.

M: Yeah. Okay it really didn't take hold down here until 12, 11 years later. And then all at once it had this big flip over. I think this was...kind of fast moving at that time. It moved very slow up to that point and then all at we got this big flip over here.

J: Well I really am beginning to feel that the community owes a great debt to teachers, black and white, who met that thing head on without a great deal of preparation. All the sudden it was handed to them. This is it. And you had black teachers and white teachers teaching side by side that for years had been meeting maybe at conventions or on the street and just a polite nod. All the sudden they're there under the same roof. Using the same washbasin and smoking in the same room. It's very impressive.

M: Right and it reached a point where you looked up you were white but you had a black principal. And [all at once] you had a black principal [inaudible phrase] white one. So it was a



big deal. But I think the teachers took it. Now it wasn't one of those kinds of things that was automatic. It was kind of a thing that I think the school, the school board, and the superintendent ahead of time they prepared. [There was preparation] [inaudible]. And once they say this is it [you have a lot of teachers to some left]. At the same time that the black teacher had the better hand because what was happening at that time that they were all the counties around were accepting black teachers. So what happened was that the black teachers say in Charles County, Prince George's County they were paying more money. [Inaudible phrase] and Howard County was paying more so therefore you got all these offers as a black teacher to say come on. A lot of black teachers left at that time. The black teacher at that time the records show that they were better.

J: So actually you got out of school at a pretty good time because you were then an experienced teacher, you were a senior teacher at this great day in 1966. ready to pitch in and you were mature and steady and I would say you had an easier time of it, I'm just guessing, than those older than you and those younger than you.

M: Yeah because I say at that time—see when this big turn over then they were looking for someone to work at the board. I left the school and I went to the central office.

J: Okay let's got into that now. Your last year at Bel Alton was what 60?

M: 65.

J: You finished there the last full year of segregation.

M: Yes and the switch, switched over. I was—

J: Good time to take a break. It was a good time for because—I thought it was a good time because the time of integration they have to you couldn't integrate part of the system. You had to integrate the whole school system.

J: From top to bottom.

M: From top to bottom. So therefore the staff at the central office had to have some black people too.

J: Who was the superintendent in the fall of 66? Was it Barnhart?

M: Barnhart or Martin.

J: Martin came further.

M: Brown. Doctor Brown was the, Doctor Brown. When I went to the central office Doctor was superintendent. And I think—

J: Barnhart had left. He was here in 58. Barnhart came here early 58 or late 57.

M: Okay well then Brown when I went to work at the central office Brown was superintendent and he left. And then Jenkins?

J: He came along somewhere in there.

M: Yeah and then Jenkins came.

J: Bruce was it?

M: Bruce Jenkins came. Then [inaudible].

J: Right okay.

M: [And then Bloom].

J: And that brings us up to date. Who were some of the highest position blacks in administration during the first five years of integration? Who was at headquarters? You in administration.

M: Mrs. Neal was one of the supervisors. Mrs. Lucas [she was there]. Then on the Doctor Mitchell came. Melvin Hall was there for about a year. [Inaudible phrase] central office [inaudible]. That was about it.

J: Was this a pretty good crew to be on the job at that time? Were there some weak links? We won't discuss personalities.

M: You mean weak links as far as the rest of the people there are concerned?

J: Yeah.

M: Yeah again you could've had a weak link but see when I went on the job I was concerned about the job. I was concerned thinking about doing what I was supposed to do and not necessarily didn't look around for weak links but there were some weak links.

J: It was a shake down period.

M: Yeah and there were some people who were there that didn't want to be there.

J: Do you recall any of your younger black teachers who you had known at Bel Alton coming to you and expressing concerns and reservations that maybe they were having a bit of a difficult time? Did they call on you as a friend to get through some of those rough spots the first few years?

M: Yeah you know—

J: I'm thinking of things like maybe a lack of confidence.

M: At the last three years at Bel Alton I was vice-principal see so therefore you're right I did have people who you know that would come to me and [we would talk with].

J: What kinds of problems were the black teachers most concerned about?

M: The biggest concern that I guess had was discipline. As you look back the discipline problem was not necessarily bad but they were—

J: But they perceived it as?

M: On one or two students. It wasn't the kind of thing where I had a discipline problem in the whole school. But this student here I had discipline—I have a problem with him, I have a problem with her [over here a certain time of the day.] That was just about it.

J: The kids themselves deserve credit for getting through that.

M: Oh yes very much so. In my 15—

J: Everybody you know knocks [inaudible]—

M: Yeah in my 15 years teaching in Bel Alton High School I never saw a girl smoke. I only saw one or two boys smoking down in the basement.

J: And never any sign of drug abuse.

M: No.

J: Any alcohol problems?

M: No it could've had. Never at school. Never at school.

J: It didn't cause any trouble.

M: Oh no never. In fact the discipline problem was darn near zero. [Just] once in a while couple of guys square off with each other and before you know it, you know. The kids that did the little things but when they saw you coming they would stop. So therefore [inaudible phrase]. I walk up to them and sometimes a couple of boys around the corner fighting and I walk out there and when I get there everybody standing about looking about like nothing happened. So you know you don't even say anything about those things you know.

J: What were some of your new problems now at the new level in the new job? Did you run into a few things there that you hadn't anticipated? This is a whole new—

M: Right. The problem I thought I was gonna have it wasn't as great. See now the school was integrated and my job was then to deal with families whose kids were not succeeding or having problems going to school. And I was wondering how I was going to have to relate to the white families because I'd never had any dealings with the white family. And the most interesting thing about it I was assigned to La Plata. This see it was the other person who was assigned before I was he was assigned, he was white, he was assigned to La Plata but immediately the lady who's in charge the board she switched me to La Plata.

J: What was her name?

M: Farrell. Cecilia Farrell. She switched me to La Plata because I don't know I guess she figured that I knew more about the La Plata area. Here I had more whites to deal with than I would have had blacks. There was a little concern in the beginning but once I got into it I found out that this was one of my assets because I had no problems. Very few problems I say dealing with the white families me being black dealing with the white families. Because I found out that they accepted me as dealing with their problems more so than they would accept another white person because I was not a threat to them. I was there strictly to help them and they got all they could from me [inaudible]. That was very interesting. I had anticipated that I was going to have problems but.

J: So for the most part you were accepted with respect as a professional? Just somebody doing a job on their behalf.

M: Right. That's right. So that made my job much easier than I had anticipated because you know. I was imagining going to a certain family's house that may not accept black people but.

J: You'd have no way of knowing.

M: You're right and I didn't and did not occur. I take it back. It did occur say one, two times and then it was a matter of griping. Not a matter of me but just a matter griping period.

J: The system not you?

M: Right, right it wasn't me. [I understand why you were here] but I can accept it. But it was pretty interesting.

J: I bet it was. Do you feel that you're a fuller, broader, more complete person for that being thrown into that?

M: Yeah and the—

J: And coming out of it a winner.

M: Yeah. I think I came out because right now its fuller as the people are concerned because I can meet these kids now that I dealt with but they were white and still I'm still Mr. Washington, "And you remember this. You went down to my house." The parents will say, "Come on by to see me sometime."

J: Its one of the great rewards.

M: Yeah and the only—the thing, the thing that I had I guess I call it one of my success points was that see communication. A lot of the staff at the board office La Plata were quote from West Virginia, Pennsylvania.

J: [That's true. Starkey was from West Virginia].

M: That's right. So therefore the communication was not as good as you would have thought it was when we were dealing with these parents who had problem kids.

J: But you were a home town, a home townner.

M: Yeah at this point that they—when we would talk the parents did not know or didn't quite understand what they were trying to say. So therefore I became kind of an interpreter. Often [inaudible] story of [inaudible phrase] Sampson and son. Where this cop come by and this guy would say, "What does he say," and he would interpret what he was saying. I find myself interpreting sometimes to the parent what the and it's very interesting. I'll tell you I really liked my job and I think as far as me communicating with the people I had no problem.

J: That's the most marvelous story. In college you really weren't prepared specifically for this sort of thing were you?

M: No, no.

J: You grew.

M: No see I went to a high school was black, college was black, I came out to work in a black, and all at once I was switched over but I didn't have any problems.

J: Are you pleased at this point with the way things have developed for Charles County schools since that point? What reservations do you have?

M: Please just please it's not...you never—

J: Satisfied?

M: Right you're never satisfied and you're never completely...but you get the feeling that a lot of good things have happened. A lot of things happened slow. A lot of things there's still room for improvement. I don't think that—but I think for my point I think that it went pretty good.

J: What year did you retire now?

M: 1983.

J: Well you [haven't been out very long].

M: No I haven't been out very long.

J: What were you doing during the last five years?

M: I was working with pupil services [inaudible].

J: What did that entail? What were your major publications—I mean responsibilities?

M: Accounting of the students in the school, problem kids in school I dealt with, drop outs or potential drop outs, the attendance at school.

J: Would have been a very, very difficult job.

M: Yeah it was a very interesting job. If a kid was stayed out of school say for a week or two and no one knew why he was out I had to go find out. It [was a call to action]. I dealt with suspended kids and pregnant girls.

J: Were there some eye openers in this [inaudible] as to the nitty gritty of life?

M: Yeah it was—

J: This time at this place.

M: Yeah one of the biggest eye openers was before integration say La Plata High School never had a pregnant girl. And all at once during integration when we started to dealing with pregnancy we had a lot of pregnancy. So I—you know you would think.

J: Could you ever figure out what happened? Why the loosening of?

M: No one reported that see. In other words it wasn't, didn't go on the record as showing you know. So therefore if you became pregnant in the school you just dropped out of school. [Inaudible sentence].

J: So this was a whole new way of dealing with it.

M: Yeah right and then they developed this parenting program. You find out that a lot of white [inaudible].

J: The statistics just varied.

M: Yeah for a while statistics was not reported properly.

J: What social changes could you observe underway during the last decade of your teaching career as far as the school age—well let's say the high school age kids were concerned? Change and I'm talking about changes in values in morays and in philosophy of life. What was happening during that last 10 years? Because you had to wrestle with this.

M: Yeah. I think that socially the school became better. I think the kids became [inaudible] the school. The kids became better socially. They have more exposure you know. You have television [inaudible phrase], transportation got better.

J: These are pluses?

M: Yeah.

J: In the development socially [of all of them].

M: Right and it—

[End of Tape]