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INTERVIEW WITH REVEREND JUNIUS MOODY

July 31, 1984

Q. Reverend Moody I know we've talked a lot of times about when you originally came here but for our tape, could you tell me again, when did you originally come to James City County?

A. I originally came here in 1925. I didn't stay that time. I came to stay in 1926.

Q. Did you come down to be a pastor, at that time?

A. Yes. At the New Zion Baptist Church on Longhill Road. I was just a part-time pastor. They were having services two Sundays a month and I was in school at the time. I'd come down here on those two weekends of the month.

Q. You would come down from where?

A. From Richmond. I was in school in Richmond. I was at Virginia Union University.

Q. Oh, you were still studying to be a pastor then.

A. That's right.

Q. Didn't you tell me you were also a teacher in those days?

A. Yes. When, after I finished, in '27, I wasn't making enough money, I was just squeaking so I applied for a teaching job. And I taught in Orange County, Virginia for two years. And then around 1930, I came to James City County and started teaching.

Q. You taught here?

A. Yes.

Q. Where did you teach?

A. I taught here. There first was a one room school. Up there at St. John, on the road where Mr. Branch lives, at that church. I taught

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up there about four years, all the grades and after that, they consolidated the schools on the upper end of the county and moved us down to Chickahominy where there was about a five room school. And I was the teaching principal and the bus driver. And the supervisor of maintenance. I taught there four or five years until the, all of the schools in the county consolidated with James City County. Then I came down to Bruton Heights. This was the days before integration, of course. I taught seventh grade there for awhile and I ended up, before I retired, I was teaching the fifth grade. And my total teaching career in Virginia, I mean James City County, was 30 years. My wife also taught. She taught for 40 years.

Q. So when did she quit teaching?

A. She retired before I did. I retired 11 years ago, she must have, been about 15 years ago that she retired. She died July 1975. She's been dead nine years now.

Q. Tell me about that one room schoolhouse up near where Mr. Branch lives. How many students did you have, do you remember?

A. I had around 20 some.

Q. Gracious. All in one room?

A. All in one room.

Q. How did you heat the building?

A. ell, we had one pot belly stove.

Q. With wood?

A. With wood, yes.

Q. And you had to cut the wood yourself and bring it in?

A. Well, they furnished us some wood. The county furnished us the wood. But in the early days of the school for blacks in this county

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all in the south, most of them started in large halls or in, you know, where lodges meet or in churches. Because when I came to, when I first started school, where I was born in Smithfield, Virginia, there weren't any definite schools for blacks. We went to school in the large hall, the Odd Fellows Hall. And just here recent, not too recent, but Julius Rosenwald, who was an executive for Sears Roebuck, opened up a foundation for building black schools in the south, called the Rosenwald School. And how they operated, the county would pay one-third and the local black citizen would raise a third, Julius Rosenwald would pay the other third.

Q. Really? And this was anywhere in the south, then?

A. All over the south. I think he built about 4,000.

Q. Good heavens.

A. So that was the early school here in James City County and we had a school in every locality.

Q. Like in different halls and things of this sort?

A. In different halls, yes.

Q. Was that actually a hall up there where you were, up near Mr. Branch's house?

A. Yes, it was. It was a hall. When blacks came out of slavery they turned to the church and they also turned to these lodges. They were mostly burial societies, you know. You could bury bodies for about \$100. They would get together in these organizations and pay, maybe .25 or .50 a month. And this hall where I was teaching in, I don't know why they had that name but it was a lodge that originated in Richmond called the "True Reformers." I think they made that lodge when I . . . at least I think they turned the land over to the

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- church. It was right there where that St. John's Church is.
- Q. Well, tell me was this in the days before Mr. Rosenwald started funding schools, when you were teaching up there. So you didn't have much funding at all?
- A. Well, he had built some schools but he hadn't built one up there see. When I moved down to Chickahominy I came into what they called the Rosenwald School.
- Q. Well, when you were up in the one room, who funded you? Did the county?
- A. The county payed me and bought the wood to heat and whatever . . . well, the teachers had to buy most of the supplies. We would sell candy. Then we had patron [indiscernible] who would raise money to help us buy equipment.
- Q. Well, what about books and desks and all? Was that up to the county or up to you all to supply?
- A. Well, in the beginning it was up to the individual. But later on the college started supplying books. My first salary as a teacher up there was \$90.00 a month.
- Q. Oh, gracious, and that was in 19 what, '30 something?
- A. Yes. 1930 something. But that wasn't too bad.
- Q. You could live on that back then.
- A. Yeah, you could, yeah.
- Q. Oh, my word. You weren't married at that point, were you?
- A. I got married in '27.
- Q. So you were.
- A. Yeah, I was married then. Well, my wife was also a teacher. She was teaching in Williamsburg at that time. I think she was getting

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about \$70.00 a month.

Q. Were you living in this house right here?

A. We built this house in 1932. It would surprise you, what this house cost me.

Q. I'm sure it would.

A. We moved in here in the fall of 1932 and the total cost of building this house, plastering and everything was \$1,000.

Q. Oh, my goodness!

A. But we didn't have that.

Q. That was a lot of money back then.

A. Yeah, we had to borrow \$500.00.

Q. That was right during the depression.

A. Yeah, it was. Right in the middle of the depression. And the way we got this house built, there was all Longhill wood land. We bought this first property up here and we had it cleaned as much as could. And the fellow came by from Hampton, somebody told him that I was getting ready to build and he was a contractor. So he showed me the plans of the house and everything and said he would allow himself \$3.00 a day. [Inaudible] And some men, he went down to the community and got some men to help him and gave them \$1.00 a day.

Q. Oh, my goodness!

A. When we got through with the house, we didn't have any bathrooms because they weren't able to put tht in. And I think it was about five or six years before we got rid of the outdoor toilet and everything. But five or six years but when we got ready to put the bath in it cost us as much, almost as much as the house.

Q. Oh, no! So you didn't have running water until then?

A. No, no. We had a well.

Q. Out back?

A. It's still there, I mean I don;t have city water yet. I have the city sewer but we have such good water . . . my son who lives out at Carver Gardens comes up here to get all his drinking water. But now that water, that well, is a dug well. The man dug that well 40 feet in the earth for .50 a foot.

Q. Oh, my heavens! And that was back in the 1930's, 1932, when you built the house?

A. We had the well when we built the house because we needed the water.

Q. When you were in that school, the one room school, how many grades did you teach?

A. Well, we called ourselves as teaching all the grades from the beginners on up. But now maybe, say in the sixth grade, we might have just two.

Q. So there wasn't a high school then, separate for the older teenagers?

A. Well, there was. There was this, what they called this training school in Williamsburg. Down where the brickyard is now. Well, those, when we got through with the seventh grade up here, they were transported down to the high school. They were transported down to Williamsburg to what they call the training school. That school started about 1925 and that operated until they built Bruton Heights School. At first going down there, their parents had to pay their transportation and then we had a bus committee, we bought a bus. I think we charged somewhere about .50 per week or something like that.

- Q. What kind of opportunities were there for black students when they finished school and wanted to go out and go to work? Were there many job opportunities around here then?
- A. Well, no. Most of them when they went to college, they went other places. We had a good number of them left here and went to Hampton Institute and Virginia State College at Petersburg, St. Paul's Episcopal School up there at Lawrenceville. Most of them went into, I don't remember that most of them . . . but a good number went into teaching because that was about the only thing that was open for them. They never thought of going into [inaudible] managerial positions, something like that wasn't even open for them.
- Q. Were there many positions open to black citizens with Colonial Williamsburg? Or was that a possibility, back in those days?
- A. Well, no. They got the menial jobs there. But just laborers and everything. And they didn't have any waiters and cooks [inaudible].
- Q. Well, on this end of the county would most of the black citizens work on the farms?
- A. Yes. This was predominantly farming when I came here. Right across the road there was what called the War Hill Farm. That's my first knowing Mr. Branch.
- Q. Oh, really?
- A. His father and him were farming over there. Most of that land was clear. It's grown up in the year and I knew Mr. Branch then as a young man. He used to be over there plowing. They had potatoes, white potatoes. Chief crop around here then.

Q. What kind of a wage were those . . . what kind of a wage would a person make working in farming?

A. A dollar a day.

Q. A dollar a day? Was that enough back in the '30s, to buy enough food? How would you have to eat?

A. Yeah, I think so. I think it was good because I can remember when you went to the store with \$10.00, you couldn't bring all the food out of there that you could buy with \$10.00.

Q. Oh my goodness.

A. When we first started keeping house here. We had two children and my wife, we would buy about \$3.00 or \$4.00 worth on Saturday and that would probably last all the week except going back and getting a loaf of bread or something like that. Some people call them the good old times but I don't want everything to back to . . .

Q. When you say that you mean because of the difference in the relationships between whites and the blacks or because it was just so hard to make ends meet?

A. It was so hard to make ends meet then. We always had nice, [inaudible]. There had always been some good white folk, your know, as well as some good black folks. As I was a child and I got ready to go they didn't have any high school at all. But Virginia Union University called themselves the University but they had a high school department there. Which was necessary because blacks weren't afforded high school much in Virginia. When that school opened 1860 I think something like that. Anyway it was after the civil war about 1868 or something like that. So when my mother was a maid for Col Day. Mr. Parke Rouse know his family. Col. Day was a colenel in the

civil war. When my mother was a maid there at their home in Smithfield. And they were just as nice as they could be and I got ready to go to school old Col. Day had died ?????? were progressive I mean very rich. My sister and I went to high school that same, she went to Virginia State at Petersburg I went to Virginia Union and for three or four years, Miss Virginia we used to call her would give my mother \$50 apiece for us. Which was a fabous ^{some} back ^{50m} then.

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Q. Each month she would give you?

A. No, no, just for the whole year.

Q. Oh, for the whole year.

A. But, you could go down and stay almost a whole year for \$50.00 dollars.

Q. That was all the tuition and everything would cost you.

A. Uh hhu,

Q. My goodness.

A. Most of those schools like Virginia Union were established by the American Baptist Association. White association in the north. They build these universities and college all through the south. And uh, when I first went to Virginia Union I was 16 years old, I think. This is in high school ???? we didn't have any other advantages. Doctor Clark, he was white northern, he was president of Union. He was the first man to ever call me mister. He put his arm around me when I was ???? he called me Mr. Moody I hope you are getting along well. I think my tuition ended about, tuition and board ended was \$12.50 or \$15.00 a month.

Q. Oh, gracious.

A. But, he had ample opportunity to work. Most of the work was done by the students. So I worked in the kitchen, and most of the times I didn't have to ???? but I was a monk. ??????

Q. Now, was this seminary Union Theological, is what it was called, right.

A. It was called Virginia Union University.

Q. Virginia Union University. Was this just for black students? or was it. . . .

A. Well, it was for males when I went there and they had this high school department, course around 1923 they did away with the high school. Then they had the college department. And then they had the theological school. And, of course, the girls school was adjacent to the ???? Parkson College. But, eventually they merged so that now its male and female at Virginia Union.

Q. But back then was it, when it was just male, was it black males or black and white males?

A. Well,

Q. When you went to school, yes?

A. We just had black males, I mean, whites didn't come there, now personally the majority of the faculty was white. Who would come down from the north. Would eventually, faculty turned black, I think there are a few whites there now i the theological department.

Q. When you first went there did you know you were going to go on to be a paster, was it someting you always wanted?

A. Yes, I , well back in my youth the only place we had to go was to church. We didn't even have any movies for blacks in town . So, we went to church, went to Sunday School, my father gave us ??????????

3d to go to Sunday school or someting like that.

Q. Oh, my!

A. Then we'd stay for the morning service. Would come back, and, of course, we couldn't play ball or go swimming on Sunday. I think, one or two people in the community had ^{victrolas} ~~victrolers~~ we'd go down and play ~~victroler~~. Then we'd go back to BYP in the afternoon, Baptist Young People Union. After that we'd stay for night service. And, that's all I knew. I thought that preaching was the ~~????~~ the greatest thing the greatest thing. I decided then that I wanted to preach. The paster of our church at that time was a graduate of Virginia Union, and they gave me all kinds of encouragement. He wrote to the president and told them I was coming and everything. Right now, since I been out I constentlly go back to that church. Every first Sunday in July.

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Q. Do you?

A. This is the first summer I've

Q. Over in Smithfield?

A. Over in Smithfield, yeah.

Q. My, goodness.

A. All my whole family, seven of us, all seven of us and mother and father were members of that church. This time the paster and his wife had the alter decorated with flowers in memory of my mother and my oldest sister who ???????? down through the years. I had a ??? relationship with that church, because I joined it over 60 years ago.

Q. When you were young boy growing up you said your mother worked as a maid for Col. Day what sort of things did your father do?

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A. My father was, he was very lucky, they came, I was born in Virginia my oldest sister, Mary was born in North Carolina. Well, my father said he came from North Carolina to Virginia because they was paying, I think he said 50¢ a day, on the farm in North Carolina. And Virginia was paying 60¢ a day. So he came to Virginia and he got a job with a Mr. Nelms, who was a paster, and he was just making mortar for Mr. Nelms, he a white man, and Mr. Nelms taught him the ~~masonry~~ ^{masonry} trade. And then he went on for himself. And as, the boys were pre-teenage my father was making 60¢ an hour. And I wondered what we were going to do with all that money. Smithfield had those peanut factory's and all that. And then there were only getting a dollar a day. And my father was making 60¢ an hour.

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Q. So to you he was rich?

A. Well, we were middle class. I didn't know I was in the ^{gh} getto until here lately. Cause I didn't know anything about that. But everybody down there, all of us were just about on the same level, you know.

Q. Well, here in James City County over the last fifty some years that you've seen changes, would you say that you didn't know you lived in a getto, because you had never heard the word? Would you say that theres any real area in James City County that you would call that? Or that used to be like that fifty years ago?

A. Yes, blacks had a way of settling together, see, and whites, well most of the whites were on big farms. When I first came here this was purely farming area. And, if anyone who has been away from here fifty years would not recogize theis place if they came back here again, because they changed all this where I'm here now was woods

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land and over there in Morehill that was wheat farm and all up there on ??? road where Mr. DeBranch lived was and there are still big farms up there, but they got some up there called farmettes they didn't have any farmettes back in that day, they had great big farms.

Q. Was this a dirt road right out here, instead of Route 60

A. Yeah, when I came here it was, no Route 60 was here when I came.

But all of these back side roads were dirt roads. This road going down to Centerville sometime in the wintertime and you all aboard it would take half a day to get down there.

Q. Oh, No!

A. I mean you get in mud holding you. And you'd have to get out and everything. And even Longhill Road was a dirt road.

Q. So transportation was slow and difficult right?

A. Oh, yeah, right, slow and difficult. When I first came here they had a local train coming down from Richmond. People said it stopped at every house and every double house they stopped twice. But, it would stop at ^{Diason} ~~Discom~~ at the old mill, stop again at Toano. The[^] it would stop at Norge, and stop at Lightfoot, and stop at Ewell and stop at Williamsburg. And good number of people up in this section would walk up here to Lightfoot and catch that morning train going down to Williamsburg. And spend the day down there and come back in the after, in the evening on the evening train.

Q. How much would it cost to ride the train?

A. I really don't know, I guess a matter of a few pennies I guess from here to Lightfoot, from Lightfoot down there I guess 25¢ maybe.

Q. Was that, did you mainly use the train or did you have a car that

you drove?

A. I didn't have a car when I first came. I used the train. And then very soon the peninsula bus started to operating. But, the segregated train, I mean we didn't know anything else. The blacks sat up in front near the door. In a car that was half baggage.

Q. So the train was segregated?

A. Yeah, the train and the buses was segregated. Even the street buses in all the cities were segregated. When I first got on a street car in Newport News and I saw a sign up there "separation for races" and I just started using that, and I don't know, I thought it meant that if they were going to have a race the car (. . .laughing could hear person) ^{separated} separated. But I do remember one experience I had in Richmond, I hadn't been there for long, we got on this trolley going down Broad Street and, I think, where my room is now we sat two near the front the conductor got and stopped the car, and told us to get i the back. ha, ha, ha.

Q. Oh, dear. Did you make any fuss?

A. No we didn't. We were afraid to make a fuss they'd put you in jail if you make any fuss. But, this is a new day in which we are living now.

Q. Well, it certainly is. Well, when, during the heart of the depression back in the 30's around here, um, because of the farming the economy do you think people suffered as much here as they did in other parts of the country?

A. No, they didn't. Back in that day I don't think there was anything like it. Soup line or anything. Because very soon ^{recreation} recreation moved they weren't paying very much, but most of the men around here got

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jobs in the constructing of these buildings. And things like that. So there never was any real suffering around here. And, you could go on these farms, like Mr. Branches farm after they got up all the potatoes that they thought were salable they would turn the field over and you could pick up all you want. And a whole lot of vegetables were the same way. And, there wasn't any big suffering around here. People always had enough to eat. When the Inn first opened I knew some fellows that waited there and they tell me breakfast at the Inn cost 75¢. And, I thought, great day in the morning that's somethin'.

Q. You couldn't even get a cup of coffee for that down there any more I wouldn't think.

A. No, but just think that's 75¢ for a man that had to work most of all day for 75¢.

Q. That's true, that's true. So that would mean you couldn't really eat out very much could you?

A. No, you couldn't eat out very much. When we had black cafeterias back then we called them cook shops.

Q. Is that like a restaurant?

A. That's right.

Q. Well, where were thoses located, right in Williamsburg?

A. Right in Williamsburg. And we could go down and get a bowl of beans for 10¢ or something like that.

Q. Oh, my gracious. Well, your children were born during the thirty's right?

A. Well, now let me explain about my children. My wife had, these are my step children, (oh) when I don't reacon you remember the article

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that ???? wrote on me when it ????

Q. No, I don't think I ever saw it?

A. And he said in that article that Rev. Moody has a favorite granddaughter that step granddaughter whose name was Deidre Rains. She even got so mad she said I ain't you step granddaughter I'm your daughter. See, now when I married Mrs. Moody, that's her picture there, Herbert was two years old, Jenny, that's her family there, Jenny was about four, and they knew any father but me, and Jenny's first husband died the week that Herbert, Jr. was born.

Q. Oh, how terrible.

A. Well, I couldn't tell the difference if they were my biological children because they thought so much of me. I married in 1927. Jenny was in Richmond with Herbert's sister and her and Virginia came to live with us after I married her. She went to school here. Then she went to school in Fayetteville, North Carolina and she came back to Hampton Institute to finish up

Q. When they were growing up during the 30's and the 40's where were they able to go to school?

A. Well, both of them went to training school.

A. In Williamsburg.

A. In Williamsburg, well, now first before they went there. My wife and a Miss Thomas called a Miss Logenwall School in Centerville. Where they did finish that school at seventh grade and then they went on to James City County training school. Both of the graduated from the training school.

Q. And then went on to college?

A. And then went on the college Herbert went on to Virginia State and

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Jenny went on to Fayetteville. She only stayed at Fayetteville two years and then she came back to Hampton Institute and finished her medical training there.

- Q. When they were younger in those days, what could a teenager do for entertainment? What kind of things were available to em, being black teenagers?
- A. Not very much, we had a car we'd go riding sometimes on Sunday. I remember one Sunday we were sitting out here on the lawn all four of us and one of the neighbors drive through next day she told Jenny. Jenny you look like a happy family up there on that hill. No we weren't happy cause we wanted to go somewheres and momma and daddy didn't want to go any wheres. I guess I didn't have very much gas. Gas was, ah, you could get 5 gallons of gas for 90¢ then.
- Q. Oh, my word! Was that back when it was rationed back during the war?
- A. Yeah, some of that time and even before then.
- Q. Well could, they couldn't go to movies in town could they?
- A. No.
- Q. Did the black teenagers continue to do a lot of their socializing in the church just like you said you did when you were young?
- A. Yes, yes, yes. Now people who like my son and my daughter who lived around in the 50's. When they were teenagers that's was about all the recreation they knew. Sometimes we would go to ah, to Hampton or Richmond, could go to a movie there. A segregated movie. But, now remember, I hate to be talkng about my family so much.
- Q. No, that's what I want you to talk about.
- A. I remember, now Herbert after his children Dredrie and Calimmia got

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????? he had very serious accident. Automoblle accident and he was a vetran, and he was in the hospital there in Kecoughtan. So we used to go down to see him. The children couldn't go in the hospital. We passed by ????? saw a sign that said no white ???? so she said grandmother can you and granddaddy put me off here so I can see the ???? and pick me up when you come back. ?????????? And that thing worried her to death until we told her why we couldn't do that. It was ??????. And then she got mad with all the white folks in the world. It didn't last too long. That's the only thing about segreation it was really humiliating especially when your children didn't know and you had to explain it to them. I guess that's the reason Dredrie married a white man. But, he seems to be very fond of her. He seems to be rich I think. He's an artist. ??????

Q. And that was the one that was married just last weekend?

A. Yes, just last weekend.

Q. Well, you say your wife taught for many years. Did she always teach in black schools or did the schools intergrate and then she moved?

A. She never taught in any of the intergrated schools. She retired before the schools got intergrated. I taught for two years in intergrated schools. Bruton Heights was intergrated when I went there. Taught there two years. And, I think intergration went off more smoothly here than in any where else. We never had any real trouble.

Q. Did you ever feel you were mistreated as a teacher? Once the schools were intergrated? Things were were just very peaceful.

A. No, no. Bruton Heights always had a black principal. And of course some of the administrative there were white. But we got along were

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well. I got along whole lots better with white children than I got along with the black children sometimes.

Q. Really,

A. Cause the black children sometimes got jealous most of the white child would know their work, see. And they were figuring that I was favoring them. You see blacks had a long ways to come. Some of these white students their fathers were college professors working with the nuclear system there at NASA and all that. And they were exposed to more than the blacks were. We never had any real uprising once or twice the Klu Klux Klan kinda reacted but that didn't last long.

Q. In this area even?

A. Not in James City County. This happened in York County but it was were near James City County.

Q. Did they have cross burnings and that sort of thing?

A. No, I don't ever recall any cross burnings, maybe we had one or two in Richmond, but I don't think we ever had one here.

Q. Were there ever any problems, were there mistreating of black citizens?

A. No, not that I know of. Now down at Grove, Doris that's Herberts wife my daughter-in-law, her grandfather, John Tack Robinson, don't know why the "Tack" he was one of the progressive negroes during reconstruction. And, ah, he had a friendship with Judge Armstead, that's his brother Judge Armstead's father. So when all these people moved out of York County to James City County because of the government took over all that land where the Naval Weapons Station is, and that had an influx of blacks, mostly blacks, they came to

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Grove. And Judge Armstead seen him. Who was the Judge at the time. So he named that district Robins District. And that's haow it was named, Doris' grandfather. And it was named after old man John Tack Robinson, he's still got family there now. I mean the children and grandchildren are still there. And, of course, you know Abraham ^{Frank} ???

Q. Yes.

A. He was, I think Judge Armstead appointed him. And he, I think for 10 or 12 years was supervisor down there. I ran for the Board of Supervisors twice, . . . here in the county. The first time I ran I forgot what year, I ran against Mr. ^{Clamerly} Clamerly. He's still around, he's a public accountant. I think I got 40 some percent of the vote, and he got 50 some. The last time I ran, I ran against a Mr. Waltrip. And, several people called me afterwards and told me I should have had a recount, but I didn't want it. Cause I had some good poor white. But, I lost that by 11 votes.

Q. Oh, My Goodness! That is really close!

A. And I know I lost it, but a good number of whites must have voted for me. Because I knew that Maxwell had got that powerful.

Q. Now what district was this exactly in?

A. We're in ^{Rowhatan} Rowhatan District.

Q. ^{Rowhatan} Rowhatan District. And how long ago was it, that you ran, that you almost won?

A. That was before DePue got in there. About eight years ago I guess.

Q. Really, um, um. In addition to being a minister and teaching school you've been involved in a lot of civic projects over the years haven't you?

A. I've been in the Community Action Agency ever since it was

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organized. I'm still the treasurer there now. I got to go down there today and sign checks because this is payday. It's a wonder they haven't called me already. I served as the Chairman of the Board, for I guess 8 or 10 years. And, after that they made me Treasurer, because I have a whole lot of free time, more than a whole lot of the men. And, very often I could get down there when the man on the job couldn't get there.

Q. Well, were you heavily involved in civic things back in the 30's and 40's?

A. Yeah, such as they were. yeah,

Q. What sort of things could black citizens do in the way of civic projects back then?

A. Well, the biggest thing we did back in those days were support for the segregated schools. ?????????

Q. Did you have to buy the books and the other materials for the students or didn't the school system provide that?

A. Well, to begin with, the parents had to buy them, but later on they started supplying. Now I remember when I was in public school in ??????. We had to buy all of our books. And, when I first came here they had to buy some books. For the last 25 or 30 years the county has supplied.

Q. When the schools were separated, segregated, do you feel the facilities for the white and the black students were equal? Did they have same kind of things?

A. No, they weren't. And, that's one reason the Supreme Court ruled their reason out. Because they said as long as you are separate you can't be equal. We didn't get the advantages that the white

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children got. I hate to talk about these things because it doesn't
. . . .

Q. Well its a part of life. It's what happened.

A. It doesn't . . . As an elementary school student in Smithfield I never knew what it was to sit at a new desk. The desk that we had in our school was the ones they took out of the white school and sent over to us. And they gave them new desks. And our desks were cut up and everything. That year before I left they had done away with that. Before I left they had built school building and I think they had supplied it very well. Cause that was 1919, when I left there.

Q. So things were improving a little?

A. Yeah, yeah, they were improving very little and slowly but, . . .

Q. And your wife also taught for, of course, for 40 some years and she taught here in this school system.

A. Yeah, yeas she taught here, taught down at Centerville. For a long time and they had one of those two room schools down there. Just had two people, my wife and Mrs. Thomas.

Q. Just a two room school?

A. Uh, hhu.

Q. For how many grades?

A. All the grades. I think, my wife taught about from one to fourth. And, then Mrs. Thomas taught from fourth on up to seventh.

Q. Now, did you always teach at the Centerville school?

A. Yes, until they consolidated. Then she went into Bruton Heights. And at Bruton Heights she was at, she just had one grade, and that was the second grade. After the consolidation the whole county, and

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then, there was so many children that they had one or two divisions. Course, when I got there I had fifth grade. But, there was three of us in the fifth grade. The school was so large.

Q. You were telling me back when you taught in the one room schoolhouse that you made about \$90.00 a month, doing that. What would preaching have paid back then?

A. Nothing like \$90.00 a month. My first church was over in Prince George. They called me over there and I stayed there I guess about 2 years. Until they called me to the Church at Chickahomany. The people laughed, I said I came from Prince George County to preach at the James City County cause I had falling into the big money. They were paying me \$15.00 a Sunday. No, \$10.00 a Sunday in Prince George County and, at they offered me \$15.00 a Sunday to move here.

Q. Oh, my goodness. But I guess in terms of other people if you were making \$15.00 a Sunday and \$90.00 a month teaching you were a lot better off during those depression years than a lot of people?

A. Yeah, that's right. I had a chance to leave James City County, I was called to a church some years ago in Cambridge, Massachusettes. But, I counted the costs. I was teaching, my wife was teaching, and I was preaching, and no one black church could offer me that much money. So I elected to stay in James City County, and I'm glad I did because James City County has been nice to me. I'm still highly respected in the county and theres some people it seems even after 60 years they still appreciate me.

Q. Well, from the testimonial dinner that they had for you I'd say that there is a lot of people that respect you.

A. You know, that was a heart warming thing that night there. I knew

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they were getting ready to plan this thing, but I didn't know the man who presided ???? I don't know what to call him. He and his wife was with the other paster from my home church. I didn't know he was coming. And, I didn't have no idea that that many, over 400 people were there.

Q. That room ws really filled.

A. Yeah, is surely was. I think I really made a contribution to this church, because I didn't taken any of the money that was left there to have. ???? After the banquet several people came to me and gave me money, I think in all it was \$300.00 and that was enough for me. So when they counted it up the chuirch profited by \$1700.00. When to the new church that I built down here.

Q. Oh, the new Zion.

A. The new Zion. Have you seen it?

Q. Oh, yes during the church tour.

A. Oh, yes, that's right. That church cost us over a hundred thousand dollars to build. We owe \$150,000.00 on it now.

Q. Well, what would one of your original churches back in the 30's have cost? Would you have had an actual church building or did you have to meet somewheres else?

A. No, we had church buildings. The other churches were already built.

Q. Oh, they've been there a long time?

A. Yeah, they've been there a long time. The Chickahomany had been there down through the years, but now I don't remember exactly when First Baptist Church in Williamsburg was, I guess I could find the date, but they use to have a little church down on Nassau Street and the Restoration bought that, and they gave them the land where this

church is now and a hundred and thirty thousand dollars. And you know they built that church for a hundred and thirty thousand dollars a fabulous as that church is. Back in that day. And our little church down here cost a hundred thousand dollars. Times have certainly changed.

Q. Tell me do you remember your grandparents at all?

A. No, I didn't remember them at all.

Q. They died when you were little?

A. Yeah, and I heard my mother make a speech about them. They were slaves, but I never knew them.

Q. Well, your mother was born after slavery, both of your parents were born after slavery?

A. Yeah, my mother was born in 1872 and my father was born, before her, about 1870.

Q. So, just after the war.

A. Just after the war. Right.

Q. Do you remember hearing your parents talk about what they had heard about slavery and the changes?

A. Yes, I did. And then I first came here there were some men, some people who were close to slavery and I heard them talk about it. They had good masters and bad masters, and we knew some people were amicable to what ever change you make, some people were going to think time is not a ??????. They tell me they had a ^{whole} ~~held~~ lot of slaves who thought the time wasn't right for freedom. Well, you see they had security.

Q. They were scared to be free?

A. Yeah, yeah they were scared to be free. I had a good friend of mine

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who was in school with me, he's dead now. Said his grandfather was a slavery up in that village where ?????, in Williamsburg, Virginia. And said when the master or someone came and told him that they were free, that his grandmother didn't want to leave. Said, I like to bake one more cake for him, Mister somebody, said his grandfather said, was a wicked old man, you's done baked the last damn cake here, we're going to Richmond today. Some people think they had the security of the master, so they had a chance to get all the vegetables they want and they could steal a pig and the master wouldn't miss it with all the others. So, they just like you said, some of them were afraid to be free.

Q. They didn't know where they'd go or what they'd do?

A. That's right. Course a lot of them came down here to ^{Fort}???? Monroe, I think when the government had a big ????

A. Really, what would they do once they got down here? All they had known was farming, right.

A. Yeah, right. But, I don't know what they did, but I understand that something like a concentration camp they had ^{Ft.}???? Monroe.

Q. Was this in the late 1800's then?

A. Yeah, after the war.

Q. Because most slaves weren't allowed to be educated so they couldn't read or write what would they do when they first left the farm?

A. Some of them were very alert. Some slaves learned to read and write.

Q. In spite of what they weren't suppose to do?

A. Sometimes the masters children would go down to the cabin and teach them how to read. ^{Fredrick} Fred. Douglas, who was a great abolish^{ment}ness, I

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don't think he ever went to school. But, he learned to read by signs on the highway and things of that kind. Booker T. Washington, he was born up here in Franklin County, he learned to read by, I think, by he masters children sometimes they. . . Heard about this school down here in Hampton, I don't know whether its a ^{legend} ~~legion~~ or the truth, but they say he walked all the way from Rocky Mountain ????? down to Hampton.

Q. That's a long walk.

A. Stopped in Richmond and slept under the board walk all night and then he got to Hampton Institute said he was dirty and everything. And one of the northern lady said she didn't know whether to take him or not see, ????????? So she sent him into a room to dust it. Said he swept so throughly and dusted so throughly she went in there with her dainty white handky and couldn't get any dust on it. So she told him I'll reason you'll do.

Q. Oh, my goodness. Booker T. Washington, you'll do!

A. And that's why he got that name, Booker, because he was always liked to read, see, liked books, see. And, first went down to Hampton he was just Booker Washington. I think someone down there told him he neded a middle name, so I think he took Talerferro. Booker Talerferro Washington.

Q. Well, you say when you first came here that you knew people who are now dead, who could talk about slavery back then? What sort of things did they tell you? What do you remember that they told you in James City County, how slaves lived and how they were treated?

A. Well, I understand that ?????? he died about 30 years ago, he was 90 when he died, he told me about some of the hardships that people

had, and then he told me too, that they weren't all hardships because when he got free they made him a justice of the peace, up here in Toano, old man George Carlin. So on the whole I think the people around here were ????? of course there no no such thing as nobody liking you. I think they got along pretty well. One of the notice preachers, I don't know if you ever heard of the resconstructed area John Jasper, in Richmond.

Q. I think I've heard the name.

A. John Jasper. I read the life of John Jasper, and intended to tell Mr. Geddy that his family owned John Jasper for a while. The Geddy family ??????. He might not even know it. Then Jasper, I don't know, I think he was ??? . Emancipation he went ot work at the tobacco factory in Richmond, John Jasper. And he got religion. Cutting out the tobacco going around telling everybody about his religion and boss gave him the day off. So he could tell everyboby about it. He started preaching after that, and founded a church there in Richmond, I don't know why they called it the Six Mount Zion Baptist Church, I don't know whether it's Six mount Zion or Seven Mount Zion. But that is still a leading church there in Richmond. ??????

Q. And so when he was owned by the Geddy he was down here?

A. And he was in demand around Richomnd and Hanover County and all of that. As a funeral preacher. He could carry them all the way to heaven and back.

Q. Oh, goodness.

A. I told Dr. Grayson this story and he always laughed about it. Whe I first came to James City County they had those long funerals, you

know. They was going to church at 2 o'clock and maybe in the winter time it would be almost dark before they bury'em.

Q. Oh, my.

A. And I told them that I had heard, well, I had a professor at Virginia Union who was very very interested in history, he said those long funerals were a carry over from slavery time. Said the good negro on the plantation would die and the master would say well you could go and bury him. But, after the funeral, you going to come on back and go in the fields again. And, they go down there and make the funeral as long as they could. ha. ha. ha. Long as the could, yesir, yesir. So when I came here they were having those long funerals I think that is one of the reputations I have here. I starting having funerals and gotten' in the ground in about an hour. Of course, one lady told when her husband died ???? I want you to preach Georges funeral but I don't want you to go there ripping and racing through to the end.

Q. I imagine you've married a lot of people over the years, haven't you?

A. I said, oh, over a thousand. Stone, who was a an undertaker ???? it's nearer to 1500.

Q. Good, heavens. What about marriages, how many do you think of them.

A. Just about the same. I got three marriages set for the month of August. And Virginia ???? is trying to catch up with me on marriages. ???????

Q. How many do you figure you've baptised?

A. Oh, I guess about 3,000. Practically everybody in New Zion church I'd say was baptised by me. ????? died at 90 and I baptised him.

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?????? and most of them down there would ??? baptised by me. ??????

- Q. You know, I think you told me once. Most of the black churches in James City County are Baptist and most of black citizens of James City County are Baptist why do you suppose that is?
- A. I don't know, somebody said Booker T. Washington said, negroes are naturally Baptist, anything else is what some white mans done told them. ha. ha. I don't know it's just they trying to get a name in church here now. And, they're meeting at the stone undertakers house now. Plan on building, and we have a ??? in this church out there on Ironbound Road. But when I came here it was the ??? living there. The ??? lived there, and in every community there was a church. There was a reason for that, because of back when thoses churches was orginized transportation was very hard to come by. So they had churches within walking distances of the people. And a whole lot of them haven't given up yet. We did have one church in upper part of James City County that they had closed down ??? but the rest of them still operating and they really don't need as many as we got, down at Grove they've got two, one on one side of the road and one on the other. One church would take care of it. And Centerville and Chichkhomany that should be really one church.

TAPE ONE ENDED

A. Tell me some of the houses in Magruder that the people move out one day and the next day bull dozer would knock the house down. They had a church ???? community of black folks out there. But they all came, most of them came to Grove. That's the reason for that second church in Grove. They brought their congregation over there.

Q. Well, did most of the people from Fort Eustis tend to settle in Grove too?

A. No, they settled in Hampton and Warwick County. See they were closer down there.

Q. They didn't intend to come in this direction. Can you remember any particularly big or important buildings that were around here in this area that no longer stand because they were burned or torn down or anything?

A. Let me see. No, I don't know, not in the county. But, I knew of some beautiful buildings in Williamsburg were torn down. The white Baptist church. Down on Duke of Gloucester Street, one of those mammoth buildings with Greek columns in front. I hated to see that go.

Q. Why do you suppose they torn it down?

A. Well, see it was in the restored area.

Q. And it didn't fit in with the rest of the . . . ?

A. It didn't fit in. And you know, since you've been here, That Methodis Church up there on the corner by the President's house that was a nice building.

Q. Oh, yes I remember that one, I was a student.

A. I hated to see that go.

Q. Oh, there's been a lot of changes just over the twenty five years

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I've been here in this district. But, you don't remember too many, where was, when you first moved here where was the seat of county government? Where were, did they have their meetings and that sort of thing?

A. They had their meeting at the courthouse in Williamsburg.

Q. Even back in the 30's?

A. Yeah. But now this complex that was recent

Q. Oh, yeah.

A. And we met in Williamsburg cause I would go to the court a lot. And most of the people on the Board of Supervisors were farmers.

Fellow Bateman, from James City County, he was Chairman for a good many number of years. Mr. Richardson was the extensive ^{long} agent, he stayed on there for a good many of years.

Q. Well, when you decided to run those two times what were the things that made you want to run? What did you want to change?

A. Well, I didn't have to change anything much, I just thought they needed to have some black representation on it.

Q. Was Mr. Frink on it at that time?

A. No, I don't think he had come here.

Q. Well, was Mr. Frink the first black citizen to be on the board?

A. First black, yeah.

Q. The only black?

A. Only, black. Several people had run for the city counsel in Williamsburg, But they don't have enough people, enough black in the community of Williamsburg to elect. Philip ^{Cooke} Good, who was an insurance agent, he's run twice. That's the reason Marlon has run twice. I found out you can't get it unless you get some white

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support too. That's when I had that near miss I had a right good number of white who voted for me. It was after Grayson and another student from the college about time for the booths to close they got into their car and went down through Mooretown rather than my area. Offer to bring the people up there to vote, some of them said that they had just got home and just pulled off their shoes, some said they're getting to cook supper, and tried to tell them well, we'll bring you right on back home, and Dr. Grayson said he know fifteen or twenty of them that said they were coming didn't even bother about coming to vote. One man from, Curtis Harris from Hopewell, read it, he's the head of SCLC in Hopewell, ^{all} ~~called~~ me the next morning long distance and said Rev. Moody I want to complement you on the run that you made. But, you know who defeated you don't you. I said, nar. Your folks. By not turning out.

Q. That must have ben dissapointing.

A. Yes, it was.

Q. Do you think you will ewver run again?

A. No, I have age against me now. Unless I plan to give up some of my work, I mean in fact, I had a little church up there in New Kent, my wife made me give up because it was too much. So, I.

Q. Are you thinking of giving up one of your churches here?

A. Yeah, I may give one up. I haven't made a decission yet, I may stay at Chickahomary a little longer. But this church has pretty big debt. I think they need a young man to help them, that's a small congregation and we can only count about 300 good, bad and indifferent. ha, ha, ha.

Q. Was that true in the past? Did you have a bigger congregation?

A. No, never was any big congregation. J. Hanke, Methodist minister, he's a fine man. They have given us all kinds of support. See, we are on the same road. J. came by here and told me one day said Herbert Willis said I was to meet you down at the church, that's when they was building the church. So, I made an appointment any went down there and sat in the church look at the contractors working and everything, ??????. Next week he brought me a check for \$500 from his church and he had just built that church something that had never happened before. And then the first year, that was last year, we had the Daily Vacation Bible School together.

Q. Oh, how nice.

A. This is the second year that we've had it together. We have some teachers there

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A. Just a young man.

Q. Well, hows the methodist church been a help over the years or just recently that thats come about ?

A. Just recently.

Q. Well, did you feel like there was any sort of communication or working together between the churches the black and the white churches fifty years ago? Or were they totally separate?

A. They were totally separate. I guess it was about ten years ago we ministers, white and black got together. I haven't been much since my wife died but, the interracial fellowship I was President of that. We had all the demoninations. ??? Methodists ministers an all. And, we use to meet together, but we were kinda cautious, we never jumped on anything controversial. I have preached at the

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Baptist Church in Greensburg on a Sunday morning I thought was a ??? and I spoke up here at Smith Memorial at a meeting when we were trying to rule religious things out of the schools. They are the only two white churches that I have spoken at. Cause I've been to the Baptist church down there, you know, leave on a Wednesday night ??? But our relationship has been pretty good. Tom Pugh^{ch} and I was good friends, course where he's alright. But he was in Little Rock, Arkansas when all that thing was going on about intergration back in 1972. I don't think he said anything. I undertand he doing well at Bruton Parish and he stayed there for a long time.

- Q. Did you ever feel that there was discrimination or mistreatment against the black churches back 40 or 50 years ago?
- A. No, I don't think there was anything discriminating, I tell you I read somewhere, that, ah, the First Baptist Church was orginanzied. They belong to an Association of the white churches called the Dover Convention. But ever since I've been in the ministry all of my association contengents have been separate. Of course, some of the black churches in the south that are now joined the American Baptist. They were the people who came down and lead these missionary movements all through the south you know. And they started these schools like Virginia Union. Course, ah, Samuel Armstrong founded Hampton Institute, he was from the American Missionary Society. ????? University in Natural, Tennessee, Morehouse College in Atlanta, all of those were established by white northerners.
- Q. But, now they've been totally operated by black citizens?
- A. By black citizens, but the American Baptist still sends donations to

Union and to most of their other schools. Cause that's one of their home mission projects. But, ah, Dr. John M. Ellison was the first black president that Virginia Union had. He was made president in, I guess, about ten years ago. Before then all the presidents were white northerners. Dr. George Ricebrother, Dr. William John Clark, Dr. G. M. McQue were all northerners who came down to the school. And they say some of them had criticisms about things about the white southerners.

- Q. What were their attitudes towards the black citizens when they came down here?
- A. They accepted you as a human being.
- Q. They did. You didn't feel that there was any predigious then.
- A. No, not from those people cause we even dined with them together, that's one thing I remember that's one thing the southern white man wouldn't do. He wouldn't eat with his negroes. They did that at Virginia Union but they couldn't do it out in the cities. Martin Luther King had that same problem, I think on a train ??????
- Q. Times really have changed haven't tehy?
- A. No question about that. You used to go to a restaurant and wonder if you could get in there. Wonder if you could eat in there. Now you don't have to worry about that any more. Some of the stores in Richmond wouldn't let blacks try on things. That was a terrible situation that segragation law. And I understand it ?????? was just a bad.
- Q. Well, you've seen a lot of different changes in your life?
- A. I certainly have, there's no question about that.
- Q. A lot of progress.

A. Yes, some progress.

Q. Well, I've enjoyed this interview. I think we've got a lot of information on here. I appreciate you taking all the hours to talk to me.

A. Well, I've been glad to do it for you.

Q. I know so many times you've talked to me and I thought Oh, my goodness I'll never remember all these things, so I wanted to make sure you told them to me again for the tape.