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JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI

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Mrs. Susie H. Noel
Interviewee (Signature)

Dec 16, 1982
Date

May 17, 1893
Date of Birth

O.H. 82.02
Oral History Number Assigned

File

Rec.
5/10/82 hys

INTERVIEWEE: Mrs. Susie Noel
INTERVIEWER: Dr. Alferdteen Harrison
DATE OF INTERVIEW: December 16, 1982
O.H. 82.06

82.07

Harrison: I am in the home of Mrs. Susie Noel, at 1037 West Pearl Street. Today is December 16, 1982.

Mrs. Noel, I am going to ask you first of all to tell me a little bit about yourself.

Noel: Well, I have been living here at this same address since 1922. I first lived further up on Pearl, but I've been here in this spot since 1922. I had three children when I moved to this address and I'm the mother of five now.

When I knew Dr. McCoy he was practicing, very little, I heard of him politically. He was President of the NAACP when times were critical for any leader especially. I would say he laid his life on the line when he was President of the NAACP. He had a wife and a young baby, I don't know how old it was, but it wasn't walking. At the time they shot in his house, the baby was asleep and the bullet went right over the baby's crib.

Harrison: Where was he living then?

Noel: Right down here on ^{Rose} Pearl Street, he hadn't built his new home then, when that happened. It was right down here on ^{Rose} Pearl Street between Pascagoula and ^{Rose} Pearl. When he got to be president of the NAACP is when the danger started with anybody that was leading out with the NAACP.

Harrison: Do you have any idea what year that was?

Noel: It was back in the 50s, honey, I don't remember the year.

Harrison: That's good enough.

Noel: I do remember going to, I don't remember if it was Belzonia or where, when Gus Coats was shot up there, he was president of the NAACP. Rev. Lee was just prior to that or before that happened. We all loaded up to go up there to hear Dr. McCoy speak. They were ^{having} a meeting in this town, I think, it was ^{Belzonia} Belzonia. We met in a hall there. The colored was so scared up there they didn't come out. So well but we had a pretty good crowd. It was in a hall that the Negroes used. The churches wouldn't let us come in for it. I do remember the last words Dr. McCoy said in his speech, he said, I can't think of the author of the saying but anyway I'll repeat the saying, he said, "Give me liberty or give me death," that was the end of his speech. Now I know the

Shw

Noel: author but I can't recall, but it was one of ^{the} lawmakers way back yonder.

Harrison: Was it Patrick Henry?

Noel: Yes, I think so. Well, in the words of Patrick Henry he said, "I'll close by saying, give me liberty or give me death." Of course, he resigned shortly after that because it had caused so much worry in his home with the wife and baby. He didn't seem like he worried much but he couldn't afford to let his family suffer. I think they shot in his house twice. The NAACP had some watchers just stationed at night on ~~Pearl~~ ^{Road} Street. ~~Between the naps or whatever they got to shoot in there.~~

Harrison: Do you know who any of these persons were that use to watch homes?

Noel: We do have a fellow, I have a fellow in memory, that we use to call High, he put out a pamphlet and who supported this little pamphlet, we never found out. *Eagle Eye* ← In this little pamphlet he would talk about the dirty doings of the Whites against the Negroes. He would say anything he wanted to say. The last thing he said in his little pamphlet, he got punished for it. ^{He} We said in his little pamphlet, wake up white women. I won't call this name, but it was a house out west that catered to white men and Negro women. So he said, wake up white women, the money you all ought to have is being spent out there at this house. Well, they said he was crazy so they put him in jail. He had said everything he wanted to about them and they hadn't bothered him, but when he said that, they said he was crazy. He wasn't telling a story. I can witness from being here a long time that that was the record of that place out there. They put him in Whitfield after he got out of jail. You remember the story, I suppose, of him getting out of Whitfield. They say he left there in a coffin. You don't have that in print nowhere?

Harrison: (laughs) I don't. No, not that I know of, sure don't.

Noel: They don't ever get things in school books that they had like that. They kept him out there and he was a free man. We would go out there and see him and he would talk alot. Where he got his money from, we never found out. He was always paying his dues in the NAACP. It got out in the paper that High left the mental hospital in a coffin and landed in Chicago.

Harrison: Oh, I see.

Noel: That was in the paper. That didn't seem reasonable to me though. I never found out anymore about it, how he got up there, but that was in the paper.

Harrison: You don't know his real name?

Noel: No more than High. We just called him ^{Arrington "Mutt"} High. Some of the older people around might know. He was married and had two sons. They used to live here, after he and his wife separated. I don't know where they are now. That's about all I remember about Dr. McCoy.

I got something else. When Rev. Lee was shot up there, he was a preacher, pastored here but he lived ~~either~~ in Belzonia ~~or Wynonia.~~ Dr. McCoy had done some dental work for Rev. Lee and he went up there to identify the filling. He was shot through the mouth.

Harrison: Rev. Lee was?

Noel: Yes. One night the old sheriff caught him going home and he rode by him in his car and shot him through the mouth. Dr. McCoy went up there the time they were in court, of course, you know you never win. Dr. McCoy knew it was his filling, but they didn't let it be.

Harrison: They said it was someone else's?

Noel: They said it was some other kind of filling. It wasn't Dr. McCoy's let them tell it, but Dr. McCoy said it was his, he remembered filling his teeth and what he used for filling. That's about all I can tell you about Dr. McCoy, but that's a lot. (laughs) Anybody lay their life on the line, at those times it was dangerous.

Harrison: When he ceased to be president of the NAACP what other type community work was he involved in?

Noel: He was kind of a business man. He opened up a theatre for us down on Lynch Street, other than that I don't remember politically ^{what} he was doing, no more than working for the NAACP at all times, even when he had given up presidenty, he was still paying his dues and keeping tabs on what the members were doing.

Harrison: Did he still come to the meetings?

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Noel: Well, he didn't come to many meetings, not in my presence. He was always interested in pushing when he would get in contact with other members, you know, and other colored people trying to show them what road to take, so to speak. We were very proud of him.

Harrison: Was he ever your doctor, your dentist?

Noel: No, he wasn't ever my dentist.

Harrison: Do you know where he had his office?

Noel: On Farish Street.

Harrison: Do you know if he had any other businesses down there, to your knowledge?

Noel: Well, he should have owned some property down there but not to my knowledge. He kept his office on Farish Street until he retired.

Harrison: Why did you go with him up to ^{Belzoni}~~Wynonia~~?

Noel: I was a member of the NAACP and my husband was sick and died so to speak in the NAACP, and we both went up there, just got a crowd to hear him speak. He was asked to do a speech. Gus Coats was president of the NAACP and he was a cousin of my husband. That was later, I think, when Gus Coats was shot in his store. They shot through the window but they didn't kill him. He was hospitalized in Mount Bayou. After he was shot, it was known by the whites at the hospital that he was shot. They called out there wanting to know, where is Gus Coats, we heard he got shot, bring him on down here, we want to do something for him, ~~people that doctor at the hospital saying that.~~ The colored people knew in reason that they would finish him off, so they grabbed him and ran to Mount Bayou Hospital and that is where he was operated on to get the bullet out. After he left there he came and stayed with us until he was able to travel.

Harrison: He stayed in your home?

Noel: Yes, he and his wife both. He was first cousin to my husband. He stayed with us until he was able to travel. The NAACP always helped those, give them some funds to travel round and make talks, you know.

Harrison: What kind of speaker was Dr. McCoy?

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Noel: Well, I don't get out much to those kind of things.

Harrison: I am talking about when you went up there to hear him speak. I'm talking about speaker.

Noel: Oh, fine, just fine. What he was saying is just what we wanted to hear. Yes, he was talking on a subject we wanted to hear. I wouldn't want to hear a better speaker, on that subject. You can find a lot of people that know things about Dr. McCoy, but that's about all I know about Dr. McCoy.

Harrison: How about his wife, did she accompany him on these trips?

Noel: Well, by having a baby I don't remember her going with him on these trips. It made her very upset when they shot in the house. She stayed very close after that. I have a bullet in my window that I never told, never put in the paper. I can show it to you when you go out.

Harrison: Is the bullet still there?

Noel: (laughs) No the hole is. My husband had ideas that Negroes were scared. When anything happen don't tell it, so we never told it, never put it in the paper. We were sleeping on this side and they shot through that side. I use to take care of the Freedom Riders, sleep them and when they get out of jail, sometimes my living room would look like a ^{que} morgue. I couldn't have no more than about two beds empty and they would want to get out and get on clean clothes and go home after they stay their time out. So they wanted to get out of jail get on clean clothes and go home, then it would be more coming in, I just kept a lot at all times. If the weather was warm they would just swarm my porch, trying to get out in the cool air. They knew in reason what they were doing here at this place, that the reason that they decided to give a shot to scare me.

Harrison: Do you remember any of the Freedom Riders names?

Noel: I wish I could. I had some lovely, dedicated people. Yes, I do, but they were from Hawaii. I got a letter from him last Christmas and they sent me flowers. Two came here that belonged to the NAACP, in Hawaii. I hear from them every Christmas. They were two fine gentlemen.

Harrison: Do you remember their names?

Noel: Yes, I got the names. Do you want me to go get the letter.

Harrison: I guess that can wait.

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Noel: One couldn't talk English so good, but his buddy with him could talk very good English. That's their address. At that time they were wearing ~~momo's~~ *mumu's*.

Harrison: This is Mr. and Mrs. Masamitakeuchi from Honolulu, Hawaii. Isn't that nice that they still remember you? *Another was Masami and Pearl Takeuchi, Honolulu, HI.*

Noel: Yes, it sure is. They sent me flowers once. They were two nice fellows. I had a lot of nice fellows, but I don't remember names now. I had one young man that sent me, by me walking so much, he sent me a timer. When I cook he said this will tell you when to look at your food. Set it on ten or twenty minutes and it would ding, ding when it got there. He said his daddy was a watch maker and he sent me that back as a token. I had so many I don't remember. They would tell me their names but I can't remember now.

Harrison: Right, I understand.

Noel: I remember these because they write me. I had one or two ladies that ~~was~~ *were* good also, from California. Well that's just about all the things I remember about Dr. McCoy. I imagine somebody else could fill in.

Harrison: Okay, but let me ask you some more questions about the Farish Street Historic District, you know we are trying to document that area. Can you recall when you first came to Jackson, what Farish Street looked like?

Noel: Well, there wasn't as many buildings as they had in the late years. There wasn't anything beautiful about it. It was just almost looking like an alley.

Harrison: This was in the 20s?

Noel: Yes. Dr. Barnes, Dr. McCoy, and another doctor was down there. They ^{are} all dead now.

*Dr. Christian,
Dr. A.M. Hall, Dr. A.M. Hair,
Dr. Leroy Smith,
Dr. R.L. Johnson*

Harrison: Would that be Redmond?

Noel: Yes, Redmond's Drug Store would be there. Dr. Redmond and his drug store was there, he wasn't practicing when we came here. They say when they had the epidemic of Yellow Fever, that was when I was a girl, he was much older than I am. The whites were afraid of it because it killed them faster than it did Negroes, and this was the saying when we came to Jackson.

Harrison: Was it 1922 when you came to Jackson?

Noel: I came in 1920 but I came out here in 1922. Dr. Redmond was still living, but retired from practicing. They say

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Noel: he made alot of money because he treated white Yellow Fever patients and Negroes. He made alot of money. They say the white doctors were running from it, because it knocked them out right now when they got the Yellow Fever. I was a girl and I was out in Holmes County, but I remember hearing about Dr. Redmond doing a lot of practicing on with the Yellow Fever on whites and colored patients. There might have been some more doctors, Dr. Christian. So that's just about the picture.

Harrison: So they had doctors down there. Were there stores that you visited, did you ever go down there?

Noel: Oh yes, I went down there. Dr. Barnes was my dentist, he fixed my teeth once. My son fixed this that I got years later, way years later.

Harrison: Which son is this?

Noel: I have a son in Denver, that was a dentist when ^{Papa} ~~Parker~~ and I went out there to a family meeting. He fixed these for me, that was about twenty years ago or thirty.

Harrison: They're still lasting?

Noel: Yes, still lasting. They don't make nothing now like they did then. I eat everything on them, hard candy, bite corn and everything. He has lost his health now, and he's not well. He's retired. You know, my other son is retired also. My other son is the oldest of the three. The youngest one and his wife stays here with me.

Harrison: That was she that answered the phone?

Noel: Yes.

Harrison: She said, "I'm Mrs. Noel, I'm her daughter-in-law, you probably want to speak to Mrs. Noel." What is your son's name who lives here with you?

Noel: John C. Noel. He is in his 50s. He is my youngest child. He not my little boy anymore like I use to have. My oldest son is a medical doctor, he's retired. Both of them have had heart-atacks, course A. J. had strokes that put him so low.

Harrison: We were talking about the times you use to go to Farish Street, you went down there to see your dentist.

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Noel: Yes, I went to see my dentist. There were some Jew stores along then that sold old time things.

Harrison: What stores were these?

Noel: Oh, I couldn't call the names.

Harrison: What type of things did you buy there?

Noel: I brought furniture on Farish Street. It's on that corner now, the name is.

Harrison: Ferguson's?

Noel: Yes, Ferguson's. I bought those two chairs from Ferguson's Store. I've had them along time. I've even had them upholstered in this so I wouldn't have to worry about the dirt. They were cloth, fabric stuff at first.

Harrison: So you bought furniture down there, went to the dentist, any other things you did on Farish Street, YWCA?

Noel: Yes, then we called it colored then. The YMCA was there, I think, if not shortly after we moved.

Harrison: The YMCA that was down on the end of Farish Street?

Noel: It wasn't on the end it was on the upper.

Harrison: You're talking about the YWCA for young women, that would be between Church Street and Hamilton Street.

Noel: Something like that. You get some of these young ones now they can tell you all about it.

Harrison: They weren't back there though. They shouldn't remember anything (laughs). I guess they're not old enough. You know, like do you remember any of the people who worked in the Y when you went there?

Noel: Mrs. Betty Marino, her picture hangs on the wall there.

Harrison: Now what kind of person was Mrs. Marino, I've heard her name alot?

Noel: Well, I don't know anything more than she was heading the "Y" and very active in it. She might have been the manager of it. She was very helpful and her picture hangs as a memorial to her in the "Y".

SHU

NOEL, Susie

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Harrison: That's the Marino Branch YWCA. Where did she live, do you know?

Noel: *She lived on Grayson St.*
~~I don't know where she lived.~~ When I first got to Jackson it was very few friends that I learned, by having children and not having money to hire help, baby help, I had to do the baby keeping. I didn't get out much, didn't have a car.

Harrison: Did you ever go down there on Saturday nights?

Noel: No, I never went down on Saturday nights. Very little trading we would do unless it was a colored store. On South Street we had a colored grocery store. We traded there. My husband was very particular about where he traded.

Harrison: What was the name of that store on South Street? I don't really know where South Street is.

Noel: *(People's Cooperative Store)* *Mr. Harris,*
It was a cooperative store, more than one owned it. *Mr. Henry Young.*

Harrison: Okay.

Noel: I can't think of the name of it. It isn't there now though. I can see the picture of the people that owned it but I can't call their name.

Harrison: Did you ever visit any of the churches down there?

Noel: No, no more than Farish Street. I went there sometime.

Harrison: Baptist church?

Noel: Yes, baptist. I soon joined the A.M.E. just because it *was* at my door.

Harrison: Is that Pearl Street A.M.E.?

Noel: Yes it is. We lived right there on Pearl Street near Clifton. I never was wrapped up with denomination of churches noway. I was ^{about} the same person in all of them. I didn't see any use of changing.

Harrison: The Smith Robertson School that is down in that area, did you ever have cause to go there?

Noel: Smith Robertson, I think, that is the school they are trying to preserve for a museum. I think it is on Robertson Street. I know some of the teachers that taught there. *My daughter Gladys Noel Bates, got her first teaching experiences at Smith Robertson School. She was teaching there when she filed her suit against the State and was fired from her teaching position for doing so.*

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Harrison: Who were some of them?

Noel: Mrs. Verna Anderson, was one. I can't think of anymore. I know her so well. She retired from there. She is working with them, trying to preserve it. *Mrs. Geneva White was another.*

Harrison: Where did your children go to school:

Noel: They went to Lanier. We had a high school eventually.

Harrison: Did they go to grade school here.

Noel: Yes, they did.

Harrison: Where did they go?

Noel: At Jim Hill.

Harrison: Was that a Catholic School then?

Noel: Oh no.

Harrison: It was always a public school?

Noel: When they got into high school they went to Lanier, then they went to Alcorn. My daughter finished at Tougaloo, and ~~West Virginia State~~ after she got married. *West Virginia University at Morgantown.*

Harrison: When you use to go to the dentist, how did you get down there?

Noel: Walked. (laughs)

Harrison: All the way down and back. Where was Dr. Barnes Office? Was it on the corner of Farish Street and Capitol?

Noel: It wasn't on the corner. It was about middle of the block after you leave Capitol. In those days we women could walk, what you talking about. (laughs)

Harrison: Just walk all over the place.

Noel: I was able to get a buggy for my last one. It was a second-hand buggy and it was a beautiful buggy. I pushed it down there in Kennington Store I wanted to run upstairs to get something. I couldn't get the baby's buggy up there handy. So, I said to myself, he'll be safe right here, he was very fast. When I got back they were all looking at my baby. When they saw me they . . . (laughs) After some

SHU

Noel

Noel: Years I said, what a foolish trick. They weren't stealing babies then. I left my baby down there and ran back upstairs. I think of that sometimes now and say how foolish I was.

Harrison: We didn't have the dangers then that we do now.

Noel: No, we didn't have the dangers.

Harrison: Where was Kennington's located at that time?

Noel: Just before you get to the Post Office. You know what corner that would be?


Harrison: That would be West Street and Capitol?

Noel: I think the Post Office is on Capitol.

Harrison: Oh, okay, that would be Lamar Street.

Noel: Emporium was on one side and Kennington's was on the other. There's something else there now. I don't ever get down there.

END OF SIDE ONE



Harrison: This is an interview with Mrs. Susie Noel in her home on December 16, 1982.

Mrs. Noel, you were going to tell us about the ~~Blacksmith~~ *Shoe Repair* Shop.

Noel: Yes, we had two friends there. One was M. E. Mosley and one was ^{S.} M. E. Bynum.

Harrison: How ~~is~~ ^{S.} that Bynum spelled?

Noel: B-Y-N-U-M, that is the way we use to spell it. He had two girls ~~but both have passed now.~~ *Thelma and Vivian, one lives in Greenville and another lives in St. Louis.*

Harrison: Where is the Blacksmith Shop?

Noel: The Blacksmith?

Harrison: Shop.

Noel: I thought you said shoe shop.

Harrison: Oh, these are shoe shops you are talking about?

Noel: Yes, ^{now} this is a shoe shop. I thought you said shoe shop. I don't ^A about a Blacksmith.

Harrison: The Bynum's owned a shoe shop where?

Noel: North Parish.

Harrison: Where these black folks?

Noel: Yes. Mosley's widow is still living. *She lives now in West Jackson.*

Harrison: Oh, did you ever buy shoes there?

Noel: He fixed them.

Harrison: Oh, it was a shoe repair shop.

Noel: Yes, a repair shop. We got our shoes there.

Harrison: I was asking you about a Blacksmith shop. Now, someone had told me that there was a blacksmith shop on the corner of Church and Mill.

Noel: It could have been.

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Harrison: You never did know anything about that, right?

Noel: No. A blacksmith would sharpen what?

Harrison: Horseshoes, shoe horses and stuff like that.

Noel: I bet they did years ago, maybe before I got here.

Harrison: Well, some younger people have remembered seeing it there.

Noel: Well, Dr. Barnes was there, that is all I can remember at the corner of Farish. Dr. Barnes and Dr. Turner lived on other corner, but he left and went to Indiana with his family.

Harrison: Let's talk about some of the things like your feeling about the Farish Street area and the Museum. When you think about Farish Street, what kind of memories do you recall in your mind?

Noel: You mean way back yonder?

Harrison: Yes mam.

Noel: Just a bad looking street and a bad looking building.

Harrison: Was it mostly black people ^{who} frequent there?

Noel: Yes, mostly black poeple. I don't know whether you would called them Jews or what that would like to mix in there ^{their} stores and have these things we usually buy, like long john. Isn't that what you call them, long john underwear? They would have to go to those stores for that kind of stuff.

Harrison: They didn't carry them in the white stores?

Noel: Not after they started coming up, they didn't. Those stores, I imagine, ~~are~~ down there now. I am not sure. They always had cheaper goods.

Harrison: Did any White folks ever live down there, that you knew of?

Noel: On Farsih Street?

There was a white grocery store on Farish St. near Cohea. The store was in front of the Selman House. The house was in the rear.

Harrison: On Farish Street or close to Farish Street between Lamar and Mill?

Noel: . No, There use to be an old family living on Capitol Street above Mill for a long time.

Harrison: But usually, that has been an all Black residential area to your knowledge?

SHW

Noel: Oh yea, Farish Street has always been known . . .

Harrison: What about up there on Lamar Street in front of the Greenwood Cementary going toward Farish Street?

Noel: All that has been Colored neighborhood, as far as I can remember.

Harrison: Did you ever belong to a Masonic Lodge?

Noel: My husband did. He was a ^{32nd}~~33rd~~, whatever you call it.

Harrison: ^{32nd}~~33rd~~ degree? Which group was he associated with?

Noel: I joined the Eastern Star, but I dropped out.

Harrison: Is that the group on Lynch Street now or the one on Mill Street?

Noel: We were first on Farish Street, the Eastern Star. Dr. Johnson's wife, I joined under her.

Harrison: Which Johnson is this?

Noel: They both are passed, but I can't think of their name. I can see their picture, but I can't tell you their name. *Dr. + Mrs. R. F. Johnson
Wife was named "Jennie"*
They both have passed. He passed first, then she got married again and went to Chicago, but she didn't live long. This pink two story house was Dr. and Mrs. Johnson's home when they lived here on ^{Rose}~~Rhodes~~ Street. ^{Chicago}~~it is~~ two, two story houses, but the pink one is Dr. Johnson. They are buried here in the cementary.

Harrison: The one on Lynch Street?

Noel: Yes, on Lynch Street.

Harrison: Right, in front of the Masonic Temple?

Noel: Yes.

Harrison: Is that the Masonic Temple that your husband was associated with, the one on Lynch Street?

Noel: Yes.

Harrison: When you joined down there on Farish Street, where was the office?

Noel: When I joined what?

Harrison: When you joined the Eastern Star.

Noel: It was upstairs in a building.

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Harrison: Is the building still there?

Noel: I think so, unless they have torn it down since they have started . . . ~~it~~

Harrison: Tearing things down. See, they had something called the Palace Auditorium down there now. It is a building down there that has a King Hiram sign on it. I was just trying to find out what building this was.

Noel: I don't ^{know} no anything about King Hiram. He ^{possibly} might was a Masonic man.

Harrison: Seems like in the Kermit Holly building, that white department store down there, you don't know that?

Noel: No

Harrison: That is on the corner of Griffith and Farish, you don't remember of that?

Noel: No. Now if my husband was living he could tell you everything because after he retired he stayed down there. He would get up and get his breakfast and dress, he liked to stand up and find people to talk to about the NAACP.

Harrison: What kind of work did he do?

Noel: He was a railroad postal clerk.

Harrison: What was his name?

Noel: Andrew J. Noel. A. J. Noel was the initial he used. After he retired he spent his days down there whenever he had a chance to talk to somebody. It would either about voting or the NAACP. Those are the two subjects that he tried to interest people in. He had it hard when he first got in the mail service. He first got in the mail service before ^{World War I} the war as a sub and he had it pretty tough. At that time they weren't accustomed to a Negro as a railroad clerk. When he--usually whatever came to his head came out of his mouth. That is one thing, fighting or anything like that, he was not afraid of that. He would hand them back what they hand to him. He could beat them doing their work. They all called him the 98 or 100 mail clerk. I think he would have lived longer if he had not worked so hard. It took a lot of head work to keep those mail and letters going to the right place. 75 was a passing and I said, "Honey, why don't you come home and go to work throwing those cards", you know, they had to take a examination every so often. He said that they said that I wasn't going to make it, but I am not going to let that happen. I am going to make it. He was called the 98 or 100th mail clerk.

Stn

Harrison: Made 98?

Noel: 98 or 100th, sometimes make a 100. A funny thing happened, I call it funny after I got over it, when he was running to Natchez, there was one Post Office on the line and the postmaster there would make the porter grab up the letters that he was suppose to wrap and put them in a box and bring them to the mail car. He kept his habit of bringing them loose and my husband would have a temper sometimes, so he reported him and told him how it should be done, tied up, each package tied up and brought to the mailtruck. He just figured he was a negro working on the train, only negro working from here to Natchez, he didn't have to do that. The colored porter brought a box of letters out to the mailcar and set them in the door (laughs) and my husband gave that box a kick and letters went into the weeds and everywhere. The engineer wasn't going to wait for anybody to pick them up, so the train just went on and left those letters out in the weeds. They didn't report him because they knew they were violating also, so that postmaster didn't report it. That's one thing I laughed about after the scare was over, I figured they would catch him sometimes on his way passing through and get him. He kicked that box out and letters went all out in the weeds. The engineer's time was out so he pulled on off and left them in the weeds. The postmaster had to send a fellow out there to pick them up and next time they were tied up.

Harrison: So, there was nothing he could do if they weren't tied up.

Noel: No, he didn't report it.

Harrison: Sounds like you all had a good life.

Noel: Yes, we did. I always thought that I would go first. He was ten years older than I was. Children make you work hard, if you love your children. In those days when we got married the war had just broke out and it wasn't any jobs. My husband was subbing, so when we did get to Jackson, that's where we wanted to get, but we first had to live in Meridian, and in McComb. They had sent him on different lines, you know, and we lived there so many months so he finally got a white person to transfer with him, this white fellow wanted to run to Natchez, New Orleans out of Natchez, out of McComb. They transfered and that's the way we got to Jackson, and we were so happy because he had said that he didn't want his children raised down in McComb, because it's a railroad town. You can remember back, it was always a railroad town, and still kind of backwoods.

SHU

Harrison: When did your husband pass?

Noel: He passed in 60?

Harrison: 1960?

Noel: Yes, 1960.

Harrison: You have a nice comfortable home here.

Noel: Yes, we built this home, our son says it's too big though, it makes so much work to keep it up. He and his wife keep it up.

Harrison: It's stuko isn't it?

Noel: No, it's not stuko it's that siding on the outside, plaster wall.

Harrison: Oh, I see, plaster.

Noel: They don't use that now, but you know, this house is over fifty years old.

Harrison: Oh, really?

Noel: From 1922.

Harrison: You all built it in 1922?

Noel: Yes. *It was built by a black contractor Ms. Charley Robinson who lived on Pascagoula St. The Chambliss boys are grandsons who can tell you more about him.*

Harrison: It's a nice house to have been built in 1922.

Noel: Well, material was good then. They tell me now you got your carpenters in these new homes doing something every once in awhile. The lumber bucks up, it's cheap.

Harrison: Yes, this is sixty years then 1920 to 1980.

Noel: Well, that's how old it is, course it needs some fixing. The porch needs another floor, I had a porch all the way around, a side porch and a side entrance. The house we moved out of didn't have but four rooms and during the winter, I had three children, they would stand around the stove to keep warm. I said if we ever build a house, I want a big kitchen, so ~~the~~ children will have a place to stand around the stove and keep warm while I make the biscuits and stuff, (laughs), syrup, that's about all we had to eat.

JHN

~~Harrison:~~
Noel

My children still love it.

Noel:

The kitchen is as large as the living room is up there. My son complains about too much room, too much cleaning.

Harrison:

It's nice and comfortable. Okay Mrs. Noel, I've enjoyed my visit with you. Now, what I need to ask you is do you mind us using the information you have given me on tape for research purposes at Jackson State.

Noel:

No, because everything I've said is just like what I said. I remember, certain parts could have been more but I just couldn't remember.

Harrison:

I appreciate what you have given us. If there are other questions I'll call you again. If you think of something you can phone us and let us know.

Noel:

A petition to name building on Tenth St - McCoy Building., we've already signed that.

Harrison:

Good, we hope that will become a reality.

Noel:

I think, the whites want to stick Stennis, there on the corner of the building.

Harrison:

Well, we hope that they will decide, well this is what a black could have been and just allow that to be. The effort is being put to get it done.

AW