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R.42. Special Research Projects: West Southern Pines, N.C.

Interview R-0748
Emanuel Douglass
23 March 1982

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ABSTRACT – Emanuel Douglass

Emanuel Douglass first arrived in West Southern Pines during the 1934-35 school year. Douglass speaks about the roles of various professionals in black community leadership, including preachers, businessmen, funeral directors, and teachers. Douglass was born and spent his early years in Winston-Salem, N.C., and compared the prominence of black-owned businesses in the larger city to what West Southern Pines had as a smaller community. He discusses how the crash on Wall Street had its effect on everybody: “When it hit the top it certainly hit the bottom.” Douglass recalls playing pool in Amos Broadway’s pool hall, and how Broadway was murdered some years after. He remembers Dr. Ross, the town’s first black doctor, and the lengths the community went to make the town look nice for his arrival. Douglass describes how homes were built in the 1930s, with the help of community bricklayers and community carpenters who traded labor to get houses built. He talks about his involvement with the West Southern Pines Civic Club, which began in the mid-1930s and grew out of the local churches. Douglass talks about his involvement with local politics, which he states he fell into by accident, by being asked to serve on town council, gaining respect of the other councilmembers, and staying on permanently. He then considers whether or not West Southern Pines could survive as a totally separate town now. Douglass eventually became the first black mayor of Southern Pines, N.C. This interview was conducted by Nancy Mason for the Town of Southern Pines on March 23, 1982. It is part of a series of interviews with people who lived in or around West Southern Pines as it had existed as a separate and entirely African American municipality from 1923 to 1931.

INTERVIEW WITH: EMANUEL DOUGLASS ON MARCH 23, 1982

INTERVIEWER: NANCY MASON

NM: I thought you might just begin by talking a little bit about yourself, your background, what brought you here, some of the things we discussed when I talked with you last to sort of set the stage.

ED: You mean when I first came?

NM: Yes, and where you came from and a little bit about what brought you here?

ED: Well, I came here during the 1934-35 school year. We began to govern it in split years like 1934-35 because it runs through like that. My uncle and aunt came here. He came as principal of the school at WSP. I was born and reared in Winston Salem and I had a chance to stay, well not a chance, but I was required to stay with my aunt in the summer because he (Uncle) went to summer school in Michigan every summer and I stayed in the house with her. I got so that I had a summer home in SP when the town was half closed down. Everybody was gone, but I was here. This went on until about 1939 and I went away to work then because we had the volunteer army coming up and they were building bases and things and I was in the construction world and I was in industrial education. So, I went to work at Cherry Point down at Jacksonville building Paradise Point, an officer's quarters, and from there I went into the service. When I got back I was employed at Cameron Morrison School and my uncle had moved down there as superintendent then. But, in my stay around SP in 1934-35 we were always reminded from whence the time was all black and there was this corp of leaders in the community. They were businessmen and preachers, and you will find most leadership during those years were around good preachers. The strong preachers and the better of the businessmen, grocery store, funeral directors or something like that and WSP was no different. The thing that I noticed most about the town was the fact that it had everything that it needed but it didn't have a bank. During that time, such a terrible time, it wasn't possible to start anything or any money institution in an area where you had so little money. There was no such thing as federal help during that time. The only black bank that we knew anything about that survived was North Carolina Mutual Association. Spaulding had the only black bank that I can remember them talking about how he survived. Even in Winston Salem our black bank there crashed. So I was used to being exposed to black accomplishments. In Winston Salem we had the largest owned and operated black bus line in the world. It continues to operate until after World War II, when the town needed to expand and serve the whole town and it drove them out of business because there wasn't any business for them in the white community. That was the reason that it went out of business. We had our own owned and operated taxi cabs--about six different companies in Winston Salem. We had the bank and savings and loan. We had movie houses and we had a regular shopping district. So, I was very exposed to black enterprises.

NM - Nancy Mason

SP - Southern Pines

ED - Emanuel Douglass

WSP - West Southern Pines

- ED: When I came here I noticed that we had the little black shopping area. The theater converted into a pool hall and all the rest of the things that we had to entertain such as we had. My uncles engaged some of the younger people and we built tennis courts in WSP just about where the gymnasium stands now. I remember working with the summer program. I think it was called NYA. He built a box that built the industrial arts shop on the campus there at the school. There wasn't one before then. The home economics was built later on the same direction. They had some brick donated so they used some brick in it. All those came during those years.
- NM: What was your uncle's name?
- ED: Paul R. Brown and my aunt's name was Josephine S. Brown.
- NM: Did they have any other relatives in WSP?
- ED: No.
- NM: I had seen the name Brown in the tax lists in the minutes.
- ED: That was another set. I think you will find a number of descendants of the Browns you're talking about. She's a Galvert. She's Adelaid Brown Galvert. She runs the store on Gaines Street. The Browns lived there when I came to SP. The home place is still beside the lodge hall.
- NM: Did you hear when you first came or afterwards, anything about the early days or early history?
- ED: Yes. It was common knowledge. In 1934 (it hadn't been three years when I got here) when it had dissolved. The Hastys were the earliest family. The father was mayor. They were proud of the fact that Pennsylvania, then not now, was open during his time as mayor. We used to have to go to town on New Hampshire. New Hampshire was the better road. Pennsylvania had water lines down it so, therefore, it wasn't as good to travel. He put lights on it so you could see at night. Yes. There was a lot of talk about it. They didn't like it. They thought that they didn't have a chance to do for themselves. When the crash came with the money situation, they weren't able to support the municipalities that needed to be from taxation. The taxes were too low anyway. You couldn't collect that. So, they had a hard time. One problem led to another. Most problems grew out of money problems. This was the downfall of the municipalities.
- NM: I've been exploring the subject about how WSP came to get their charter; why that happened; when it did and who was behind that. I've heard that a man, a black, named Lt. Oxley from Raleigh apparently knew of a town in Mississippi, a similar situation, a black town which was separate where they got a charter and he was interested in this and allegedly thought that WSP would be a good situation for a similar thing like that. I've been told that he came here and had some discussion with the people there and then sort of handled the necessary work in Raleigh and supposedly came back here and said yes they can get their charter but it will cost fifteen hundred dollars. Have you heard anything about this, and before you answer I will read the minutes here for ESP a mention of his name. This was in 1931 right after the charter was revoked and it said that this Lt. Oxley of the State Welfare Department

NM: of Raleigh, although I had been told that they thought he was a military person,.....

ED: I understood that he was Lt. too. I understood too that a doctor ran a hospital where the Lawson Institute now is located. He was from Raleigh and it was through the contact of the two people to start with, by him being a doctor, now I understand how he would know him through the Welfare Department.

NM: So you have heard of this Lt. Oxley. What do you know about him?

ED: Nothing. Other than that he was known with the doctor who ran the hospital over in WSP. The hospital where Lawson Institute now stands today. Dr. Scruggs was the doctor at the hospital where Lawson Institute stands today. It closed after he got sick and went back to Raleigh where he originally came down here from. That was the connection you'll find with this Lt. you were talking about. The health department and the doctors being in Raleigh; that's probably what happened. He had no guarantee of this happening, but, it seems that's where it got together.

NM: What makes you think that Dr. Scruggs was involved in WSP obtaining a charter?

ED: Most of the time you'll find in the black community where ever it is, the leadership comes from the professional people that are there. Even to the time when you had the one-room school house. It was so much leadership that came from the school marm. The thing of it was that they had to be more than the teacher for the children. They helped the parents in communication, writing letters and things of that nature. So they got themselves in a leadership type of role. As you notice, the first mayor of the black town was a preacher. He was also a teacher. I understand that one of the first schools that was in WSP was a donated situation from yankee sailors that were here. I forgot because I heard this about four years ago. The school was on the corner of Massachusetts and Henley going toward Mechanic Street. To this day there is nothing but woods on that site so there's something wrong with the title of the land now I imagine. Nobody is building over there.

NM: Do you know what role Dr. Scruggs or Lt. Oxley may have played in getting the charter?

ED: I'd be very surprised if you could find anybody living now that probably knows.

NM: Had you heard anything about the money being involved, the fifteen hundred dollars and what could that have been for in 1923? Were there costs involved and would it have been that great a sum?

ED: I hate to say it but you'll find most of the time when anything is needed, especially when it involves something that had to be done by a legal branch, it always cost a tremendous amount of money. That wasn't anything new. I never heard a statement. The money was never talked about. It was just to pay for the charter.

GR: Now, who they had to pay God knows what. Now I understand how things could have happened during that time. You might have had to pay two or three hundred dollars to four or five different people to get it through the legislation.

NM: It seems curious that a charter for a black town would be given in 1923 when you put it into perspective with what was happening here and in the South with the poll tax and the segregation tactics...

ED: Let's back up a little bit. Let's think about what you had here. The people here that were in position to run things were the same people that were employing the people over there which made a bigger bond than you would find automatically which the people that were employers were Northerners. So they could see wherein if they wanted to do this they would help them to do this.

NM: Have you heard of any people in ESP who actually were enlisted in obtaining the charter, who may have helped financially or pressure...

ED: You're too far back for me.

NM: I thought though you might have heard something.

ED: No. You see, people who have died and left people different amounts of money, they were probably working for them, and you never know how much they left anyhow. But you know that you could always get donations in the community for different things. So, that's not surprising to me. There has always been a fairly good bond between the employee and the employer, especially when they worked for any amount of time. So that's the reason I figured that that they probably got the money. Through the efforts of some persons that were transformed in here. I would imagine it was just a situation like the time SP whose name was being changed from Vine to SP. You find a lot of things happening during that era that is not really a true picture of what was happening all around. Such is off the coast of South Carolina and Georgia where you had the black state. It was a black state. Now it's being disintegrated and it's down to a refuge for war. But, you see what I'm trying to show is migration of people from South Carolina, Georgia and all around coming into North Carolina and when they found places of work, even if it was seasonal work, they came. And some of those things came with them. So that's nothing new. When you get a tourist town that flourished, you had to draw from the outside because you didn't find that many people in one location, by themselves. Just look at the area that you're in. You think about people that in Pinehurst, SP and around three miles apart and it was so that they had a way of running from SP to Pinehurst and folks to ride back and forth to work. That's better than we have today. We don't have transportation now. So there were a lot of things happening way back that we can see a need for them now.

NM: The perspective is so important.

ED: Sure.

NM: You said that when you came in 1934-35 that you detected or recalled now a bit of dissatisfaction with the fact that the charter had been revoked and I was wondering if you might recall what you heard about why that happened. The minutes of ESP say that it was necessary to take over WSP in order to protect the interest of tax payers

- NM: of this town and that it was necessary to have control of WSP ... "First , for the reason that many criminals of North Carolina are drifting into WSP where they are protected from being apprehended by officers and to be in the community where they are protected by a negro form of government. Second, that there's considerable danger from the health standpoint of an epidemic breaking out in the negro section that would cause serious danger to SP as a resort community in a town that is dependent upon the negroes as servants." And Mr. Stutts gave as his third reason ... "that the negroes were not capable of governing themselves if they did not have sufficient funds to built streets and to look after the other civic needs of the negroes." Now I was wondering how these officially stated reasons affect you?
- ED: I'm sorry that things like that got in official documents because right now you find the black community more aroused, more critical of the white man when he wanted to write about a fellow when he was a servant to start with but found means to pick himself up by his boot straps and progress. But, by virtue of the fact that this crash of Wall Street...it had it's effect on everybody. When it hit the top it certainly hit the bottom. We admit it was an economical situation but why did it come about? Not to WSP. You have the same amount of robberies going on right now, if things stay like they are. Now you picture a haven of robbers. It possibly could be so. But why were they there to start with? Survival drove them to that particular incidence.
- NM: In discussing this with some of the other people that I've interviewed they said that in fact the town was a bit rowdy during that time but they attributed that mainly to outsiders coming in to take advantage number one of the employment situations, but really these weren't people who settled. Plus, there seemed to be rowdiness concentrated upon the attraction of Amos Broadway's establishments. They would attract people from Greensboro and other areas and there might be some rowdiness associated with that. I'm trying to get a clear picture.
- ED: I'm telling you now that you will never get a clear picture because you are always going to have a one-sided version. Amos Broadway was a character that you find in most communities. He was a brick layer by trade. He was supposed to have been one of the best we had around. Amos entered into a cafe, poolhall, theater-type operation. He would sponsor dances and during that time you had chauffeurs that knew one another from miles around; Greensboro, High Point and all around. When they would have a dance it was easier for one of them to call another one because they knew who they were working for and where they were working so they would tell around when they would have a party. That's the only advertisement for dances and stuff like that that took place that you would have a lot of outsiders coming to Amos's place. Other than that you had the same amount of gambling and liquor selling in it as anywhere in North Carolina, even after the takeover of the black town. It was just who was doing it. That's all. When you write things you write them for the benefit of the public who is going to read it and your peers who are going to criticize you. You don't talk about how it got like that, and why. It was a segregated situation; therefore, you make do with what you have. And the black man knew the white man was gambling and drinking. He did the same thing where he could do it. But, he got to be aware of the situation.
- NM: I think it's good that you can add that perspective of the Depression and what the results were.

ED: Let me tell you about Amos Broadway. Another thing about him (since we are talking about him)...Amos was a man who would call my uncle at school if a child was cutting class and hanging around his place. You won't find many people doing that today. In the summer time when school was out we could go down and shoot in that pool hall until three o'clock. At three o'clock he had customers coming in and we had to get out. He ran us out of there.

NM: So that's how you used to spend your summers back then?

ED: Yes. I never did get to be the pool shark that the others did. We'd play four or five hours some days. He just let us play. He furnished recreation when nobody else had it. All the little parties and things... he'd let the children come by there in the day time, but when the grown folks came they had to get out. I know this was because I was one of them. I'm trying to show you that everything about Amos wasn't bad. He did have the rowdy crowds sometimes. He put a man out of his place because he was rowdy one time. As I understand it the same fellow came back and waited for him to close up that night and shot him. That's how he got killed. He was trying to keep some peace, and a man ambushed him.

NM: Somebody related the details of that. Do you recall? When was it that he was killed?

ED: No. I was away then. It was after school had opened and I was away. But I understood that it was somebody that he had put out one night and the fellow went home and got his gun and waited for him to close up that night and when he came out of the place going next door where he lived, he shot him.

NM: When you first came here was there evidence that ESP was attempting to improve the area in WSP? At least the physical situation.

ED: I couldn't see any physical evidence as I know it now. WSP had benefited from the take over of ESP only through the fact that the school had been stabilized and was under control of the school board. Dr. Heard was the chairman of the school board when I came here. I think Norris Hodgkins's daddy was on the school board. All the roads were dirt. There just wasn't anything you could put your hands on other than education that had been uplifted.

NM: So that was the main thing.

ED: The school was built, the part that is torn down now; it was completed in 1924-25. It was built by funds raised from the same people that helped them to build the original school down on the old site. The State contributed to a school for operations but under the survey, even after WSP was merged, it never was the same. So therefore, the black school always had to raise money to get things done. I remember when they had to have movies in the auditorium at school to subsidize the budget of the school for buying supplies. The PTA would have to put on different programs to raise money for the school set-up and different churches were very influential about raising money for buying encyclopedias for their libraries. They had to buy different sets for the different age brackets of the children. They had a union-type of school. There were grades one through eleven. We didn't have a twelfth grade. This was a tremendous big step because the black schools had been a one-teacher and two-teacher school most of the other years. A formal education was grade one through seven. A child heard the same thing over and over for

ED: seven years. One thing they did know was basic education. This consisted of reading, writing and arithmetic. To explore through the high school we didn't get that much of it because we had to go to work.

NM: When your uncle came here and was principal were there any public sources of money?

ED: The Rosenwald fund was the biggest thing that happened during that time. It came after he was here. We found most of it being spent in North Carolina in 1936-37 or maybe it started in 1935 and went through there. I know the Rosenwald fund was a great asset to the black schools because a lot of school houses got built through the fund. I don't know if it was WSP or not but I know that there was some being spent during the latter part of the thirties.

NM: Do you recall your uncle talking about some of the difficulties related to the school system in WSP? What sorts of things was he dealing with on a day-to-day basis in 1934-35?

ED: A school principal was just about like the preacher, the lawyer and the doctor. He was called in to family consultations, children problems, getting shoes to go on the children's feet, clothes on their backs, trying to get funds from the Welfare Department to get help and this and the other. Community problems didn't have to be school problems. But, they were the principal's problems because he was in the community and was looked upon as a community leader. So therefore, all problems tended to end up with the preacher, principal and the teacher. It was a long time before they got a black doctor. We had no black lawyer. I can remember them cleaning up for the black doctor to come to town. They fixed the old Lockhart house for his office. The community leaders went in there with all the help they could and did carpentry work and painted it and fixed it up for the doctor to come to town.

NM: What was his name?

ED: Dr. Ross.

NM: Where did he come from and approximately when did he come?

ED: I don't remember. You can find a lot of people around who can tell you that. He did a tremendous job for the community, until he got himself involved in some illegal operations. It was disputed whether or not Dr. Ross took his own life or died from a heart attack.

NM: Was that while he was still in WSP?

ED: Yes. When they were supposed to transfer from WSP to prison Ross never served because he died in route or just before he got there.

NM: What sort of illegal operations?

ED: I think it was all around abortions.

NM: When was this?

ED: I believe it was in the late 1950s.

NM: What were the people in WSP doing for medical care and things like that when you first arrived?

- ED: They had different white doctors in the community. You had Dr. McMillan who came here in the 1940s. Dr. Heard was a dentist. Dr. Caudell, who had a son who was a doctor, he married another doctor. Mrs. Caudell, the son's widow is still practicing around here. There was always a lot of doctors around here but they were white. The only black doctor in the area that was a resident that I can recall was Dr. Quick from Rockingham. I knew his first cousin in Winston-Salem who was a dentist. When Shaw University lost its medical school in the 1920s a lot of the black doctors that were matriculating in the State didn't get a chance to matriculate any more. So, they had to go out of State to go to school. We lost a lot of aspiring black doctors. I think from 1922-24 Shaw lost its medical school and we lost the avenue for black doctors.
- NM: There apparently was a law suit against the Town of SP by WSP protesting the revoking of the charter. The attorney was an Andrew McCoy from Durham, I've heard. Did you ever hear anything about that law suit and what the outcome was? Somebody said they thought that this Mr. McCoy died at some point during the course of the suit and that sort of put an end to it but I believe there was an appeal to the State Supreme Court. Do you recall anything about that?
- ED: I only heard that there was a suit and I only heard that they had a lawyer. I don't know the name of the lawyer. I heard Mr. Bethea, who ran the grocery, talk to my uncle about the law suit but I was small and it didn't amount to anything in my memory. I think he was one of the last black commissioners on the town board anyhow. Mayor Hasty passed during the latter part of that time anyhow. I think Mr. Henderson was still with the town.
- NM: The first commissioner was Evander McIver. Did you ever hear of him or his family?
- ED: No. I know some McIvers around here now but I don't know if they fit in there or not. There are some Hendersons around but there are two different sets. The Betheas are the only living relatives that I know.
- NM: Keene Addison. Do you recall hearing about him?
- ED: The last Addison that I knew left here some time back. I don't know where he is. He was driving a truck.
- NM: Ben Armstrong.
- ED: You have some Armstrongs now nut I don't know the relationship.
- NM: There was a William Douglas but he was not related to you.
- ED: We have no relatives at all in this area.
- NM: Eb Streets. Did you ever hear of him? I have been told that he was a land holder.
- ED: Well just about all the land in WSP was owned at one time by different ones in the black community.
- NM: Did you ever hear of Ben Hicks? What do you know about him?

ED: Nothing. I have heard the name, that's all. Harrington, Hicks, Hendersons, Saunders, all those outstanding names.

NM: You know them as being property owners, or have you heard of them as having....

ED: Terrys?

NM: Do you know how the property was acquired?

ED: It looks like to me the measurement of land was bad during that time. It kind of staked out so much land and some of the land got sold two or three times. I hold the lawyers responsible because they would give away deeds. Somebody didn't trace the deed back far enough. But you can't get one lawyer to talk about another lawyer so therefore they got their little closed society. The scratch each others back and let it pass on. Just like the last thing, they had a big dispute about Mid-Pines when they sold land. They found out that the same land had been sold two or three times.

NM: How did that situation come to be as it is?

ED: Like I said the blacks thought they owned that land down there and Shamburger claimed he was buying the land from a lady and he looked around and Mid-Pines sold out to Quality Oil and Quality Oil came over the survey map and in the survey map the land was included in it. Hope Brodgen's husband was the lawyer for Shamburger but he died and I don't know if Shamburger ever got another lawyer or not. He might have thought it was a dead horse and quit spending money.

NM: Did the town of ESP, when they did incorporate it, attempt to do some surveying like that or does it seem that that is not what happened?

ED: It looks like to me they commissioned a surveyor, I forgot his name, that is the reason we have two maps. Some lawyers used one map and some used the other one, in writing deeds. But before the county commissioners adopted the new map the man died of something and I don't think they ever adopted the second map. They would cause some more controversy when the town council of SP abandoned the city squares that were supposed to have been layed out to pick up the garbage and things in the black people's lots. When they abandoned each adjoining property was supposed to get the part that's in the square. It didn't happen like that. Some squares went to people with quick deed claims and all that kind of stuff. You'll find now that some people never got any of it. Some lawyers got slick and quick claimed some squares and sold them back to people that owned adjoining lots which they didn't have any business buying to start with.

NM: How is this situation going to be resolved?

ED: It will never be unless the Town goes in with a condemning situation and takes off. Something will happen.

NM: What were some of the changes that you've seen in WSP during your time here and observing it from a distance at the time when you weren't here?

ED: The upgrading of the community as a whole has changed. You have

ED: to realize that people weren't making any money at that time and they built houses accordingly. You'll find a lot of houses that were built for five and eight hundred dollars. We call them run down shanties and slums now because they were built forty-five and fifty years ago. By now with the tremendous improvement and neatness they have given out but they served their purpose. Now you'll find that the grandchildren of the former owners are now building better houses, because the town demands it. The ordinances are different. You can't build as cheap as they did back then. Everybody did it themselves. They had a community situation. You help me build my house and I'll help you build yours. We had community carpenters. We had community brick layers. They got together and traded labor. That's the way they built their houses. Not knowing where they were building to start with, you'll find houses built in the middle of the street where they had no business being built but the people who laid out the streets later on laid them out according to the surveys and making them run parallel like they should run and some of the streets run straight through some of the people's houses. So they had to move the street over. From the time I came here with not a paved street in it, now you'll find that just about all of WSP has been paved. It's been a tremendous change. We still have some drainage problems yet to correct. You also have some drainage problems on the East, North and South side too. We corrected a big drainage problem since I've been on the Town Board going down through the Grover Street side going out there toward Knollwood going down by Sandavis's place off the top of the hill up there from Bennett Street going down through there. We did a tremendous amount of drainage and fixing. The town was catching the service water from the top of this hill over here by Weymouth and all back out toward Mass. Avenue and it was coming down dumping into this trough down here where Calvin Tristers built and we had to do some improvements there, to get that water off of them.

NM: What have been the biggest incentives for the community improvements in WSP which you have talked about?

ED: It would be a combination of things. Along comes a time when people continue to educate themselves with the problems of the community. They address those problems more and more. They have to be reckoned with sooner or later. Like with the community development grant. We had some people that were against us doing it.

NM: Why was that?

ED: They wanted to say that we should take the money that we were putting in it and use it for other means in the town. I was in total disarray about it because in fifty years we hadn't done anything about it yet for the town of SP. Here was a chance to take government money which would be our money and other state money and every one else's money. If we didn't use it somebody else would. So you can't tell me it's not progress to see what has been done with that seven hundred and fifty dollars over there and the town certainly wouldn't have seven hundred and fifty dollars for the next ten years to put in there. You will find that you will have problems that will establish themselves in priority as economics and people address themselves to it. The longer we have public education the more educated people will become. The working business of government municipal, state or what ever is

ED: accountable to the people.

NM: How has WSP participated in the government of the town of SP? Particularly since you have been involved in the politics of this area?

ED: How have they participated?

NM: Has there been an active participation by the community and had ESP been receptive to that participation?

ED: I think the first entering into the community as a whole came through the organization of the WSP Civic Club. That was the first really active community organization.

NM: When did that begin? Do you know? Was that something that came after the separate municipality?

ED: Yes it came after. I didn't know about it until 1938-39. But I think it started around 1935. It's been around for thirty or more years.

NM: I was very impressed when I went to the meeting with the extent of participation and people obviously being aware of what was happening in the community.

ED: You got there one night we didn't have many there.

NM: There must have been twenty-five there.

ED: Yes, but let a matter of real concern come up and that place will run over with people.

NM: What is the basis for that kind of participation?

ED: It grew out of the churches. It was a joint effort of the churches coming together to voice their grievances as a group and to present their grievances to the town governing board. The preachers had to utilize their talents at leadership. Rev. Funderburk was a great advocate of the Civic Club. He passed some years back but his widow is being funeralized Thursday here. She just passed in Pittsburgh this passed Sunday. There is not many people in WSP that can't remember Rev. Funderburk.

NM: As I look on the tax lists, there was from the minutes in 1923 a Katie Funderburk. Was that a relation? Do you know?

ED: I don't know. It could be. Elder Funderburk was one of the outstanding preachers because he was ordained. We had a lot of preachers that said God called them to preach but Funderburk was an educated man and he gave a lot of leadership to the community.

NM: What church was he associated with and do you know where he came from?

ED: I can't tell you that but he owned property on Leak Street and sold it out. I met his boys and him when I got here. He could have enlightened you a lot. Floyd McDonald would be a good one, but he's not capable of remembering anything.

NM: Do you recall any of the names on that list? Do they ring a bell with you?

ED: I can't connect them together. You found out what happened at the Civic Club the other night when you went to talking in there and how many people they could identify.

NM: This participation by the Civic Club, is there anything different about WSP or is this typical for a community such as WSP when there is an issue? It seems that this participation is sustained whether there is a big issue or a crisis.

ED: Most towns now rallied behind the NAACP or other organizations that functioned in the church, but WSP Civic Club is a function of a church or churches that came out of coming together of the minds. I like it because it never ceased to function even with the passing of the original preachers from the churches from whence they came. The membership of the different churches keep it alive. I marvel at the fact that when you say WSP Civic Club, if they don't tell you anything about it, they don't talk against it. One thing I have found, silence gives consent with people. When they don't say anything bad it's certainly saying something good. They have a tendency to give negative attitudes a whole lot more than positive.

NM: How did you become involved in the politics of SP and did you begin as a representative of the area? Did you see yourself somewhat serving in the tradition of the self-independent typr government that WSP had?

ED: No I got in by accident. They had had a black member of the town council since T.T. Morris and I think Morris must have come on the board in the late forties and he served and then Felton Capel. Felton served until he was asked to serve on the C and D board of the state. He resigned to serve on that. The Civic Club was approached about naming somebody for the council to consider. I was working at Cameron Morrison School but I was going back and forth every day during that time and they got together and asked me would I consider serving and I told them for the benefit of the club and community I would serve the balance of the term. Then they could look for somebody else. I hadn't planned on staying on. By the end of the term they decided that they didn't want anybody else. They wanted me to serve so I ran and after I won I continued to to serve. At the present time I still serve. I have told the club to find another wick to put in the lamp because any wick will burn out. I don't want to stay until I become a nonfunctional institution of one. I haven't heard anything from them about replacing me. I find myself trying to serve until they get a successor. That's what has kept me here. I've found that alot of white citizens thought well of mee too and I'm appreciative. I've told them that I have no rule of thumb other than try to wear the moccasin that we put on the other person's foot and if it squeezes my toes I know it squeezes theirs. That's my rule of thumb. I don't know, sometimes we have a tendency to make a qualified applicant be over qualified especially if he's black. I found the biggest thing in dealing with the town of SP since I have been here is that I try my best to be fair. I try not to tell one person one thing and another another. I don't want to ever be guilty of getting caught in a lie. It takes more to straighten out a lie after it is proven to be a lie than if you had told the truth to start with.

NM: Could you just mention a few words about how WSP Civic Club has related to the town government of ESP and do they serve as regular input?

ED: I can talk more or less since 1969 to now. I don't know of a single instance the Civic Club has made or differed with the town on a situation when they have petitioned the town or something of that nature, that the town ignored them. So I think the function of the club is very good towards the total aspect of the community. The problems that they think that they have in the community, they let it be know to the Town Council. I don't recall a single time that the Council hadn't stopped to hear what they were saying. I don't recall a single time that they ignored them and kept on going. Either they listened to them and changed their minds or it was a compromise. So I think that's a good participation and good function in business. You never get everything you want but it's good to be always heard.

NM: Do you have any other observations or any other suggestions that you would like to add at this point and I'm hoping that we will be able to talk a little bit more later on.

ED: Things that concern me now are not only black, it's things in general. It's economic and actually it's the backbone of the town itself. What would help the black community would help the total community. The situation that we find ourselves in now, with this being a tourist section as I told you to start with, tend to lend itself for poor business for the realities. If you can't sell anything, then the builders can't afford to build it. If we don't have the tourists of the magnitude that we have places for them to stay, it affects the workers that work in those institutions. When you find that you have nine banks or money institutions in a town of this size you find then that you have an institution for every thousand people. You need to have a lot of money to keep them afloat. Those are the economic things that I think have a tendency to hurt the total. One side counts as well as the other. I don't see how one side will survive without the other side because it's so instrumental. We're going to have some situations that's very distasteful in this town. We have an albatross hung around our necks with a sewer system that is too large. It will cost us money for the next ten years before I can believe that it might turn the tables around. And start breaking down some so we can understand it better because the users have to pay for it. That's state law. We have to have water and water is going to cost more. You have to raise your water rates to pay for the new water that you haven't got yet, but it's nothing new in the state. As long as we have to pay for utilities companies building nuclear plants. We're not using them yet. It's another one of those things where we go about raising the revenue. It concerns me more or less that we have something that we know we have to have but we don't have the control that we want to have. A town this size needs to have its destiny a little bit better in its hands.

NM: Could WSP have survived as a separate town?

ED: That is questionable because the recovery for the Nation came in the late 1930s after Roosevelt. The money would have to be in circulation for a black town to survive. They were mostly a working class of people and they were working in the service area. So you know the money would have to come from circulation. As a whole, we have never in the last thirty years gotten back to the point where we were when it came to the black participation in banks and institutions that we were before the crash. It's possible that they could have survived by entering into the war in the latter part of the 1930s. It's a possibility that it would have. I'm

ED: not sure that circulation of money from the Roosevelt era would have gotten to it in time for them to do what they needed done.