

Storer College Oral History Project
Harpers Ferry National Historical Park
Interview with Stanley Spurlock by Elaine Eff
5645 Harpers Farm Road E, Columbia, Maryland 21044
March 11, 2014

Elaine Eff: Today is March 11, 2014. This is Elaine Eff [spells], and I am interviewing Mr. Stanley Spurlock, a graduate of Storer College, who attended from 1947 to 1951. We are in the Howard County Central Library in Columbia, Maryland, and it's a beautiful day.

[00:00:41.11] Stanley Spurlock: Yes, it is, very beautiful.

EE: So, it's a treat to be able to talk with you, and I know you have certain things you started that you want to tell us at the outset about your days at Storer. We're going to talk about as many aspects as we can, your memories of being a student there, but even before you got there.

So, you wanted to tell me something to start out, I believe, and then we'll start with some of our questions.

[00:01:11.07] SS: Well, I was raised in a small town, as I mentioned, Covington [City], Virginia, which is nestled in the Allegheny Mountains near White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia. I had an unusual experience going to Storer College. There was a large water tower on the base and a very heavy snowstorm, and I've tried to meet other people who witnessed this, but that tower was laden with snow that was so heavy, it crashed to the ground, and it destroyed some of the specimens of the science teacher who at that time was a Mrs. Jemison. I can't recollect her married name right now, but she taught biology, a very excellent teacher, very strict, and everyone knew her and kind of feared taking her course because she was a bit strict.

EE: So, when was that?

[00:02:40.22] SS: That was in—the week that my brother and I arrived in 1947. I did not mention, but I arrived there with a twin brother, Sterrett Spurlock.

EE: Why don't you spell his name?

SS: Sterrett [spells first name].

EE: All right. You're going to have to tell us about why you chose Storer College.

[00:03:16.23] SS: Well, it's rather personal. My brother and I had arrived from the military. I arrived from the Navy, he from the army, and we were really cutting up a bit in our hometown, nothing that was serious but enough to aggravate our parents.

[00:03:47.10] So, when the opening came to—we applied to some colleges, but Storer was the first to accept. So, when we accepted to go, my mother said, “You're leaving?”

Thank God.”

[00:04:05.02] And from that moment on, Storer was my choice. I went there. I recall some of the—

EE: Before you get there, you're going to tell me some of your teachers, I'll bet, right?

SS: Right.

EE: Did you think of going to other colleges or was Storer your only choice?

[00:04:31.22] SS: I had considered going to a state college in Virginia, Virginia State College, but as I said, my brother and I, both were World War II veterans, had acted up so that our parents were glad to get rid of us. So, we took the first college that accepted us.

EE: So, how old were you? Tell us exactly when you were born.

[00:05:01.28] SS: I was born November 26, 1923 in Covington, Virginia.

EE: And what kind of town was Covington, Virginia?

[00:05:13.05] SS: It's a mill town. A paper mill supported one end of the town, and on the other side was a textile plant, a rayon plant, they called it. So, there was always employment there, but I had no intentions of making my home in Covington, after having seen the world, the Navy, to be exact.

EE: And where did you go?

[00:05:49.24] SS: I went to Okinawa, Europe, those two places primarily.

EE: Lucky you, yeah. And tell me a little about you and your brother. What kind of twins were you? Were you close twins? Were you good friends?

[00:06:17.21] SS: We were good friends, but we were not homogeneous in our looks or our attitudes. We were just fraternal twins, but we got along pretty good.

EE: So, what was it like going from Covington to Storer? You really had already seen the world. You were twenty-four years old, twenty-three years old by the time you went to college.

[00:06:49.13] SS: No, let's see. I was twenty-one. Wait a minute. I went to college in '47, and I was twenty-four, right. I was twenty-four.

EE: So, you were older. You and your brother were both older than other

students. So, what was that like, going as an older student?

[00:07:14.20] SS: There were lots of veterans there. Oh, many, many, many veterans. Most of the male population had been in World War II. So, we were all kind of on the same level. All the freshmen were—there were very few freshmen that were not veterans. Most were veterans.

EE: What do you remember about the male/female ratio?

[00:07:46.13] SS: Most female, the ratio I can't very well—let's see, '47, after the number of veterans stopped coming, the population decreased. During '47, most of them were getting discharged from the service. So, we had an influx of veterans, but after that, the number of students coming in dwindled quite—

EE: Now, did you attend on the GI Bill?

[00:08:31.28] SS: Yes. That was quite an enticement.

EE: Tell me about that. That is an amazing opportunity. Tell me what that meant to you.

[00:08:41.23] SS: Oh, definitely, definitely. I don't think I would have gone to college, had it not been for the GI Bill. I don't know. I wanted to go to college. I was a pretty good student in high school, but you had to procure this money, you know. You had to get this money together.

[00:09:09.06] So, it would have been very—a lot of men and women, I guess, worked their way through, but the GI Bill was just a godsend, that's all. You had your books, tuition, all of that was paid for, and all you had to pay was your food, your dormitory expenses and so forth.

EE: So, it must have been—here, you're going to Storer with your brother.

SS: Right.

EE: Tell me what you remember about first seeing Storer. Had you seen it before you had gotten there?

[00:10:00.01] SS: No.

EE: Why Harpers Ferry? What did you think about going to that place?

[00:10:08.15] SS: I really wasn't amazed at Harpers Ferry because, at that time, it was not accredited. It was not an accredited college. So, I had to do further graduate work in order to get teaching positions and so forth because Storer was a nice college. If you had an elementary major, you were all right, but it did not, the state did not

recognize secondary education. So, when you came out, you had to go back and do some preparing.

EE: So, what was your major?

[00:11:01.02] SS: Social studies. I don't think—well, I did not get a job teaching from my credentials at Storer until I received certification from other schools.

EE: And where did you go?

[00:11:22.23] SS: I went to University of Maryland, took some courses at the University of Virginia, and I received—what did they call it? MEd, a masters of education from Coppin State College in Maryland.

[00:11:42.26] And let's see. At the University of Virginia, they called it—I forget now what they called that degree. Let me see. I didn't write that down either.

EE: Did you know when you started at Storer that you might not get a degree? Did that not enter into the process?

[00:12:16.14] SS: They gave you a degree, and I knew—it was common knowledge that unless you were an elementary major, you would not get certified in secondary ed, but we went anyway, my brother and I.

EE: And did you both finish?

[00:12:38.16] SS: Yes. Well, no, he got married and went to Alderson Broaddus College in West Virginia. But I finished in '51.

EE: Did he marry a Storer student?

SS: Right.

EE: Oh, who did he marry?

SS: Her name?

EE: Uh huh.

SS: [laughs] Let's see. Gayanne Her name was Gayanne Moss. She lived in—what's the name of it? Clarksburg, West Virginia.

EE: Okay. [laughs] You hadn't thought about that in a while, I guess.

SS: No.

EE: That's great. So, I'm going to finish with the degree and just tell me, what did a Storer degree—so, leaving Storer, and then you had to go out and get further degrees. So, how was finding employment after you graduated?

[00:13:53.07] SS: Well, I went back. I had been in the Navy, but I joined the Air Force and stayed long enough to retire from the Air Force. Then I went to—as I said, Coppin State, and received certification, credits at the University of Virginia, and let's see. There was another.

EE: Did you say the University of Maryland?

SS: The University of Maryland, right, right.

EE: But in other words, so, then, with all those degrees, how was finding a job?

[00:14:42.24] SS: After that, they wanted—who was it? I forget now, but I didn't go into what I was prepared for. I went into special ed. because that's where the need was. So, I took anything that they would give me. In fact, when I was interviewed, I signed a contract at the very same meeting of the interview. I had not had the opportunity to teach, although growing up, they called me Professor, you know, and I ain't never been to college. [laughs]

[00:15:48.20] EE: But I always wanted to teach, always, but it wasn't as I thought it would be. I mean, it had its ups and downs, you know, and it was rewarding also.

EE: So, tell me, what was your first job? Where was it?

[00:16:10.21] SS: Teaching? in Baltimore, yes. Then I stayed in Baltimore four years and moved to Howard County. But I can't think of the school that I taught.

EE: And where did your brother go?

[00:16:36.24] SS: He went to—he didn't teach. He went to his wife's home in Clarksburg, West Virginia, and he worked at a bank.

EE: So, let's talk a little about your chosen profession that Storer prepared you for, and then we'll go backwards and talk about your years at Storer. Tell us a little about your life in teaching.

[00:17:09.03] SS: I'm not polishing my apple, but I was always referred to as Professor. Even when I was in the Navy, they called me “Prof.” So, it seemed like I was always destined to be a teacher, but it wasn't—as I said, it wasn't what I thought it was. It wasn't like “Have a seat.” It was more like discipline, getting the students to do what you want them to do, and they were special ed. students on top of that. So, it wasn't all peaches and cream.

[00:17:57.10] But you had to live, and you had to have a job. So, I stayed with it. I stayed in it until I retired in Howard County.

EE: In what year?

[00:18:18.04] SS: Let's see. Maybe '71. I'm sure it was '71. Let's see. I'll take a guess on that and say '71.

EE: So, what was the highlight of your teaching career?

[00:18:39.07] SS: I would say molding, molding and getting students to do as you would want them to do. I mean, I learned the hard way. I thought if you walked in there with your chest out, they're going to just sit there and obey you [laughs] and do what you want. But it's more leading than pushing, you know? And I learned that the hard way.

[00:19:20.27] But, finally, I stayed with it. So, I must have learned it in some kind of way. But you just had to motivate was the main thing and get them interested in what you are trying to put across. No pushing. I mean, that was taboo because it would backfire on you, which as I said, I wish I had learned that in the beginning.

EE: So, tell me what you did learn? What messages, what lessons did you take from Storer College?

[00:20:05.09] SS: Well, for one thing, I learned that students are very sensitive. They watch your every move. They imitate you. They notice how you dress, and everything about you is kind of emulated, and you pick up on that because you find that you want to set an example.

[00:20:46.26] But when I went to Baltimore City-- that was very difficult, very, very difficult. But eventually things smoothed out, and you don't come out of the military and go into teaching without trying to be militaristic to a certain extent. [laughs] But, as I said, you learn. You learn by doing, and it worked out. It worked out.

EE: Well, let's talk a little bit about what you learned at Storer. What were your favorite subjects? What did you enjoy learning about?

[00:21:42.13] SS: Well, generally, I enjoyed—well, I made pretty good grades in all of my subjects, not blowing my own horn, but I was quite frequently on the honor roll. And when people recognize you as having certain abilities and talents, not bragging, they kind of look up to you. And having your name on the honor roll quite often, you're bound to get a reputation.

EE: What did you study? What are your most memorable classes or your most memorable teachers?

[00:22:43.17] SS: Well, it was, it was, as I said, general studies. So, I had my—there was a teacher there named Mrs. Jemison, and she had a reputation of being rough in biology. So, I evaded for a couple of years. It was mandatory, and I had to take it.

[00:23:11.19] And I went there and found out that t wasn't as bad as I thought it was, you know? But her name was the talk of the campus, and her biology. She was a very good teacher, a very nice lady. I was so sorry I put it off so long when I could have done it earlier.

[00:23:38.24] But they kind of scare you, you know? You hit the campus, and people start talking, and you're listening, and oh, her name was Jemison [spells], but she was excellent, excellent.

EE: Were the teachers when you were there predominantly black or white?

[00:24:10.22] SS: Let me see. I put some teachers' names down here. I believe they were primarily black. Let's see. Dr. Schumaker was white. Professor Wolfe was white. I think Mrs. Hyslop, the French teacher, was white. Did I say Professor Wolfe?

EE: Uh huh. What did Professor Wolfe teach?

[00:24:48.00] SS: He taught English grammar, speech, very good. And those were, while I was there, the only white teachers. The president was white, but he retired before I arrived.

EE: Who was the president when you were there?

[00:25:18.15] SS: Dr. McKinley. [McKinney] I think he had just been hired. He hadn't been there too long. He had a PhD from Yale.

EE: Did you know him?

[00:25:35.16] SS: Well, he was the president. So, I would know him to speak to him, and that was it.

EE: That's a lot.

[00:25:42.25] SS: If I'd met him, I'd speak to him, yeah. But you weren't—it was a small campus.

EE: How many students were there when you were there, do you recall?

[00:25:58.18] SS: I don't think I could make a rough guess on that. No, I can't say. But it was in February of '47, and the veterans had enrolled, and as I said, after the veterans, the population started decreasing.

EE: And you said there were more women than men when you were there. Would you say that?

[00:26:36.06] SS: I believe I had to think about it. Let's see. I think there were more women. Yeah, more women.

EE: Right. So, you said there were about four white teachers or so when you were there. [rustles papers] That's okay. And then tell me about some of the teachers that you had that people loved or people hated or people stayed from or people kind of gathered around. Do you remember any of those?

[00:27:07.13] SS: Oh, Dr. Schumaker. I never recall Dr. Schumaker failing anyone. He was a very studious man, very calm, never excited, an excellent teacher. Everyone took courses from him.

EE: What did he teach?

[00:27:31.23] SS: Social studies, humanities, I would say, I guess.

EE: What made a great teacher?

[00:27:46.04] SS: The way they related to the students. The kind that you just revered. I mean, he was easygoing, but it didn't mean that individuals didn't want to do their work. He was well liked. He kept discipline in the room, although he had a soft voice, but everyone took courses from him.

EE: So, do you have any memories of specific classes that you took?

[00:28:37.28] SS: As to what?

EE: Just sort of whether it was the relationship between you and the teacher or episodes or things you learned or pranks. [laughs]

[00:28:57.02] SS: Well, as I said, I only flunked one course while I was there, and that was because as an undergraduate student, I was asked to go to Charles Town, West Virginia to substitute. I was a senior in college, and I missed some classes from this teacher, and he gave me a failing grade because I wasn't in his class. I was in Charles Town teaching as a senior. That was the only failing grade that I ever received.

EE: What class was that?

[00:29:57.12] SS: I can't recall. [laughs] I'll have to think about it. It was one of the humanities, history or something along that line.

EE: That must have hit you pretty hard.

[00:30:14.20] SS: I had an excellent record until then. No failures.

EE: Tell me what campus life was like, especially since you started having a twin brother there. So, first tell me where you lived on campus.

[00:30:31.23] SS: We had a dormitory called Mosher Hall.

EE: Describe that building to me.

[00:30:39.18] EE: It was an old building. I think it dated back to the Civil War. Let's see, three floors, I believe, or two floors? I'm not sure on the number of floors. But all the men, it was a men's dormitory, and it was called Mosher Hall. I think it was named after someone who served during the Civil War.

EE: Had it been updated at all? What condition was it in? I'm curious if you and your brother shared rooms or what?

[00:31:30.16] SS: Yeah, we shared. There were four of us in a room: my brother and I and two other students. But he left after—let's see. I forget now the year that he left. But he married a coed and, as I said, went to Clarksburg, West Virginia.

EE: So, describe your room. Do you remember it?

[00:32:10.29] SS: It had Army bunks, one up, one lower, and two of those. Being four of us in there, it seemed like it was roomy enough. There was a table there and four chairs, I believe. But the Army bunks, we were accustomed to Army bunks, having just come out of the military.

EE: Was there a desk? Was there a table in place where you could study? Or were you not expected to study in your room?

[00:32:47.29] SS: There was a table there, but someone was in and out all the time. So, you had time to study. Or there was a library that was pretty nice, and you could go there and study.

EE: Where was that? What building?

[00:33:06.01] SS: It was right on campus, oh, walking distance from your dorm.

EE: So, what do you remember about the library? Was it well stocked? Did it have everything you would need? Did you have to go to other libraries?

[00:33:23.29] SS: Well, I wouldn't say it was well stocked. It had been there for so long, and that school relied on donations a lot, being a religious school, and it—I really never thought about how proficient or sufficient that was because it did what we

were required to do. There was plenty of research going on there for the students.

EE: Can you describe the library? Do you remember what building it was and how you walked there from your dorm, for example? Were you in Mosher Hall all four years?

[00:34:16.15] SS: Mosher Hall, yes, yes.

EE: Could you answer that in a full sentence, how long you lived in Mosher Hall.

[00:34:28.29] SS: I was there the entire time in Mosher Hall. Mosher Hall was next to Anthony Hall, which I think I have that—yeah, Anthony Hall, let's see [looks at his notes] Yeah, Anthony Hall was the administrative building. It had classes also.

EE: And then how would you go from your hall? Where was the library located?

[00:35:04.25] SS: I would say a hundred yards, not that much, no, it wasn't. It was walking distance.

EE: Do you remember what building it was in?

[00:35:16.04] SS: The library? I just think they called it the library. [laughs]

EE: That's a good name for a library. Tell me about some of the other buildings you remember. Like when you go back now, my guess is it doesn't exactly look like the Storer College you went to fifty years ago. I'm sorry, sixty years ago.

[00:35:42.18] SS: There was practically a new building there called Cook Hall. It was primarily home ec, and it was a fairly new building. It was newer than the other buildings there.

[00:36:03.14] As I understand it, some of those buildings have been used during the Civil War. So, they were pretty old, but Cook Hall was fairly new. And let's see here. Cook Hall, there was, as I said, Anthony Hall, the administrative building, and Mosher Hall, and Brackett Hall, the females' dormitory.

EE: Do you remember Lockwood?

[00:36:39.19] SS: Lockwood House. Lockwood House was off-campus. Oh, it was quite a distance from the campus. Let's see. Other than it was used as a barracks, it was used during the Civil War is the only explanation I can give for it. It housed military.

EE: But you don't remember it being used by Storer?

[00:37:21.01] SS: No, no.

EE: So, did you play in any sports? Were there any athletics when you were there?

[00:37:29.19] SS: Oh, yeah, yeah. Well, I wasn't built for football. [laughs] So, I didn't play football, but we had intramural sports. We had a football team and a basketball team that played surrounding—not surrounding. There was a conference there. We played Livingston in North Carolina, Elizabeth City in North Carolina. They were all black schools at that time.

EE: And what athletics were you involved in, any?

[00:38:14.22] SS: Oh, I played softball. I played touch football. I never played basketball, but those intramural type things.

EE: Do you remember the gymnasium? Do you remember the gym, the athletic center?

[00:38:38.10] SS: That was, we called it the barn. It had been a barn. But that's where the basketball team conducted its games with visiting teams.

EE: Did you have like a rivalry with any single school?

[00:38:59.07] SS: Oh, yeah. Two schools in North Carolina. Let me think for a minute. I'd have to take that back on the rivalry because I can't think of it.

EE: But you did have them, right?

[00:39:36.19] SS: Right, right.

EE: Tell me what clubs or were there any special organizations that you participated with?

[00:39:50.20] SS: Well, you had to make up your own. There were no fraternities there or sororities. But you kind of made up your own after school activities. There was a program called the student, s—?—what was it—it wasn't SGA.

EE: Oh, Student Government Association.

[00:40:34.24] SS: No. But I was president of the senior class and also president of the Student Government Association.

EE: Well, that's pretty big. That probably kept you pretty busy. What was that like?

[00:40:55.01] SS: Well, during my senior year, I had a lot of interests because I took both of

those jobs. They figured I should have only taken one, [laughs] but I did it anyway.

EE: What did you do? Did you have a campaign platform? Was there something that you wanted to accomplish or some things that you needed to have a say in?

[00:41:28.15] SS: In a sense, yes, but the student body nominated me and elected me. So, I took it even though I shouldn't have. I shouldn't have done it because it incurred a lot of wrath as a senior and having both of those jobs.

EE: So, why'd you do it? What made you do it?

[00:42:02.10] SS: Well, I guess I was kind of being egotistical.

EE: What did you have to do? Was it just that you could call yourself the president, or were there actual things you had to do?

[00:42:14.13] SS: Yeah, there were—as a senior, you had to call meetings. As the student government president, there were also meetings. And you had delegates from each class, and you worked on discipline problems. If a student was to be disciplined for something, we wanted to handle it before the faculty did. Not serious things, you know, but we wanted to talk it over and try to keep—there will always be some students who will kind of break the rules, you know? So, we wanted to kind of keep those students in line, to let them know that what they were doing was wrong.

EE: What kind of rules are we talking about?

[00:43:24.05] SS: I remember one case where there was a slight altercation between a male and a female student. They were boyfriend and girlfriend. There was just a little ruckus that we thought we should handle and keep it out of the hands of faculty.

[00:43:55.23] But it was mostly prestige, having those jobs, more so than—because there was a faculty advisor that looked over everything you did. So, it gave you, as I said, prestige. You were what they called a BMOC, a Big Man on Campus, you know? [laughs]

[00:44:30.17] So, that's what it amounted to.

EE: So, if you had to do it all over again, would you have taken both jobs?

[00:44:41.13] SS: No, because it caused too much envy, you know? I wouldn't. And there were people there that were expecting or wanted one of those jobs, and they expressed their opinions about it, you know? But, no, I would not have. I would have selected the class president's job and not the student government job.

EE: So, because you were president twice or double presidents, you didn't get to know the president of the college as a result of that, Mr. McKinney?

[00:45:34.05] SS: Slightly, but he had what they called, there was a sponsor they called it for the student government. I don't guess he delegated it, but there was a teacher there who sat in on our meetings. He served in lieu of the president. I mean, I very seldom saw the president other than—once or twice maybe you went to his office, but this teacher that served as the—I can't think of the word I want to use.

EE: Advisor or mentor?

[00:46:30.24] SS: Yes. Right. He sat in on the meetings.

EE: And what was his name?

[00:46:42.24] SS: Let me see if I have it written down here. No, I didn't get his name. [Mr. Lewis.]

EE: That's okay. So, were there any special events that would happen on a regular basis, let's put that down, it's noisy, or happened during the four years that you were there that you can talk about?

[00:47:15.15] SS: Special events? Well, football games, basketball games.

EE: Do you remember John Brown Days?

[00:47:28.08] SS: John Brown Day, we celebrated it, but there was no John Brown Day that I can recall. But we all kind of gave him, we honored him, but I don't remember John Brown Day.

EE: What did it mean to you to be going to school in Harpers Ferry?

[00:48:00.28] SS: Well, we thought about John Brown and his Harpers ferry--and his deeds at Harpers Ferry. When I first went there, John Brown's fort was on campus, but it was moved into Harpers Ferry, downtown Harpers Ferry.

EE: Do you remember the students being involved in any way or responding?

[00:48:47.05] SS: No. What I recall is just it was just suddenly gone. I really don't recall when it was moved.

EE: Tell me a little about, like you were at the school, but the school was in the town of Harpers Ferry.

SS: Right.

EE: What kind of mobility did you have? What was the town like? How did the town respond to the students?

[00:49:27.10] SS: I think I wrote something down here about Harpers Ferry and Bolivar. Harpers Ferry didn't have any black citizens, but Bolivar did. Let me get that straightened out. Yeah, Bolivar had black citizens, but Harpers Ferry—I think there were maybe one or two families in Harpers Ferry.

EE: So, how did you relate to the town? Could you move freely through the town or through Bolivar? Did you go to town for anything?

[00:50:10.25] SS: You could move through the town, but segregation was in force then in Harpers Ferry. I remember there was a restaurant not far from the campus that students from the campus attended, but they couldn't go in there and sit down at that time. I forget that lady's name that ran that restaurant. [Mrs. Rathbone]

EE: And where was the restaurant in relation to the school?

[00:50:53.29] SS: Oh, maybe a half a mile from the campus.

EE: How did you get around?

[00:51:00.11] SS: We walked. If a fellow had an automobile, he was a BMOC, a Big Man on Campus. There were very few automobiles on campus, and they weren't really missed because the place was so small, Bolivar and Harpers Ferry, that you could walk any place you wanted to go.

EE: Did you travel anywhere outside of Harpers Ferry? If so, how did you move about? What transportation was available?

[00:51:46.10] SS: No, we primarily stayed on campus. There was a beverage store in Harpers Ferry called Pope's. They went down to Harpers Ferry to get their beverages. I mean, some hard stuff.

[00:52:31.10] But you didn't have any, was there a grocery store? There was a drugstore. The drugstore was a place that we went to, and there was a grocery store in Bolivar, small, very small.

EE: Was there prejudice?

[00:53:04.14] SS: You didn't come in contact with racists. Let's see. Relations were pretty good because we were allowed to use the high school gymnasium in Bolivar.

EE: For what?

[00:53:32.21] SS: For basketball. If we had a team coming in—later on, our gymnasium went

kaput. It wasn't used.

EE: You're talking about the barn?

[00:53:48.12] SS: The barn. Right, the barn. We were allowed to use the gymnasium in was that Bolivar or Harpers Ferry? In Bolivar, right.

EE: What was it like being at school in the late forties, early fifties when there was all this agitation? I mean, Brown v. Board of Ed was just a few years later, causing the demise. I mean, were you kind of aware of a dwindling down? How was that evident?

[00:54:29.25] SS: I don't recall that taking place while I was at Storer College.

EE: That's interesting that you—we talked about, you said that the school wasn't accredited. It was accredited by the West Virginia Board of Education, and they were giving those AB degrees. [For teaching elementary not secondary education]

SS: Right.

EE: In elementary and secondary ed.

SS: Not secondary.

EE: That's interesting. I have a note that they did in '46, but you know better. You definitely know better. So, here, when you're saying that you were able to stay on the campus, what did you all do for socializing?

[00:55:18.07] SS: Well, you know, Storer was very, very strict on boy/girl relationships, and you saw your female friends during meals and on Sunday, you walked to church with them. And I remember after lunch on Sunday, the men and women would stroll up and down the campus prior to vesper service, prior to church service, and there was a stop put to that. After you ate, the young ladies were kept in the dormitory until time to go to church, but, they could still, prior to that, they could stroll to campus, but someone put a stop to that. I'm sorry.

EE: You make yourself comfortable. You sit where you're comfortable.

SS: I keep moving. [laughs]

EE: That's okay. I'll follow you with the mic. [laughs] Wherever you go, I'll follow you. Tell me about church. What was the relationship with the campus to the church, and which church are we talking about?

[00:57:15.27] SS: It's the church right on campus, right on church—it wasn't—it was on a side street going down into Bolivar. I passed that church not long ago. It's still there. A

relative of Bette Davis [the film actress] is buried in that cemetery of that church.

[00:57:51.15] Church was mandatory, but—

EE: Was this a Free Will Baptist church? What denomination was it?

[00:58:04.26] SS: I believe it was Methodist. I'm not sure. And I passed it the other day and didn't look at it. I don't think it was Baptist. I believe it was Methodist. I believe Storer was Methodist. I'm not sure.

EE: Well, it was founded by the Free Will Baptists.

SS: Okay.

EE: And I know the church across the street was that church. Do you remember going to services there? Was that what that was like?

[00:59:38.23] SS: Oh, we had to go. [laughs] Yeah, we had to go to church until the fellows started playing hooky, you know? But church was mandatory, and that was a time when you could get to see your girlfriend. So, you didn't quite mind too much.

EE: Did people come from the community as well? Who went to these services?

[00:59:19.21] SS: Mostly campus. Mostly campus.

EE: And who presided over the services?

[00:59:28.11] SS: Dean [checks his notes] Kelly was the chaplain, and he presided over the church.

EE: Did you like going to services? Was there anything besides getting to see your girlfriend of the moment and it being mandatory, do you remember ever trying to sneak out or what you all did to avoid going?

[01:00:20.03] SS: Well, you know, it wasn't something that you rushed, you'd holler and scream about in glee. It was mandatory. So, to keep from getting points, not that they gave points, but, you know, you went just to keep everything in order.

EE: The world was good. Do you remember choir or glee clubs?

[01:00:55.19] SS: Oh, yes. It was made up of students. They always had a person there conducting, a musician conducting the choir.

EE: Who did you know who was in the choir?

[01:01:19.02] SS: Students.

EE: Did you ever sing?

[01:01:23.20] SS: No, no, I never. I did as a youth, but I didn't feel like I wanted to join the choir.

EE: Do you remember any special people coming to lecture, whether it was at the church or the school?

[01:01:39.01] SS: Coming to lecture? Oh, yes, but I can't remember their names. I wish I had gotten that question prior to now. Then I could have thought about it, you know? It's not going to come to me. [laughs] [Clarence Cranford lectured.]

EE: That's okay. Don't you worry about it. This is not a test. So what did you do when you had free time?

[01:02:12.25] SS: Well, let's see. I guess between dinner and eight o'clock during the week, we played softball, played touch football, and pitched horseshoes. 'Pitched a lot of horseshoes. [laughs]

EE: Where did you do that?

[01:02:56.11] SS: Right on campus.

EE: Whereabouts?

[01:02:59.19] SS: Oh, right next to the barracks [dormitory]. Dig some pits and put your stakes in. In fact, it was right next to the barracks. And then we do—make up softball, and that was right near one of those halls. I think it was Cook Hall. Was it Cook Hall? Yeah.

EE: So, what did you do that was coed? Those were things that were probably just boys only right?

[01:03:46.29] SS: Correct. Right.

EE: What did you do that was coed? Anything?

[01:03:51.21] SS: They would have a get together in the evening. I forget what day it was, that you could go over during the week to—Brackett Hall was the name of it. You could go over to Brackett Hall and dance for an hour during the week. But that lady, her name was Mrs. Bird. Mrs. Bird was pretty strict.

EE: Who was she?

SS: She was the dorm mother, I guess. She lived in—did I say Brackett Hall?

EE: Yes.

[01:04:49.29] SS: Brackett Hall, right.

EE: And what did she do?

[01:04:54.06] SS: She was the housemother, I guess.

EE: And what was her job?

SS: Keep the boys out. [laughs] She was pretty strict.

EE: Did you like to try to get into the girls' dorms?

[01:05:09.05] SS: Oh, no, no. That was forbidden.

EE: So, were there white students on campus at the same time?

[01:05:19.03] SS: Never.

EE: Why don't you say that to me in a full sentence?

[01:05:25.10] SS: Beg your pardon?

EE: Instead of saying yes and no, I'd rather you use what I asked you in a full sentence.

[01:05:32.06] SS: Okay, no, there were no, it was not interracial. There were no white students at Storer while I was there, none.

EE: But there were quite a few white administrators and teachers.

[01:05:54.02] SS: Yes, yes. I have a list of them here. Let's see. There was, wait a minute—Professor Wolfe, Dr. Schumaker, Mrs. Hyslop [spells]. There weren't as many as I thought.

EE: Now, who were they?

[01:06:38.21] SS: Let's see. Professor Wolfe was—

EE: What was that list that you just gave me? Why did you give me that list? Who were they?

[01:06:48.13] SS: They were white faculty members.

EE: And then who were the black faculty members that you remember?

[01:06:56.29] SS: Oh, let's see. Of course, the president, Dr. McKinney. His wife was a faculty. Dean Jacobs, Dean Kelly, Dean Johnson, Mr. Darius, Mrs. Darius, Mrs. Jemison, Dean Pawley, Professor McDaniel, Professor Steele, and Mr. Jemison. Well, he worked in the office, but he was black.

EE: Were these your teachers or all the teachers you remember on campus?

SS: They're teachers I remember.

EE: I'd sort of like to know what they taught, too.

[01:08:08.10] SS: Oh, let's see. Mrs. McKinney taught English. Dean Jacobs, well, she was the dean of women.

EE: What did she do?

[01:08:32.12] SS: She was, I would say, the female policewoman. Dean Kelly was the chaplain, and he was the chaplain and he taught religion. Dean Johnson taught sciences. Mr. Darius, he taught science and was a football coach. Mrs. Darius was a business teacher.

EE: How do you spell Darius?

[01:09:24.00] SS: Darius? D-E-R-I-U-S [actual spelling Darius]. Let's see. Mrs. Darius taught business. Mrs. Jemison taught biological sciences. Dean Pawley taught English. Professor McDaniel, he taught humanities, I guess. Let's see. I took a course in history under him. Let's see. Professor Steele, music. Mr. Jemison worked in the business office, and there was a maintenance man there called—his name was Johnny Hilton.

EE: Now, how'd you know him?

[01:10:41.23] SS: How'd I know him?

EE: Yeah.

[01:10:44.08] SS: Oh, he was all around the campus, all over campus. He was the maintenance man. A small campus like that, everyone knew everyone.

EE: So, how many students do you think were there when you came in as a freshman?

[01:11:01.28] SS: Gosh, that's tough.

EE: A hundred, two hundred?

SS: Oh, more than that.

EE: Five hundred?

SS: I wouldn't say five hundred. Let's see. Mosher Hall, Brackett Hall. I would say maybe between three and four hundred.

EE: And how many do you think were there when you left?

[01:11:39.01] SS: This is a guess. Maybe a couple of hundred, I guess.

EE: I guess what I'm asking you is like did the population change.

SS: Definitely.

EE: You did say that the veterans had all come, and that started to drop off.

SS: Right.

EE: So, why, where were people going that they weren't coming to Storer?

[01:12:07.00] SS: Well, the veteran population just decreased. So, the number of veterans coming in was much smaller. In fact, I remember my last year there, there were maybe two or three veterans who came in, three. In '40, the population was really declining. I would say in '50—let's see. The population hit its peak, I would say, in '47, and it was decreasing after that.

EE: And why was that?

[01:13:09.19] SS: The veterans, the veterans. The number of veterans just decreased. The war had ended, and the number of men coming to Storer just decreased, and it seemed like the number of females decreased.

EE: Do you remember what your tuition was when you started as a freshman?

[01:13:45.09] SS: Tuition, that was paid by the GI Bill. So, I—

EE: Yeah, so you really didn't know whether it was rising or what was happening.

SS: Right.

EE: And then they also paid for your textbooks and supplies.

SS: Right.

EE: So, you really had no concept.

SS: Right.

EE: That was nice. [laughs] Do you remember what discipline was like there? What happened to the kids who, what did you know that you'd better not get caught doing? Was there something and what would happen?

[01:14:20.15] SS: Well, I don't recall very many students being sent home, and I don't recall if they came back. They were sent home, let's see, I guess a couple of pregnancies. It wasn't that many that caused a couple of students—

EE: That's all right. You just relax. You sit where you want to sit, and I'll follow you with the microphone. Don't worry about it.

[01:15:22.21] SS: I guess a couple of pregnancies caused some students to go home.

EE: Did you know anybody who was involved?

[01:15:34.26] SS: Well, I wouldn't want to give their names.

EE: So, was there any other kind of discipline on campus when people did something bad? Was there any punishments that were doled out?

[01:15:55.05] SS: I'm trying to think. Let's see. I guess maybe one or two, use of alcohol could—I don't know if alcohol was the problem or the results of alcohol was the problem, but there was maybe a case or two of that.

EE: Okay. Did kids live off campus or did everyone live—

[01:16:54.14] SS: Oh, no, on campus.

EE: Did you ever try to go off campus when you weren't supposed to?

[01:17:00.27] SS: Men could go any time they wanted to, the males. But females had a curfew.

EE: Anybody sneaking out?

SS: I don't recall ever of a female sneaking out.

EE: Was there any course that everybody had to take, like a single course?

SS: Biology and English. And I guess all of those core subjects, math—you have to take some math and speech was required.

EE: Do you remember how many credits you took a semester, how many classes?

[01:18:04.08] SS: Let's see. Was that sixteen? Let me think now.

EE: How many credits was a single class?

[01:18:13.06] SS: Three. Three credits, and you took four to five classes. Four is twelve. I would say four to five classes.

EE: Was there that one class that nobody wanted to take, that everybody thought was the toughest?

[01:18:39.27] SS: Yeah, biology. Mrs. Jemison's biology. It was the talk of the campus.

EE: But then you found it to be quite wonderful.

[01:18:55.21] SS: Yeah. [laughs] Well, I wouldn't say wonderful. It certainly wasn't what it was put up to be.

EE: Was there any hated teacher or hated administrator?

[01:19:24.04] SS: I can't, not that I had. This fellow that, Hall—he gave me a bad grade, but I wouldn't hate him for that because he thought he was doing his job. But he was the teacher I told you about, I was teaching a course, and he—but I wouldn't say he was—

EE: And he taught history, you said.

[01:20:04.03] SS: No, it wasn't history. Did I say history? I didn't mean that. One of the humanities.

EE: Were any of your teachers doctors, PhDs?

[01:20:27.29] SS: Dr. Schumaker [pause], Dr. Wallach. I just thought of his name.

EE: What did he teach?

[01:20:48.00] SS: He taught European history and German.

EE: He was probably a white man.

SS: Yeah.

EE: Okay. Do you remember graduation?

[01:21:07.25] SS: Oh, yes.

EE: What was it, and how can you describe it to me?

[01:21:12.09] SS: Graduation was in '51.

EE: But what month of the year was it?

[01:21:20.25] SS: It was June of '51.

EE: Where did it take place?

[01:21:30.09] SS: Right on campus.

EE: Whereabouts?

SS: Harpers Ferry.

EE: No, but where? In front of a building, outside, inside?

[01:21:37.29] SS: It was, it was—in the chapel. One service was in the chapel.

EE: Did the girls wear gowns? Did you all wear gowns? Did you wear suits?

[01:22:16.28] SS: Oh, gowns, had class rings. In fact, this is '51.

EE: Oh, my. All right. I see the Storer College ring. That is a beauty. Wow.

[01:22:30.21] SS: This is old. It's old.

EE: Well, tell me about it. I have a feeling I can't see what used to be on it, but tell me what it—

[01:22:37.22] SS: Well, it had 1951 on it. There is, in Harpers Ferry, there is— [pause]

SS: What was in the middle of it?

[01:23:20.15] SS: Jefferson Rock. There was a rock in Harpers Ferry. It overlooks the Shenandoah River, and it says—I'm misquoting this, but “something about that site over the Shenandoah River is worth the trip across the Atlantic,” and that was by—I forget who said that, but it was a saying. It's a landmark. People go to Harpers Ferry, and they go to Jefferson's Rock.

EE: And did you go there?

[01:24:14.17] SS: Oh, yeah. It's a huge rock that's on stone pillars, and the Shenandoah River flows right past. I think it was, yes it was Thomas Jefferson that said this scenery

of this site is worth a trip across the Atlantic.

EE: And when would you go to this rock?

[01:24:52.19] SS: Well, it was a novelty at first when you went there. But later on, you visited it to show new students the place.

EE: Were there any like initiation rites?

[01:25:12.03] SS: I would say so. The fellows used to do a little imbibing up there on the rock. There was a—

EE: Were you one of those fellows?

SS: [laughs] Ahh, guilty. There was a—in Harpers Ferry, there was a beverage store right in the middle of the store. It's not much of a town, Harpers Ferry.

[01:26:06.17] And the guys used to go to that store and get a beverage and go up to the rock and consume it.

EE: What did you drink?

[01:26:25.03] SS: Wine.

EE: What kind of wine?

SS: [laughs]

EE: What kind of wine did you drink?

[01:26:31.18] SS: I forget. I don't know of any names. We would just get a bottle of wine.

EE: Red or white or did it matter?

[01:26:43.11] SS: I don't think it mattered then. I guess it was mostly red.

EE: Okay. So, what about initiation rites? What did you have to show a new student?

[01:27:08.22] SS: Well, let's see. We would—I have to think about that. Well, one time, they had the guys walking around with the towels wrapped around their heads. I really can't think of anything else.

EE: What do you mean, towels wrapped around their heads?

[01:27:51.06] SS: Bath towels.

EE: What was that? They're trying to be like—

[01:27:54.15] SS: Like Hindu. It was just some punishment to degrade them.

EE: Who gave the punishment?

[01:28:05.09] SS: The group. They were trying to get into the “in group,” and they made them walk around with—it was wrapped around. But I really can't think of how long it was.

EE: What was the “in group”? Who was the “in group?”

[01:28:42.14] SS: What do they call themselves? They were mostly athletes.

EE: You can think on it. Don't worry. I know you'll come up with it. I'm not worried. So, what was your very favorite spot on the campus or on the town?

[01:29:22.23] SS: I guess Jefferson's Rock, yeah. Off-campus, it was Jefferson Rock.

EE: Tell me why.

[01:29:35.14] SS: Well, we would, it was a place to get off-campus. The campus wasn't that large, and to get someplace and assemble, and some things, if you wanted to partake of a little wine, you wouldn't do it in your room. You'd go down to Jefferson's Rock because the beverage store was downtown, and you walk up these steps to Jefferson Rock.

That was about the extent of it, to Jefferson Rock.

EE: Did you ever do any courting when you were there?

[01:30:36.27] SS: Oh, yes. Oh, yeah, you always had a girlfriend.

EE: Where would you go or what would you do?

[01:30:49.01] SS: Well, there's a big gate leading, the girls, they were allowed. You couldn't go out at night. So, you could walk downtown to, they called it the Ferry. You could walk down to the Ferry and go to the store with your girlfriend and walk back, but that was not during the night. That was during the day.

[01:31:28.15] SS: And the administration was very, very swift on associations between the races--the sexes. So, if you went downtown with your girlfriend, it was between—it wasn't during class hours.

EE: So, there was no place you could go and get a soda?

[01:31:54.27] SS: Oh, yeah, but you couldn't sit down and drink it. But there was a place on campus where you could get a soda. I forget what they called that place. Come to think of it, there were no chairs in there. You stood up.

EE: Describe that place. What did it look like?

[01:32:27.18] SS: It looked like a small resta[urant]...let's see. It had ice cream sodas, candy bars, canned goods like sardines and potted meat, nothing fabulous, things that you could prepare right away.

EE: But there was no place on campus for the adults, the adult students to hang out and drink a beer.

SS: No. Oh, no.

EE: Those are the Baptists and the Methodists there.

[01:33:17.28] SS: No, no, no, no. That was forbidden. I never will forget—don't write this down—my twin brother and I, he was sitting there in the room. He had a bottle of whiskey sitting on the table. And the dean of men came in and saw it, and to this day, he put my name as one of the guilty. I had nothing to do with it. He was the one. But he coupled us together and said, "You Spurlocks, we don't do that here."

[01:34:05.17] And I didn't say anything. You know, I should have, but it was my brother that did it. And he was sitting there with a bottle right on the table, and the dean looked in and saw it. I should have spoken up, you know, but I didn't.

EE: So, what happened to you?

[01:34:31.14] SS: Well, that was the first time. So, he didn't do anything to him.

EE: What dean was that?

[01:34:38.18] SS: Dean Kelly.

EE: The chaplain.

SS: The chaplain, right.

EE: So, what was Dean Kelly's job besides teaching religion and being the chaplain?

SS: That was it.

EE: Being the police, coming around and checking on you guys?

[01:34:52.26] SS: Oh, yeah, oh, yeah.

EE: So, what did you like best about the campus?

[01:35:07.04] SS: Well, you know, not having too much experience with campuses, it was—at that time, I thought it was a quiet place to study, but I always regretted that it wasn't accredited. But it was out, away from a lot of busy-ness. It was rural, so to speak, and it was quiet. But I wasn't worried about quietness then, but now that I think about it, it was a quiet place, away from the town.

[01:36:24.19] Now that I think about it, it was kind of secluded. You didn't, you only came in contact with campus people. There were very few people outside of the campus that you associated with because in Harpers Ferry, there weren't any black people and very few in Harpers Ferry.

[01:37:04.25] Now, wait a minute. In Harpers Ferry, there were very few, there were no black people. In Bolivar, there was a few. But had it been accredited, I would have thought much better of it.

EE: Tell me how you felt when you heard that it was closing and how you feel now.

[01:37:30.09] SS: I don't know how that struck me. I don't know where I was when I learned it. I may have been overseas.

EE: 1955.

[01:37:41.12] SS: It didn't strike me as something that, as a great loss. For one thing, as I said, "I'll always remember that it wasn't accredited," and I'll always remember that. You come out thinking that right away you're going to get a job, and that didn't—so that stays with you for a while, especially when you feel that you are qualified.

EE: Did you try to get a job when you left Storer?

[01:38:24.24] SS: Oh, yeah, in my hometown, and the principal told me—they let me substitute-- but the principal told me, he said, "It's not accredited, you know?" and that struck me in my heart.

EE: But, you knew that when you were there?

[01:38:48.18] SS: Yeah.

EE: Did it just not sink in?

[01:38:51.06] SS: Right. It's hard, once you get established, to change and move. You get into a

comfort zone at Storer, and you don't want to move. You know everybody. Everybody knows you.

[01:39:12.25] And it circulated that the place wasn't accredited, but you were kind of a fixture there by then, you know, and you just don't want to pull up stakes. I thought about it a lot, quite a bit. I thought about transferring to Virginia State, but I never did get around to it.

[01:39:43.14] But eventually I received accreditation, but to me, all of this—I wonder why they would have this school there doing this and not be accredited, you know. Why? And teach those subjects and not be accredited. It didn't make sense, but that's the way the ball bounces, I guess.

EE: Tell me this. How do you feel about your alma mater now being the headquarters for the National Park Service?

[01:40:35.09] SS: Oh, I think it perpetuates things. I guess John Brown will be involved. I think it's a great thing.

EE: How do you feel when you go back there to visit? I know you go to the alumni—

[01:41:02.24] SS: Right, right, and go to—I go to the services there that Sunday, and you meet old friends. You meet old friends, and it's—I don't know. You just look how far you have come, you think. You think about that.

[01:41:35.18] But the alumnae are dwindling, you know? We went down.

EE: So, let me ask you a question: What advice do you have for the Park Service going forward, knowing that they want to preserve your legacy and your story?

[01:41:58.06] SS: Oh, I think it's great. I think it's a great thing. Otherwise it may die. Storer College may die, you know? Storer College played a very big part early in its history, but it didn't keep up. I think it has a great history when you think about its contribution to black people because it was one of the earlier colleges.

[01:42:55.02] But I think about it now, my feelings about it have softened quite a bit since earlier when I learned that it was not accredited. But it played its part. It did a great thing with black people.

EE: Where is your diploma today from Storer College?

[01:43:32.14] SS: I was looking for it a day or so ago. I have it. I was looking for it.

EE: Can you just say, use the word “your diploma” so that we know what we're talking about.

[01:43:46.02] SS: My diploma has been misplaced. It was on the wall in my living room, and I took it down, and I'm looking for it now, but it's in the house. I can find it. But, you know, that very thought came to me to put it back up. In fact, as late as yesterday, that thought came to me, and I looked for it. But it's there someplace, and I'll find it.

EE: All I can say is, Storer College should be very proud to know that you are its graduate, and if you're any indication of the kind of gentleman who comes from that school, it doesn't matter. Accreditation is just a word. So, this has just been a honor for me to talk to you. Although I want to close up, I notice that I have a couple of questions, just a little housekeeping that I'm going to ask you anyway. You told me about your dorm room. Did you decorate it at all?

[01:44:57.12] SS: I don't think so. My dorm room? No, I don't think I did.

EE: You didn't have any pin-ups or—

[01:45:14.28] SS: There were four of us in that room. So, I don't recall putting anything up.

EE: How was the building heated, the dorm?

[01:45:30.28] SS: I think it was steam heat. Wait, let's see, coal. They used to bring truckloads of coal there. So, that must have been for steam. No, yeah, yeah. They had furnaces, and they burned coal. They had heated water for—what do you call those things?

EE: Radiators?

[01:46:06.01] SS: Radiators. [laughs] Radiators, right, right.

EE: So, you don't remember being too cold or too hot or do you?

[01:46:19.22] SS: I was pretty comfortable at Storer. Comfortable, right.

EE: Where were the bathrooms in the dorm, in Mosher?

[01:46:26.20] SS: It was down the hall a few doors.

EE: And do you remember there being an auditorium and a stage, an auditorium where performances would have taken place?

[01:46:40.27] SS: It was in Anthony Hall.

EE: What hall?

SS: Anthony Hall, that's where they held assemblies, and when my graduation class installed some floodlights on the rostrum in Anthony Hall.

EE: What kind of performances did they have there? Who would perform there?

[01:47:29.10] SS: Oh, you would have speakers to come in. Sometimes it was in-house. Dean Kelly would give a presentation sometimes, and the president of the student government would give a presentation. He was responsible for it one Friday.

EE: It was you.

[01:47:58.29] SS: Right, right. And let's see. Anything that came on campus worth noting had a session at Anthony Hall. All of the assemblies were in Anthony Hall.

EE: What did it look like when everybody was in there?

[01:48:25.03] SS: Like a theater. It had a rostrum and—what do you call that thing that a minister uses?

EE: A podium?

[01:48:48.19] SS: A podium, right. He had a podium.

EE: Do you remember any special May Day festivities?

[01:48:58.08] SS: May Day, no.

EE: You were going to say something? Did I interrupt you? About the podium and the—

[01:49:08.11] SS: Oh, yeah. I said, I believe I mentioned that our class established floodlights on the rostrum.

EE: So, do you want to tell me what the barn looked like, the inside of the gymnasium?

[01:49:30.12] SS: It had a basketball hoop at each end where they played the games, and it was standing room only. I mean, no seating, all standing. And it faced a big field right between Cook Hall and the street, the street that runs up as you go into the campus.

EE: Do you remember the Hayward Shepherd monument?

[01:50:24.21] SS: Hayward Shepherd? No, I don't think I do. Hayward Shepherd?

EE: Do you remember the gates at the front of the school?

SS: Oh, yeah.

EE: Anything special happen there? Is that where everybody would meet? Where did people—

[01:50:51.14] SS: They just strolled up and down the entrance, that gate. The people just strolled from the entrance at the gate, and that sidewalk curved, went straight past Anthony Hall and made a curve around to the library next to Cook Hall.

EE: I should have you draw a picture of it next time instead of just writing notes. That would be fun. I'd like to see that, like go home and do that and find that diploma, right? I mean, are you, what do you think about the missing buildings? Do you think about that at all when you're on campus today?

[01:51:50.00] SS: Missing buildings?

EE: The buildings that aren't there any more? Does it feel pretty intact to you?

[01:51:57.09] SS: Let's see now. What did I miss? I was on campus at an alumnae meeting.

EE: Does it feel pretty intact to you?

[01:52:09.11] SS: Yeah, Anthony Hall was there. Brackett Hall. Is Brackett Hall there? And Cook Hall, Anthony Hall. They're all there.

EE: I would love for you to draw me a map. Could you do that for me? We'll do that. And I guess there's only one more thing I'm going to ask you, and then I'm going to ask you to ask me what I forgot to ask you. You know, you were living in the late forties, fifties, after the war. It was a pretty interesting time certainly racially. How did that affect the campus? Was there any sense that you were—

[01:52:57.27] SS: None.

EE: Say that to me in a sentence.

[01:52:59.20] SS: There was no, there was no contact. Mrs.—what was that lady's name? Let's see. Randolph [Rathbone]—I wrote that name down, I believe, 'ran that restaurant. No, I didn't write it down. You know, that lady that ran... There was a restaurant. It wasn't a restaurant. It was just a store that had all kinds of odds and ends, and they used to give credit to the Storerites. I forget that lady's name, Mrs.—have you been to Harpers Ferry? You know that, as you leave the campus and make a left and go down towards Bolivar on the sidewalk, there's a building there that was a combination grocery store, knick knacks, a little bit of everything in there. Mrs.—don't tell me I didn't write that name down. But she used to give the veterans credit. Well, she was very nice to the people on campus. The only

thing was, as far as her store was concerned, she was a segregationist. [laughs]
There was no place to go in there and sit down and have a soda.

[01:55:29.11] But they practically supported her business. I can't think of that lady's name.

EE: Did the students get together? Did you meet to talk about the issues of the day at all?

[01:55:59.28] SS: Later on, later, later, later, they began to notice that you could go in there, but you couldn't sit down, but that was late during my senior year. It was accepted all through my other years, but then it came to someone's attention as a senior that no one—I think there was a group of people, I tell you, it was from the American Friends Society came to Storer one summer, and they brought it to our attention, the American Friends, that you couldn't go in there and sit down, but you could go and spend money.

EE: Meaning you were just unaware that was inappropriate or because you told me you'd gone to restaurants, you went places. Remember we talked about going to get sodas, and you said yes, but you couldn't sit down.

SS: Right.

EE: Is that a place we're talking about?

SS: Yeah, yeah, right, right.

EE: But there wasn't a lot of rabble-rousing?

[01:57:30.05] SS: Unh unh, no, no, until those people came from the American Friends Society, and they brought it to our attention.

EE: You said you were isolated or insulated.

[01:57:46.07] SS: In Harpers Ferry? Yeah, definitely. There was no public transportation. Well, come to think of it, maybe there was a bus, but, yeah, there was a bus, and you caught it in front of her drugstore. It's been a lot of years.

EE: I have a feeling that this is going to be like, you know, getting a shot, and it stirs things up. So, I invite you to just take out your pad and make some notes. We can certainly talk more. I think that this has been a very exciting and wonderful conversation. So, if we want to have a Part Two, I'm eager to continue to chat. I have a feeling that you're going to beat your brains out about the names you couldn't remember [laughs], and I know you're going to remember them. So, I can't tell you how much I've enjoyed this.

[01:58:44.16] SS: Oh, thank you. Thank you.

EE: Thank you. Is there anything that you want to talk about that I haven't mentioned, that we haven't talked about?

SS: No, I don't think so. No, I think we covered just about everything.

EE: Well, I thank you for thinking before we met and making that lovely list. If you need any help finding your diploma, I'll bring the nail to help you hang it. All right?

SS: [laughs] Okay.

EE: Thank you so much. This was a treat.

SS: You're welcome.

[01:59:16.29] [End of File]

