

Interview with **Curtis Jones**

November 12, 1985

Production Team: A

Camera Rolls: 359-361

Sound Rolls: 1320, 1325-1326

Interview gathered as part of *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years (1954-1965)*. Produced by Blackside, Inc. Housed at the Washington University Film and Media Archive, Henry Hampton Collection.

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**Note:** These transcripts contain material that did not appear in the final program. Only text appearing in ***bold italics*** was used in the final version of *Eyes on the Prize*.

00:00:04:00

[camera roll 359]

[sound roll 1320]

CAMERA CREW MEMBER: I HAVE FLAGS.

[sync tone]

INTERVIEWER: YOU'RE SEVENTEEN YEARS OLD, YOU'RE IN CHICAGO AND YOU'RE ABOUT TO LEAVE TO GO DOWN TO MISSISSIPPI FOR THE SUMMER. TALK TO ME ABOUT WHAT YOU AND YOUR COUSIN, EMMETT TILL, WERE EXPECTING THAT SUMMER, WHAT YOUR EXPECTATIONS—WHAT KINDS OF THINGS YOU THINKING YOU WERE GOING TO DO THAT SUMMER?

Jones: Well, what really happened, I lost my grandfather on my father's side and my grandfather on my mother's side came up here to the funeral and he took us back down there, you know, for the summer. I had just came—I'd just completed, a month and a half of summer school, you know. And, so I went in the car with my uncle, my father brother [sic], and my grandfather took Emmett Till and Wheeler Parker on the train back with him to Money, Mississippi. And I, I went in the car.

INTERVIEWER: OK. CUT ONE SECOND. I JUST—

00:00:59:00

[cut]

[wild audio]

INTERVIEWER: —WANT TO FIND OUT SOMETHING—

CAMERA CREW MEMBER: AT FLAGS.

00:01:02:00

[cut]

INTERVIEWER: IN THE PRE-INTERVIEW—

[sync tone]

INTERVIEWER: —YOU TALKED ABOUT SOME OF THE WARNINGS THAT YOUR MOTHER HAD GIVEN YOU BEFORE LEAVING, ABOUT SAYING “YES SIR” AND “NO SIR,” AND BEING—JUST KIND OF DEALING WITH THE SOUTHERN, YOU KNOW, BEING CORDIAL, AND DEALING WITH THE SOUTHERN KIND OF WAY, TALK ABOUT THAT.

Jones: Yes, before I left going down there my mother, you know, advised me to make sure, you know, when, I came in contact with a white person, make sure I say a “yes sir” and “no sir,” you know. And so I understood that, you know. So when I got down there I really didn’t come in contact with no white person until after he was killed, you know.

00:01:41:00

INTERVIEWER: WHAT—DID YOU HAVE ANY FEELINGS OR, OR—FEELINGS ABOUT, IN TERMS OF YOURSELF IN TERMS OF WHAT YOU WERE, YOU WERE FACING IN TERMS OF WHITE MISSISSIPPI DOWN THERE, AS A KID AT SEVENTEEN?

Jones: No, I really hadn’t been exposed to, too much of racist and I really didn’t know. We was going down to have a good time cause I had, three young, young uncles who was younger than I was, on the farm. We was going down there to pick some cotton cause I’d never picked any cotton before, and I was looking forward to do that, cause I had told my mother that I could pick two hundred pounds, and she told me I couldn’t, you know. So, we was going down there to look for a good time, you know.

00:02:22:00

INTERVIEWER: OK.

Jones: [coughs]

INTERVIEWER: DESCRIBE FOR ME EMMETT TILL, YOUR COUSIN, AT THAT TIME.

Jones: [coughs]

INTERVIEWER: WHAT WAS HE LIKE? WHO WAS HE LIKE AS A PERSON, AS A KID?

Jones: Emmett Till was, at the time, he was fourteen years old, had just graduated out of grammar school. He was the type of guy loved fun and jokes. He loved to play a joke on peoples [sic] and laugh. He laughed all the time, you know. And so his uncle, the day he got killed, we went fishing in a little mud hole down there. And, I'm fishing and all of a sudden I hear some water flash [sic]. And he'd throwed [sic] a log in the water, and said, that was a big fish just jump up over there, you know. And he'd break out and laugh, you know, that's the type of guy he was, you know. He loved to be, what you call, the center of attraction, right, that's the type of guy he was, yeah.

00:03:17:00

INTERVIEWER: NOW TELL ME, TELL ME ABOUT GOING TO THE STORE THAT DAY AND THE DARE AND, AND, HOW THAT KIND OF WAS A PART OF SOMETHING EMMETT WOULD PICK UP AND DO.

Jones: Well, my grandfather was a preacher, he had a church. And he had a little raggelly [sic], I think it was a '41 Ford, if I'm not mistaken. And he took all of us to church that day, including my grandmother and my three uncles, myself, Emmett, and Wheeler. So while he was in the pulpit preaching we get the car and drive to Money. So, [coughs] at the time of the incident, I was sitting out there playing checkers with this older man and Emmett was mingling with these young boys, I guess around his age, around fourteen, at the time I was seventeen, I was a senior in high school, he had just graduated from grammar school, so there was a little age difference between us two. *And, the next thing I know, one of the boys came up to me and say, say, man, you got a crazy cousin. He just went in there and said bye to that white woman. And that's when, this man I was playing checkers with, this older man—I guess he must have been round about sixty or seventy—he jumped straight up and say, boy, say, y'all better get out of here. He say, that lady'll come out of that store and blow your brains out,* you know? So, when he said that she was coming out the store and we hopped in the car and took—and ran, and drove back to the church.

00:05:04:00

INTERVIEWER: DID YOU THINK THAT, AT THAT TIME, THAT WHITE PEOPLE WOULD BLOW YOUR BRAINS OUT FOR SAYING "HI, BYE" TO A LADY LIKE THAT?

Jones: No, I didn't. You know, we it was kind of funny to us. We drove back to the church.

We parked the car. We sat in back of the church, they had some benches back there, on, on the rear last bench back there, so my grandfather would just bout completing his sermon. And, so we, got in the car, drove home, you know, went to bed that night. So the next day we [coughs] we was telling some, kids, young—you know, youngster lay around there what had happened, but they had heard about it. So, one lady—one girl was telling us that we better get out of there cause when that lady husband come back gonna be big trouble. So we, we didn't tell our grandfather. We had told our grandfather I'm sure he would have gotten us out of there, you know. See, that was that Wednesday. So that Thursday passed, nothing happened.

00:06:08:00

[cut]

[wild audio]

Jones: Friday passed, nothing happened. So we forgot about it.

INTERVIEWER: CUT. WE'LL PICK THAT UP, OK?

00:06:13:00

[cut]

[slate]

[change to camera roll 360]

CAMERA CREW MEMBER: I HAVE FLAGS.

[sync tone]

INTERVIEWER: OK. OK, TELL ME THE STORY, TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED WHEN HE WENT IN THE STORE AND WHAT HE ACTUALLY SAID AGAIN, FOR ME.

Jones: Yeah, so, anyway, *he went into the store, to buy some candy. Before then he had showed the boys round his age, he had some picture of some white kids that he had graduate from. That was, you know, female and male. So, he told the boys down there, you know, they had gathered round this store, so there must have been round about maybe ten to twelve, you know, youngsters around there, that the girls was his girlfriend, you know? So, one of the, the local boys said, hey, there's a girl in that store there. Said, I bet you won't go in there and talk to her, you know? So he went in there to, you know, get some candy. So, when he was leaving out the store, after buying the candy, he told her, said, bye, baby.* And that's when they came over and told me what he said. And that's when the old man was telling us that she will go to her car and get a pistol and blow her brains—blow his brains out, you know. And that's when we hopped in the car and went on back to the church.

00:07:28:00

INTERVIEWER: AND YOU DIDN'T REALLY TAKE THIS OLD MAN SERIOUSLY?

Jones: No, I didn't take him serious.

INTERVIEWER: START AGAIN, TELL ME ABOUT IT. TELL ME THAT YOU DIDN'T TAKE THE OLD MAN SERIOUSLY AND THAT YOU DIDN'T TAKE THE—

Jones: No, I really didn't take the old man serious. I just figured he was old fashioned [pause] he was just, what you call an old country man, and I had no idea that, you know, that, that a group of people would kill a boy over saying, bye baby, you know, and it was really surprising, it was a shock.

00:08:04:00

INTERVIEWER: TELL ME, DESCRIBE FOR ME, THAT NIGHT WHEN YOU WERE SLEEPING, AND THE MEN COME INTO THE HOUSE AND WAKE YOU UP.

Jones: [coughs] Well, this incident happened that Wednesday. Thursday nothing happened. Friday nothing happened. Saturday nothing happened. So, say, Saturday night we went to town, the closer town was Greenwood, we went there, and we must have stayed there till approximate three o'clock that morning. So we returned and my grandfather didn't have but three rooms, had the kitchen and two bedrooms. And his bedroom, that's where we sit around, you know, turn it into a, a sitting room after he got up. So [coughs] around about, I guess it must have been three o'clock, three thirty, I was awakened by a group of mens [sic] in the house. So, I didn't wake completely up, you know how youngsters, they sleep hard, you know. So I woke up, rubbing my eyes and, and I seen all these white guys, you know, standing around, some of 'em had shotguns and stuff. And it seemed like this should of scared me, but I went back to sleep before they left. I went back to sleep and when I woke up the next morning I thought it was a head—it was a dream. So I jumped straight up, I went to the porch, and my grandfather was sitting on the porch, you know. So I asked him, I say, Poppa, I said, did they bring Bo back? He said no. He said, I hope they didn't kill that boy, you know. And that's when I got kind of scared, you know. So I asked him, I say, ain't you gonna call the police? He said, no, I can't call the police. Say, they told me that if I call the sheriff they was gon [sic] kill him, kill everybody in this house, you know. So I told him, I say, I'll call. So, I went down there to the, the guy that owned the property there, [coughs] his name was Mr. Ware, and I made the telephone call. But getting back to that night, the mens who came into the house and got him, you know, I heard from my grandfather on the porch there, at first, they was planning on taking all of us. When they came there, you know, he answered the door, and they asked, the first thing they asked him was did he have three boys in there from Chicago? And he stated yes, you know, he said, I got my two grandsons and a nephew. So they told him to get us up. But in the course of getting us up, they changed their minds, they said get the one who did the talking, you know. Cut.

CAMERA CREW MEMBER: OH YOU CUT HER—HOLD IT THERE ‘CAUSE WE GOT A SOUND ROLL COMING OUT.

INTERVIEWER: OK. CUT HER.

[cut]

00:11:03:00

CAMERA CREW MEMBER: AND MARKER.

[sync tone]

INTERVIEWER: OK. LET’S GO BACK TO THAT, WE’RE BACK IN THAT TIME AGAIN, AND I WANT YOU TO START TELLING WHEN YOU FIND OUT THAT THE BODY HAS BEEN FOUND AND THERE’S GOING TO BE A FUNERAL AND WHAT YOU DO WHEN YOU FIND THIS OUT.

CAMERA CREW MEMBER: I’M SORRY. I HAVE TO CUT. A SECOND.

[cut]

00:11:20:00

[sync tone]

INTERVIEWER: OK, NOW TELL ME ABOUT THE PHONE CALLS? DID YOU CALL THE SHERIFF?

Jones: Yeah. Yes I went to Mr. Ware house, he was the, what you call the sharecropper, sharecropper or owner. He was the same man that my father worked for when he first got married, you know. So I went there and I knock on the front door and I told him I want to make a telephone call to the sheriff. So he told me, he said, OK, you can make the telephone call, but use the back way, come through the back way, you know. So I went to the back way, so he showed me where the phone was, so I called my mother and told her that during the night, a group of mens had came into the house and took Bo, you know. And we didn’t know, at the time, you know, that he was dead or alive, you know. So, in turn she’d notify his mother, you know. And then I called the sheriff and I went back to the house. We sat there with my grandfather. My grandfather had took my grandmother round bout fifty miles away to her brother house, cause my grandmother was scared to death, cause that night, she got hit side the head with a shotgun. She was trying to protect Bo, you know, from the mens and they told her get back in bed, and now her pleading and stuff, getting out of bed again, one of the guys struck her with a shotgun side the head. So after he took him, she was scared to death, you know. So she got my grandfather to take her to her brother house, I can’t think of the name of that town. And, she never did come back to the house anymore, you know, he was—until they—when she seen my grandfather again, it was in Chicago, round about, I

guess two months later.

00:13:03:00

INTERVIEWER: OK. NOW LET'S, LET'S GO TO THE NEXT—WHEN, WHEN THE BODY'S FOUND.

Jones: That happened that Sunday. Wednesday I was over at some relative house, we was out there, picking cotton. So one of my uncle, named Maurice, drove up there in the car, in that 1941 Ford, and was telling me, he say, he said, Curtis, they found Bo, they found Bo. He say, look—I say, is he d—is he alive? He said, no, he's dead. Said, Poppa want to know do you have a suit. I said, no, I don't have no suit. He said, come on back cause they gonna have his funeral, you know. So I got in the car with him, and we rode back to the house. So my grandfather, he wasn't thinkin', you know. [coughs] So I asked him, I say, Poppa, I say, you think it'd be wise to bury him down here? I said, I'm sure Mamie would like to have the funeral in Chicago. He said, I don't know what to do. I said, why don't you let me call first, you know. So I called Chicago again to my mother and my mother got in touch with Mamie, and they got in touch with the double—NACP [sic], and they had, an undertaker, this was a white undertaker to pick the body up and take it round 'bout fifty miles away, and put it in an air-sealed casket and then they shipped it back to Chicago. But at first they had a black undertaker out there, and he was scared to death. He told my grandfather, they were trying to get him to take the body back to town, and he told me—told them, say, listen, he said, they gave me strict orders not to bring this body back to town and I'm not going to take it back to town, you know. So, anyway, when this white undertaker came and took over that body he was glad to get rid of it, you know.

00:14:52:00

INTERVIEWER: OK, CUT FOR A SECOND PLEASE.

CAMERA CREW MEMBER: GOT EIGHT FEET.

[cut]

00:14:56:00

CAMERA CREW MEMBER: SECOND STICKS.

[sync tone]

INTERVIEWER: YOUR GRANDFATHER GOES BACK TO TESTIFY AND HE TELLS YOU SOME STORIES AND ALSO YOUR MOTHER WOULD NOT LET YOU GO BACK. TALK TO ME ABOUT THAT.

Jones: Right. Yeah, my mother said when—no way that I can go back down there, you know. So, the first time or the second time my grand-

INTERVIEWER: LET ME, LET ME STOP YOU. SAY, SAY WE WENT BACK TO CHICAGO—

Jones: Yeah. Well we went back to Chicago and plus my grandfather left there. He moved to a little place called Argo, in Summit, Illinois, approximately twelve miles west of Chicago. And he went back to Money to testify. My grandfather is Mose Wright. And, while he was going to the courthouse, he—the car he was in was intercepted by three or four car full of white mens and they was trying to force him off the road. But at the time, they didn't know that there was at least remote cars that were escorting him. And these other cars came up, so what these mens, white mens did, they just kept on going, calls him—gets some name callin's [sic], and, kept on down the road. But if he had been traveling alone in that car he'd have been in trouble.

00:16:10:00

INTERVIEWER: WHY WOULDN'T YOUR MOTHER LET YOU GO BACK TOO?

Jones: Well she was afraid that at the time, that something may happen to me, like—

INTERVIEWER: START AGAIN, PLEASE, SAY, MY MOTHER WAS AFRAID—

Jones: My mother was afraid that something would happen to me like something happened to Emmett Till, you know. And so she told—cause they asked her could I go back and testify, you know, cause I seen the mens, you know. And she told 'em no way, you know, she was too afraid for me.

00:16:38:00

INTERVIEWER: WHAT DID YOU THINK OF YOUR GRANDFATHER WHEN HE TESTIFIED AND STOOD UP AND POINTED THESE GUYS OUT? DID IT MEAN—

Jones: Well, at the time, I really didn't know, you know, how brave he was until I got older. And, then, that's when I really found out that he was a brave man, cause I found later that he was one of the first black mens that stood up in court and pointed his finger at a white man and accused him of murder.

00:17:09:00

[cut]

[wild audio]

INTERVIEWER: CUT.

00:17:12:00



[cut]

[slate]

[change to camera roll 361]

CAMERA CREW MEMBER: I HAVE FLAGS.

[sync tone]

Jones: OK.

INTERVIEWER: —RECOGNIZE BUT THEN YOU DIDN'T KNOW.

Jones: All right, OK. [coughs]

CAMERA CREW MEMBER: OK, OK.

INTERVIEWER: OK.

Jones: Yeah, *at the time, I really didn't realize how brave my grandfather Mose Wright was, you know, but, after I got older, I realized that he was a brave man. He was a mighty brave man, to travel back down there, you know, among all those hostile peoples, and testify, and to get up in a court and point his finger at a white man and accuse him of murder.* He was the first black man ever did that in the state of Mississippi. And, I think, that's—most of that courage come from him being a preacher, you know, leading peoples, you know. That's where you get—got his courage from.

00:18:05:00

INTERVIEWER: DID THIS EVENT, THIS—WHAT HAPPENED AROUND THAT TIME, DID IT HAVE ANY EFFECT ON YOUR FEELINGS TOWARDS WHITE PEOPLE AT THAT TIME?

Jones: No it didn't, for the simple reason, [coughs] the way my mother raised me. I was raised in a church, you know, I don't know if you know it was a sanctified church, and they don't teach no hate, you know. You go there and, and they—it's about teach—you turn the other cheek, you know, and, you know, I was seventeen years old and all I knew was church, you know. And trying to live right, you know. So I was about too young, and raised too good and pure to have any hate in my heart, you know.

INTERVIEWER: OK, CUT.

[cut]

00:18:49:00

CAMERA CREW MEMBER: HAVE FLAGS AND MARK.

[sync tone]

INTERVIEWER: WHY YOU FELT AT THAT TIME, WHITE PEOPLE HAD THE RIGHT TO GET AWAY WITH KILLING BLACK PEOPLE LIKE THAT IN MISSISSIPPI WHAT, WHAT YOUR THOUGHTS ABOUT THAT WAS THEN, AND HOW IT IMPRESSED YOU THEN?

Jones: Well, the way I thought about it then, I just figured it was a way of life, you know. A way a—

INTERVIEWER: OK, START AGAIN AND TELL ME WHAT WAS A WAY OF LIFE. OK?

Jones: It was a way of life, you know, the way my parents told me down there, and so when you went down there, I guess, the average black person expect certain things, you know. Just like my grandfather was telling me, he'd say, that was, wasn't the first time these mens had committed a, a homicide. He said, once they were selling watermelons and this black man was sitting on this porch with his family, and they asked him, did he want to buy a watermelon? And he stated, no, nobody want to buy no meal-mouth watermelons. And these two guys, same two brothers, grabbed him and beat him to death with a chain. His family got him, buried him, they didn't even make a police report, they didn't even notify the she—the sheriff. So this was a way of life down there, you know. And, and so—but after they killed my cousin Emmett, I think this woke a lots of peoples up, you know, really showed them how hostile they was, you know.

INTERVIEWER: OK LET'S CUT.

CAMERA CREW MEMBER: CUT.

[cut]

00:20:20:00

INTERVIEWER: WHAT I WANT YOU TO DO IS I WANT YOU TO TALK TO ME ABOUT—

[sync tone]

INTERVIEWER: —HOW EMMETT TILL'S MOTHER, EMMA, AND TELL ME WHO EMMA IS, ALL RIGHT AND THIS—

Jones: Wait a minute, wait a minute, wait a minute. Mamie.

INTERVIEWER: MAMIE. I'M SORRY.

Jones: OK, all right. Mamie Bradley.

INTERVIEWER: MAMIE, MAMIE BRADLEY

Jones: Bradley, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: WAS VERY—WAS INSISTENT THAT SHE WAS GOING TO GET EMMETT TILL OUT OF THERE, AND SHE WAS NOT GOING TO LET HIM BE BURIED IN MISSISSIPPI LIKE THAT AND THE WORLD WAS GOING TO KNOW ABOUT IT.

Jones: Right. OK, you want me to start now?

INTERVIEWER: YES.

Jones: Yeah, [coughs] Mamie, at the time, was a schoolteacher and Emmett was her only son, you know. So when they got in touch with her she used every clout, connection she had to get Emmett back to Chicago so he can have a decent burial. Cause the authority in Money, wanted to bury him right there, the same day he came out that river. They, they didn't want him even to go to Greenwood, wi—which was only ten miles away. They was determined to bed him—bury him right there in Money. But Mamie, through her determination, I guess, her strong will she made connection down there and got him back. And after she got him back she made tours just about half of the United States making speech and demonstrating and telling, half, half of the world what they did to her son. Her and my grandfather, you know, with the double-ACP [sic], you know.

INTERVIEWER: THANK YOU.

CAMERA CREW MEMBER: GOOD.

00:22:00:00

[cut]

[wild audio]

CAMERA CREW MEMBER: ROLL.

Jones: Went back to sleep, you know.

CAMERA CREW MEMBER: OK, OK, this is, this is wild, no camera. Brother Jones, Curtis Jones.

Jones: OK.

CAMERA CREW MEMBER: ALL YOU.

Jones: Yeah my cousin Emmett and Wheeler and my grandfather, Mose Wright, was scheduled to catch a train at Illinois Central that's located at Roosevelt Road and Michigan Avenue. The night they 'posed [sic] to depart Emmett was late and he missed the train, the train had took off without him. See, so his mother brought him down there, found out the train had took off, she hopped back in the car, got on the outer drive, sped all the way to 63<sup>rd</sup> and Kembrall and they had a little stop there for about five minutes. And they ran up the ramp up there and the train was just about, about movin'. And they got him on there and threw his bags, and that's how he made it. If he had been another minute he wouldn't have caught it, that's how close it was, you know.

00:23:03:00

INTERVIEWER: NOW, TELL ME THAT SAME STORY AGAIN, BUT START IT BY SAYING THE INCREDIBLE THING ABOUT THE WHOLE STORY OF EMMETT TILL IS THAT HE ALMOST MISSED THE TRAIN, LEAVING CHICAGO.

INTERVIEWER 2: IN YOUR OWN WORDS.

INTERVIEWER: IN YOUR OWN WORDS.

Jones: OK. The incredible thing about the whole story is—

CAMERA CREW MEMBER: START THAT AGAIN PLEASE.

Jones: OK. The incredible thing about the whole story is Emmett almost missed the train leaving Chicago to Money, Mississippi. My grandfather and Wheeler and him were scheduled to take a train from Illinois Central off of Roosevelt and Michigan Avenue. So when Emmett got there, the train had took off. So he was able to catch up with the, with the train at 63<sup>rd</sup> and Kembrall. If he had been a minute late, he wouldn't have caught it.

00:23:51:00

INTERVIEWER: OK. TELL ME ABOUT, YOUR COUSIN, YOUR COUSIN ACTUALLY SAW IT AND THEN HE DISAPPEARED THE NEXT DAY. DID HE—

Jones: Yeah, I had a cousin, my cousin Wheeler, first cousin Wheeler Parker, who was also down there. When the mens came into the house that night. He was awake through the whole affair. And, so, when they took Emmett out of there he didn't go back to bed. He stayed up. So, when I woke up that morning, he was sitting on the porch with my grandfather. So after the Sheriff got there and we talked with the Sheriff and everything, some kind of way he called one of his uncles, and they took him to Memphis and got him out of there. Well, I knew one thing—cause I had left there, I left and went to Greenwood, came back he was

gone. Yeah, at the time, he was sixteen.

INTERVIEWER: WHY—

Jones: I was seventeen.

00:24:47:00

INTERVIEWER: WHY DID HE LEAVE SO FAST, YOU THINK?

Jones: He was afraid, he was shaken. It took, it really took effect on him. Shook him up, really shook him up.

INTERVIEWER: DID YOU EVER FEEL LIKE THEY, POSSIBLE THEY MIGHT COME BACK AND GET YOU. DID YOU EVER FEEL THREATENED YOURSELF?

Jones: Yeah, I did—

INTERVIEWER: I DID WHAT? TELL ME WHAT.

Jones: I felt threatened that Monday night. Like I was saying, I had a cousin who was in, he was a Sergeant in the Air Force so he took me home to Greenwood. Greenwood was around about 10 miles away to have dinner with him. So, when he brought me back to the house, I seen the house all lit up. So he just pulled up in the driveway and said, OK, I'll see ya. I said, OK. I go in the house, there's not a soul in the house. It was the empty house. And, I laid there all night. The first time I was stayed awake all night. Then, then I got so afraid, that I got underneath the bed. And I remember that rooster, seemed like he crowed, he must have crowed ten or fifteen time during the course of that night. I remember at school they used, used to tell us that when the rooster crowed, soon it be daybreak, you know. So I used to, I raised up, peep out the window. It was still pitch dark out there, you know. So I stayed to take out light and then I went to the people house next door, you know. And what had happened, my grandfather had gotten afraid and slept in his car in back of the church, you know.

00:26:22:00

INTERVIEWER: THERE WAS SOMETHING ELSE I WANTED TO ASK YOU ABOUT, CUT ONE SECOND PLEASE—WHEN IT FIRST OCCURRED TO YOU—

CAMERA CREW MEMBER: ROLLING.

INTERVIEWER: —YOU KNOW, AFTER HE WAS MISSING, THAT YOU FELT THAT HE WAS NOT, THAT HE WAS NOT COMING BACK, THAT HE WAS DEAD.

Jones: Well, I say, say about that Tuesday. You know, after, I thought maybe they had him, holding him, holding him what you used to call hostage or something and they was bring him

back, you know. So after that Tuesday, and listening to the people's talk, down there, the local people's talk that's when I had feelings that he wasn't coming back, you know. Cause on that road, my grandfather Wilmer [sic], most of those peoples that live around there was his church members, you know. So he came by and talked with us and supposed to have been looking after us and telling us different stories about different situation that had had happened down there and that's when I realized that, you know, it's possible that he wasn't coming back. 'Cause there's been no kid that grew up in Chicago, you know, done a little mischievous thing, they'll catch you and kick you in your be—behind, that's it you know. So, I didn't think they'd kill 'em, you know.

00:27:42:00

INTERVIEWER: SO YOU, YOU LIKE NEVER REALLY HAD A SENSE OF THE DANGER OR THAT SOMETHING SO SMALL AS SAYING BYE, BABY.

Jones: No, not, not, you know, like I said, I was, I was raised up under my parents, and by living on the West side of Chicago. Back in them days, it was very little violent and I didn't know nothing about no ra—racist or nothing like that, you know. I wasn't exposed to that, you know, cause we went to school what—I guess, a mixed school. We got along pretty good, we stayed to ourself [sic], and most of the white boys, you know, kinda stayed to theyselves [sic]. Except the one who plays sports, you know, we was kinda tight, you know, I played football, so we was tight. But once in a while, you see a little racist fight around there, you know. But we tried to stay out of it, you know, and that was it, you know. But we weren't exposed to that.

00:28:39:00

INTERVIEWER 2: CLOGGING MY NOTES—ANYTHING ABOUT MOSES WRIGHT, DID HE HAVE ANY AWARENESS OF HOW IMPORTANT WHAT HE DID WAS? I MEAN, RIGHT AFTER IT HAPPENED THE FACT THAT HE DID GO BACK AND HE DID TESTIFY, DID HE REALIZE THAT PEOPLE—

Jones: Yeah, I think he did. I think he, he realized that he, what he did was a tremendous thing. And—

INTERVIEWER 1: TELL US WHO THE HE IS.

Jones: My grandfather Mose Wright, at the time, [coughs] he went back down and testify and, and made those trips across the United States to different churches and different halls, you know, making speeches, you know for the NAACP. You know, that he was doing a great thing for 'em, you know. And—but, I think this is something he figured he had to do though, you know. He had to do this for the simple reason [coughs] by being a grandfather when the mens came through this house and pulled the boy out of his house, you know, this was something he had to do I believe. He thought he had to do this, 'cause they didn't take no whole lots of twisting his arm to get him back down, you know, get him down there to testify. He was only one who went.

INTERVIEWER: OK. CUT. THANKS

CAMERA CREW MEMBER: OK, ALL THAT WAS WILD AND THIS IS A WRAP.

[cut]

[end interview]

00:30:08:00

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