Transcript of an Oral History Interview

with

Mr. and Mrs. Louis Moore

June 5, 1974

Interviewer: David V. Taylor

This interview was conducted as part of a series on Black History in Minnesota.

Mr. Moore was born in New Richmond, Ohio on October 25, 1880. Cora Moore was born in New York City April 14, 1897. Louis Moore came to St. Paul in 1898; Cora Moore in 1910. They have been prominent citizens in the St. Paul Black community for over fifty years.

Subjects discussed in the interview include parental backgrounds, early community life in St. Paul, social clubs and literary societies, institutions in the Black community, Black business, racial prejudice, opportunities, Mr. Moore's careers and family.

This is a verbatim transcript of a tape-recorded interview, edited slightly for clarity. The transcript was edited and approved by the Moores, with no restrictions placed on the use of either tape or transcript. The original tape recording is available in the Audio-Visual Library of the Historical Society.
Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Louis Moore

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Taylor: This is an oral interview with Mr. and Mrs. Louis Moore, Sr.

Mr. Louis Moore was born in New Richmond, Ohio, October 25, 1890. He came to St. Paul in 1898. And he is a spry eighty-three years old.

Mrs. Cora Moore was born in New York City April 14, 1897. She came to St. Paul in 1910 and she is seventy-seven years of age.

Mr. Moore, when were you born and where were you born?

Mr. Moore: I was born in New Richmond, Ohio, in the year 1890.

Taylor: Do you remember anything about your grandparents or your parents?

Mr. Moore: Yes, I lived with my grandparents for perhaps the first five years of my life.

Taylor: Do you know their names?

Mr. Moore: They were Carrie and Henry Johnson and my mother and my father and I were all born in the same town, and my mother and I were born in the same house.

Taylor: Do you know the address?

Mr. Moore: No, there was no address.

Taylor: No address, granted. Did they live there all their lives, part of the community?

Mr. Moore: Yes, they lived there all their lives, and we lived there until we came to Minnesota in - what was it, '98?

Taylor: '98.

Mr. Moore: '98, yeah.

Taylor: Did your grandparents come to Minnesota, the whole family?

Mr. Moore: No. Just my mother and father and their family.
Taylor: What was your mother and father's name?

Mr. Moore: Henry - William Moore and Hettie Moore. They both died here.

Taylor: Do you know about when your mother or your father was born, what year?

Mr. Moore: They were approximately twenty-one years older than I was. That's about as close as I can tell you.

Taylor: Okay, so we'll count back from 1890 and assume that they were born about 1869.

Mr. Moore: Born in the same town and ...

Taylor: Did your parents ever tell you stories, incidents that you remember about perhaps ... let's see, they would be living during the Reconstruction period, about Blacks then?

Mr. Moore: No, no, nothing interesting because they had lived in Ohio on the banks of the Ohio River for many, many years before that, so I'm not even sure what year they came to Ohio. And most of our relatives came from Kentucky; most of the other relatives came from Kentucky.

Taylor: Did you have family here when your parents migrated up?

Mr. Moore: Yes. I had two aunts and uncles who came to Minnesota in '84.

Taylor: Do you know their names?

Mr. Moore: Yes. Mr. and Mrs. Pettis and Mr. and Mrs. Terrell.

Taylor: Um hum.

Mr. Moore: Now my mother had been here in the '80s to visit them when she was a younger girl and she liked it so well here that when my dad was married, why they decided this would be the place. You know, things about that time, about 1900, there were such towns as Detroit, and St. Paul and Minneapolis, for instance, St. Paul in particular - St. Paul was bigger than Minneapolis in those days, you know, were just coming into their
own. The automobile business was just started in Detroit and I can always remember my father said, "I wasn't sure whether I should go to St. Paul or Detroit." And even Detroit was smaller than St. Paul then. You know, it's a funny thing about St. Paul. It never did advance in population like a lot of other cities.

Taylor: I imagine that had a lot to do with either railroad or industry.

Mr. Moore: St. Paul was the railroad center in those days. And all the roads actually went out of St. Paul.

Taylor: But in terms of industry and things, it ...

Mr. Moore: Now the industry, making a comparison between Minneapolis and St. Paul you want to know.

Taylor: Basically agricultural products and things?

Mr. Moore: Well, it went out of here on the train, on the railroads and there wasn't as much river traffic then as there is now. They're trying to decide on whether to continue the river traffic now or not, because it's too expensive, you know.

Taylor: Why did your father move? Was it employment, a nicer place for the family to live ...?

Mr. Moore: Employment, yeah. See we lived in Cincinnati, actually. And Cincinnati's one of the old cities, you see, and it remained still, yes, dead. Right on, all they had was river traffic on the Ohio River and that was tremendous in those days with those big boats - I can remember seeing them now - but otherwise, nothing. There was no progress down there, see, and people just were looking for something else. That's why Detroit and St. Paul and Minneapolis started building.

Taylor: What kind of employment did your father find up here?

Mr. Moore: He found employment on the railroad.
Taylor: Which line?

Mr. Moore: And the hotel. Well, we'll say Great Northern and Northern Pacific, see. They had most of the business in those days. And that uncle I told you that lived here had been the head waiter at the Ryan Hotel, which was the big hotel in those days.

Taylor: That was in the 1880s, wasn't it?

Mr. Moore: It had to be the '80s, yes. So he told my father to come, and of course he went to work right in the Ryan Hotel when he came.

Mrs. Moore: What about the Omaha Railroad?

Taylor: The Omaha Railroad?

Mr. Moore: Well, what about it, Mother? We only need a couple of railroads, we don't need ...

Mrs. Moore: I meant that you did work for them as a telephone operator.

Mr. Moore: The wife wants me to mention that I ran an elevator in the ...

Mrs. Moore: Now, you know, I was thinking about being an operator in the ...

Mr. Moore: Well, that wasn't in the Omaha, that was the Northern Pacific Railroad.

Mrs. Moore: Oh, that's right.

Mr. Moore: Yes, I was a telephone operator for the Northern Pacific general offices downtown here.

Taylor: When was this?

Mr. Moore: And that was about 1905, we'll say. I know I quit school and got this big job, see, and another colored fellow and I were the operators. See they hadn't heard of having colored boys as telephone operators in those days, you know, and we were the operators 'til finally I guess it was decided that they'd better have girls, so they walked girls in on us one day after we worked there about a year though, I think, And ...
of course there haven't been any of them - no one there since either.

Taylor: Let's see, now, your father worked on the road. Were there many Black people working on the railroad at that time?

Mr. Moore: All Black people, you might say.

Taylor: And this was in the 1880s?

Mr. Moore: You know, all the waiters and ... were Black in those days.

Taylor: All men?

Mr. Moore: Yeah, and the pullmen, too. And all the hotels were Negroes in those days, worked in the hotels were colored waiters and, well, that's as far as I can go. All colored waiters in all hotels.

Taylor: The Blacks, of course, had businesses too, then.

Mr. Moore: Well, you can count the businesses, you know, as a barber shop, poolroom and ...

Mrs. Moore: Owen Howell. He had a shoe shop.

Mr. Moore: Well, he had a ... yes, a ...

Taylor: A shoe shop?

Mr. Moore: ... tailors shop. Yeah, you know it was a combination tailor's shop, pressing and cleaning.

Taylor: What about your family life? How many children did your parents have?

Mr. Moore: I had a sister. She's still alive and lives in Chicago.

Taylor: When was she born?

Mr. Moore: See, she's two years younger than I am, so she must have been born in '92.

Taylor: Where did you live in St. Paul initially?

Mr. Moore: Oh, down here at the big corner, Rondo and Arundel.

Taylor: Rondo and Arundel.
Mr. Moore: Rondo and Arundel, that was one of our big corners in those days.
Taylor: I'll have to remember that. My aunt Lola used to live down there on Rondo and Arundel, I believe.
Mr. Moore: Yes, she did.
Mrs. Moore: Yes, that's right.
Taylor: There used to be a store on the corner, a big building with a store on the corner.
Mr. Moore: Yes.
Taylor: And then what the Black police station ...
Mr. Moore: It wasn't Black, it was just police station. At Western and Rondo.
Taylor: Right, right.
Mr. Moore: Yeah. And I can remember back in those days, everybody didn't have a telephone in those days, you know, and I'll say nobody had a telephone, and so we would go down to the police station and use their telephone.
[Laughter]
Taylor: And what do you remember about your family life, your home life?
Mr. Moore: Well, ... I've been going to St. Philips [Church] since 1899.
Taylor: Really?
Mr. Moore: Yeah. Let's see, what else can I tell you about that. The Episcopalians had an elementary school over on Fuller where -- you know where they just built the new church over here?
Taylor: Right.
Mr. Moore: And you know they -- before that ...
Taylor: That used to be an Episcopal church, wasn't it? The Camphor Methodist building?
Mr. Moore: Yeah. And before that it was an Episcopal Church, you know, the Messiah, which now is up on the hill but they also had an elementary
school there, and I went to school there for about a year.

Taylor: You did?

Mr. Moore: Yeah. Now that was about '99, something like that.

Taylor: What else do you remember about your family life, your mother and father and home life?

Mr. Moore: Well, let me see, how shall we say that? Well, ....

Mrs. Moore: Well, it was a good life [Laughter]

Mr. Moore: Well, that ... that isn't ... doesn't mean anything you see. It's a good life.

Mrs. Moore: Doesn't it?

Taylor: Well, let's put it this ...

Mr. Moore: The colored - the colored people who lived on this side of town lived right around in this neighborhood, from Dale to Western or to Farrington and to St. Anthony and Carroll and no one lived beyond Carroll, see.

Taylor: Right. But they were kind of scattered sites because I - well, Miss Starks, who lived out near the old folks home, ...

Mr. Moore: Yes, they lived out West Seventh Street but there were no other Negroes out there and then, of course, out Rice Street ...

Taylor: About ten hundred ...

Mr. Moore: ... lived the Godetts and a few people lived out there. And that was another community out there. And, of course, down in lowertown.

Taylor: What's lowertown?

Mr. Moore: Lowertown was down around Broadway and down in there. That's the first place that the Negroes lived back in the early days. Now, my aunt when they came here in the '80s, they lived down there somewhere. One place, you don't remember, Brown and ... you don't remember ... a
big men's clothing store on Sixth and Robert ...

Taylor: Big Men's Clothing ...?
Mr. Moore: Browning, King ...?
Taylor: No.
Mr. Moore: No, that was before your time. Well, my aunt would always tell me about the candy store which was next door. And she said they lived upstairs on the second floor over that candy store at Sixth and Robert, so, see, they were getting uptown then. [Laughter] So they finally had their home over at Aurora, at Fuller and Mackubin, next to that grocery store.

Taylor: I was talking to Ida Combs a couple of years ago. Of course she died over here at Willows, and she said that they were one of the few Black families on the West Side of St. Paul, across the river. And she grew up with Germans and spoke German fluently when she was a child.

Mr. Moore: Is that so?
Taylor: And she mentioned that there were two societies in St. Paul at that time. One lived in the down and under, and they were considered low life or something, quite a sporting people she called them, and then the people who considered themselves Christian lived on the higher ground or something like that.

Mr. Moore: Well, you know, back in those days, you know, the society was divided up between the gamblers and people who weren't gamblers. We folks up here on the hill, see. So all the gamblers, you know, then were down along Third Street.

Taylor: That's where all the business area was.
Mr. Moore: Yeah, well ...
Mrs. Moore: Well, there was Fan's place, you know.
Mr. Moore: That's what I'm speaking of. And Fan had a gambling joint, you
might have even ....

Taylor: Fan?

Mr. Moore: Yeah. Fan Travis. Did you ever hear them speak of Fan Travis?

Taylor: No.

Mr. Moore: Well, he was the big gambler downtown in those days, big saloon, and all the money, see.

Taylor: He was a Black man or ...?

Mr. Moore: Well, supposed to be for everybody but actually ...

Taylor: He was a Black man?

Mrs. Moore: Yes, he was Black.

Mr. Moore: Actually, that division had been made not by the Negroes themselves. You know the police department took care of that. That's to keep you colored folks all down there together. Actually that's what it was done for, you know. They do the same thing today in almost everything, you know.

Taylor: But if I recall, wasn't Pilgrim Baptist Church down that way at one time?

Mr. Moore: It was on Cedar and Summit if you can ... you've probably forgotten where Summit come down there now.

Taylor: Yeah, it's all changed down there.

Mr. Moore: Yeah, it's all changed around. The church was on Cedar right there and that's where Pilgrim Baptist was.

Taylor: What about some of the other institutions, like what do you know about the Crispus Attucks Home when it was ...?

Mrs. Moore: He was the president of Crispus Attucks. I have to help him because he doesn't mention these things.

Mr. Moore: No, Mother, I ain't president of the Crispus Attucks. Keep still a minute.
Mrs. Moore: Yes, you were, at one time.

Mr. Moore: No, that was just the association, on the board.

Mrs. Moore: That's what I told you.

Mr. Moore: Well, he wants to ask me where Crispus Attucks was. Now back in the old days, it was out-way out there where Grace lives ...

Taylor: Near Randolph and Brimhall?

Mr. Moore: Yes, someplace out there, I never did see it when it was out there. I never had anything to do with them until they moved over here on the East Side. And ... where ever Grace lived out there, she lived on Palace or somewhere out there ...

Taylor: Um hum.

Mr. Moore: Well, she was pretty close to Crispus Attucks.

Taylor: A little later you were on the board of directors?

Mr. Moore: Oh, yes, after I grew up, of course, I was on the board of directors, yeah, that's what they called it I guess. And we'd make a little trip out there.

Taylor: Were there a lot of Black older people out there at the time? Did they have orphans at that time or did they just ...?

Mr. Moore: No, there were no orphans out there. Those were all older people.

Taylor: On the East Side?

Mr. Moore: Yes, on the East Side. But I think it originally started as an orphanage, didn't it?

Taylor: Right. I think Miss Valley Turner is still around, who was the first orphan out there, as I recall.

Mr. Moore: Is that so?

Taylor: I'm going to try to talk with her sometime.

Mr. Moore: Yes, try and see her. I haven't seen her for some time now.
Taylor: What do you remember about another community institution, the Black press, the Appeal newspaper and some of the others that came?

Mr. Moore: Well, of course, by the time I grew up the Appeal then was just a sort of a . . .

Taylor: Local?

Mr. Moore: ... church paper, see. Old man [John Q.] Adams would print the Appeal on the back of the Methodist church is the only thing I can remember about it.

Taylor: Really?

Mr. Moore: Well, that's what I remembered about it.

Mrs. Moore: Yeah, I have a copy of it. See I've got an awful lot of material but it's all packed away, you know, since we came in here. But the collection can be copied, I suppose.

Taylor: No, you can't - it's not . . . I'll get to you because it won't pick up from across the room. But I have three personal copies of the Appeal.

Mrs. Moore: Yes, one for . . .

Taylor: No, I've got the big ones like this. One is 1901, and a couple of the Quarto Centennial Editions in 1910.

Mr. Moore: Oh, is that so?

Taylor: And it had a spread of all the Blacks and their homes in St. Paul and their . . .

Mr. Moore: Yeah.

Taylor: They were celebrating his twenty-fifth . . .

Mr. Moore: Oh, is that so?

Taylor: . . . anniversary of his editorship. And I remembered the St. James had a little thing called The Helper.

Mrs. Moore: That's right. We've got one of those too.
Mr. Moore: Yes, yes, I think we still have the Helper around here somewhere. Now that was, of course, strictly a church paper, published every - oh, I don't know, every week I guess. Do you remember who the publisher was of that?

Taylor: No, who was it?

Mrs. Moore: It wasn't Bowling, was it?

Mr. Moore: No. Bowling was a Baptist by the way.

Mrs. Moore: Oh, I can't ... but his face is clear.

Mr. Moore: Morgan was his last name. What was his first name? He published that out of St. James.

Mrs. Moore: He was married to Charlie Miller's sister.

Taylor: What about things like ... I'm doing an article on the Black Spanish-American War veterans here. Now I know that there was no one left here to go to the war that I know of, or did they? And I know that in 1924 or '21 - somewhere in about there - that they established the Charles Young camp of the Spanish-American War veterans, and the women's auxiliary. And Eva Neal was involved in that. Do you remember anything about that?

Mr. Moore: Well, no, I don't actually remember anything about it, because the Spanish American was all a little before me and that thing, that auxiliary, I guess was something that was organized later, you know.

Mrs. Moore: Just recently.

Mr. Moore: And I can't remember anything about that. I can kind of remember them singing one of those Spanish-American songs when I was a kid, because that was about the time we came to St. Paul and the war was about over then, you know. I don't remember what that song was. Do you remember? Spanish-American song?
Mrs. Moore: No.

Taylor: Do you remember anything about let's say Black businesses?

Mr. Moore: Well, as I think I named all the businesses just now. My dad had a grocery store on Rondo and Western.

Taylor: Oh, he did?

Mr. Moore: Yeah, a little grocery store.

Taylor: Was this in later years after he had finished working for the ...?

Mr. Moore: Yes, it was. But that's been a long time ago.

Taylor: I don't recall that. Rondo and Western?

Mr. Moore: Rondo and Western. There was a store there for many years, you know. Someone had it, off and on.

Mrs. Moore: And it was a busy corner.

Mr. Moore: A busy corner.

Mrs. Moore: With a police station.

Mr. Moore: Yeah. Well, you know, they weren't a real full grocery store as you see it today, you know, green vegetables and all that. It was one of those candy and cookie stores I call it.

Taylor: A sweet shop.

Mr. Moore: Yeah.

Mrs. Moore: That's right.

Taylor: What about the barbers now? Who was up here cutting hair?

Mr. Moore: Well, of course the Hall brothers were here about 1902 or something. They came and I only remembered them being down on Fifth Street, except when they had to move from down there and moved up here on Selby.

Taylor: Why did they have to move?

Mr. Moore: I don't know. But they were there for many years. All three of them, you know.
Mrs. Moore: Yeah, but their clientele downtown was all white.

Mr. Moore: Yeah.

Taylor: They didn't allow any Black people in, right?

Mr. Moore: No, you couldn't go in there.

Mrs. Moore: Their children had to come to the back of the store.

Taylor: Really?

Mr. Moore: You know Mike Carr had a bar on Wabasha and he refused to serve Negroes who would come in the front door. But he said, "When the Hall brothers cut Negroe's hair, you can come in here and get a drink!" I remember that. [Laughter]

Taylor: Which Hall brothers are we talking about now? There's S. E. Hall, S. E. Orrin?

Mr. Moore: Orrin.

Taylor: And A. V.?

Mr. Moore: And A. V. Yes. By the way, before you came I was up to A. V.'s apartment ... Oh, he's still here?

Mr. Moore: Yeah. The reason I went was because his name had been taken off of the hospital list that we have in the elevators and I went up to ask if he'd come home or what but no, they're going to send him some place else. Yeah.

Taylor: Is this his mother, Lettie Hall here or what ...?

Mr. Moore: No, that's Orrin ... O. C.'s wife.

Taylor: Now, Andrew Bell had a barber shop over here where the Angus is.

Mr. Moore: Yeah, right on Selby, right in the first floor of the Angus.

Taylor: Was there an Albion Building there at one time?

Mr. Moore: Wait a minute now. What was the building on the corner? What did
you say?

Taylor: The Albion Building.

Mrs. Moore: I don't know where.

Taylor: Because I know that they moved up and according to the notes left in the family it was either the Albion Building and later the Angus ...

Mrs. Moore: Angus Hotel.

Taylor: ... Angus Hotel, but at any rate they moved right across the street from that, that little house. He lived right across the street. I know the Angus was built in '86, I believe and ...

Mr. Moore: And that was right on the corner, wasn't it?

Taylor: Right.

Mrs. Moore: Yeah.

Taylor: And I know he was up here as early as '83. Of course that was before your time ...

Mr. Moore: Yes.

Taylor: ... but I didn't know whether there was a building on that site before the Angus.

Mr. Moore: No, the Angus must have been there then, because it's always been an old - I went to the Neil School back in - before the McKinley was built see.

Taylor: Neil School?

Mr. Moore: Up where the Neil Apartments are is where it was located. You see, now we'll get off, we'll get back on to this in a minute - but back in those days the only school right around in our neighborhood here was - what was the one here on St. Anthony?

Mrs. Moore: McKinley?

Mr. Moore: No, no, not McKinley.

Taylor: Jackson?
Mr. Moore: No, the one right here on St. Albans and ...

Taylor: Oh, Maxfield.

Mr. Moore: Maxfield.

Taylor: There's a fire barn there.

Mrs. Moore: Oh, really?

Mr. Moore: ... and it only went to the third or fourth grade, see, so when we grew up we couldn't go to the Maxfield but there was the Webster up on McKubin and the next street past Selby and Laurel, or the Neil. So they had a dividing line then between those two. Arundel street was the dividing line and if you lived east of Arundel you could go to the Neil, otherwise you'd go to the Webster. And living on this side of University, you couldn't go to the Jackson. And we were too old to go to Maxfield so I went to the ... McKinley was built and that was a nice lot we used to play in there, trees, berries, everything was in there. Anyway they built that and I sat here and watched it burn down and I went to school there the first day it opened. And I watched it burn down a couple of years ago.

Taylor: Right. Now let's see, what about Mr. Starks, he had a barber shop?

Mr. Moore: Starks had a barber shop - where in the devil was his barber shop?

Taylor: They claim they owned the land between Dale and ... up the block there on Grand.

Mr. Moore: Oh, is that so?

Taylor: Yeah. They said that he had a barber shop that catered to white clientele only ...

Mr. Moore: I wouldn't be surprised.

Taylor: ... and that only the wealthy family they remembered.

Mr. Moore: Yeah. Well, he was on ...
Taylor: ... patronized there.

Mr. Moore: Did she say he was on Grand Avenue?

Taylor: It was either that they owned that land or his business might have been up a little bit further.

Mr. Moore: I think it was out a little bit further, but I can't tell you positively.

Taylor: She said it was up near the Crocus Hill Food Store, still in existence, I guess ...

Mr. Moore: Oh, yes. Yeah.

Taylor: That would be further out on Grand Avenue then I suppose.

Mr. Moore: Yes. That's right.

Now you asked me something else and I didn't answer it, just now?

Taylor: The barbers, I'm trying to get the barbers ...

Mr. Moore: Yeah, trying to get the barbers straight in here.

Well, as we said, the three Hall brothers all came to town, and Ed got all the boys to go into the shop and they all went in the shop. O. C., of course, the barber shop wasn't the proper work for him. He was too smart to be a barber so he went off and got one of those $100 jobs down at the courthouse, see. He was a clerk in - oh, I don't know which office it was now, but we thought O. C. had himself a big job, you see, when he worked ...

Taylor: Didn't he write poetry also?

Mr. Moore: No, this one here didn't. A. V. ...

Taylor: A. V. wrote poetry, huh?

Mrs. Moore: Yes.

Taylor: Because I remember in the Appeal it mentioned him being the Poet Laureate of St. Paul. [Laughter]
Mr. Moore: Yeah, I wouldn't be surprised, yes.

Taylor: Do you think that he would have any of that still today?

Mr. Moore: Oh, I'll bet that she's got plenty of it up there. I was up talking to her today. But you could ask her.

Taylor: Who's her?

Mr. Moore: His wife.

Taylor: When are they leaving? Maybe I should go up there and talk to them right away.

Mr. Moore: Maybe you better go today, yeah. He's in the hospital right now. And...

Taylor: People keep mentioning something about a Black fire brigade as a company of fire fighters.

Mr. Moore: That's right.

Taylor: Where was that?

Mr. Moore: The one out on Front Street.

Taylor: On Front Street?

Mr. Moore: Front and... what's the cross street now? Oh, I don't remember. The fire brigade is still up there, but they're not all... they split it up after while. But old man Godett was the captain of that fire department back in the old days. You know the Harris boys, some of them? Their father died just last week, too, and he was one of the colored firemen out there. Oh, there was a whole bunch of them out there. But they were all colored, that's true.

Taylor: Someone said that they were never called on but to fight mattress fires. [Laughter]

Mrs. Moore: Is that what they said?

Taylor: Is that the truth?
Mr. Moore: Oh, yeah, they had it nice out there. I think they enjoyed it. But it just shows, you know, that every effort was made, you know, to separate you, and didn't care what you did.

Now when I graduated from high school in 1910, there were no jobs to ... 

Taylor: Which high school?

Mr. Moore: Mechanic Arts. There were no jobs to look forward to, here. The first thing I did immediately was to take a civil service examination and go to Washington, and got a job. And, you know, those folks down there in Washington, you know, is a typical Southern city ...

Taylor: Um hum.

Mr. Moore: ... and of course it was then. You couldn't do anything in Washington then. And they treated you better there than they did in St. Paul.

Taylor: Yeah, and they would have you believe that here in St. Paul there was no racial prejudice or nothing.

Mr. Moore: That's right.

Taylor: And there really was.

Mr. Moore: Well, to show you what you couldn't do, you couldn't, well, it's ... it's an odd thing. Some things you could do here you couldn't do anywhere else and that's the way they had it. But you couldn't go down and walk in and ask for a job and get it.

Taylor: That's strange. I didn't know that.

Mr. Moore: A fellow I went to school with, his father was third vice president of the Omaha. He was the head of the freight claim office so - I can't think of his name - so when I was running the elevator there I said, "Say, I'd like to get a job in your department." That was one of the big departments, you know, where they didn't pay a whole lot. None of them paid very much in those days. "I don't need a janitor now." I
Taylor: says, "You know what you can do with your freight claim department."
And he and I played football together on the football team down at Mechanic Arts.

Don't need any janitors.

Taylor: So that all that Blacks could do was get into service type of jobs?

Mr. Moore: Yeah. You could get janitor jobs if some Dutchman or Swede didn't get it first. That was a funny thing, too. You know, the first thing I noticed when I went away from here, you know, the young fellows you couldn't get a job, for instance ... well, I went to Washington. I noticed all the grocery wagons were driven by colored boys, see. Well, I never remembered seeing a colored boy drive a grocery wagon here.

Now that's one of the divisions, see.

Mrs. Moore: Then another thing, too, when he took his civil service, and it was from 1910 to 1912, I think it was 1910, the two years he took the national census in Washington, D.C. He passed the civil service here then went to Washington for two years to take the ...

Taylor: National Census thing.

Mrs. Moore: Even when Louis [Jr.] got down and Louis was in Washington, worked for the advertising department, he met some of the very same men that had been his boss originally.

Taylor: Oh?

Mr. Moore: Some of them had gotten better jobs and had stayed, hung on, you see.

Taylor: Well, what were some of the prominent families around here at the time? Some of the big families that, you know, ...

Mr. Moore: Well, I think that the Adams and old lawyer McGhee ...

Taylor: Yeah, Frederick McGhee. Remember the Hilyards at all?
Mr. Moore: Yes, I remember all the Hilyards. They were one of the first families around here and ... 

Mrs. Moore: And the J. B. Johnsons and the Moores.

Taylor: The Welles and the Moores.

Mr. Moore: And old brother Lyles, you hear his name mentioned there.

Taylor: T. H. Lyles.

Mr. Moore: Yeah, Tom and he and his wife were fine old people.

Mrs. Moore: And who were the other ones that Lyles was in with, the two of them were in business together? Lyles and ...?

Taylor: Thomas?

Mrs. Moore: Not Thomas.

Mr. Moore: Thomas was his first name.

Mrs. Moore: You know he was a fair man, don't you remember? Simpson. Simpson and Lyles.

Taylor: The undertakers?

Mr. Moore: Yes.

Mrs. Moore: They were undertakers.

Mr. Moore: And George Willes and all of them were ... it's a funny thing now, Simpson was a post office man and he took this on the side, the undertaking business, and George Willes did the same thing. And nobody was able to have themselves a nice undertaking building, and Lystel, old man Lystel let them have their funerals in his place. He was down on Fourth Street in those days.

Taylor: For some reason records indicate that it was either the Hilyards or the Lyles that were supposed to have had some money.

Mr. Moore: Well, yeah, I just read in the book there where old man Lyle was supposed to have money. I never...
Taylor: We can never trace it down but supposedly he made it in real estate speculation early.

Mr. Moore: Well, then it must have been ...

Mrs. Moore: No, I never heard ...

Taylor: Did they have a fine house, or big house?

Mr. Moore: They had a nice house.

Mrs. Moore: Just a nice house.

Mr. Moore: It was right here on ...

Mrs. Moore: A pleasant sort of house, just a nice house, not really ...

Mr. Moore: Well, it was one of the best houses in town. Right over here on St. Anthony and St. Albans.

Taylor: St. Anthony and St. Albans?

Mr. Moore: Yes. And McGhee had a nice house over at University and St. Albans.

Did you name all the prominent families yet, Mother?

Mrs. Moore: There was the Pettis and Carrolls and ...

Mr. Moore: Well, of course you have ... My folks had been here since the '80s.

They were two of the oldest.

Mrs. Moore: Yeah, and their lives were centered, you know ... around the church and civic work in social and cultural, their lives were centered around those things.

Taylor: That's interesting. Now let's see, you were born in 1890 and you graduated from Mechanic Arts in 1910?

Mr. Moore: Well, about 1909, I guess it was.

Taylor: Then, let's see, when did you marry your wife?

Mrs. Moore: 1915.

Mrs. Moore: You better say it. [Laughter]

You're talking there, I'm going to go over there. Yeah, we'll soon be married sixty years. We loved them.
Taylor: Did you initially live in St. Paul? Now, let's see, 1915, which meant that you came back from Washington?

Mr. Moore: Yes, I stayed there just two years, then came back.

Taylor: When did you come back, 1912?

Mr. Moore: 1912, yeah.

Taylor: And what did you do then?

Mr. Moore: Well, she'd come to town then in the meantime.

Taylor: Did you meet her out in Washington or ...?

Mr. Moore: No, I didn't. I didn't know her until she came back here.

Mrs. Moore: He went into the post office, but you didn't go in right away.

Taylor: What types of things did you do in your life? What type of activities were you involved in? From, you know, 1910 on or 1912, when you came back?

Mr. Moore: Oh, that's after I came back. I'm trying to think where I went to work when I came back here. Things were still a little ...

Taylor: Did you go off to the First World War?

Mr. Moore: No, I didn't. Louis [Jr.] was born and I was put in the last class or something then. So I didn't get to make the war.

Taylor: There were a lot of Blacks that went off to the war from St. Paul?

Mr. Moore: Oh, yes, yes, I can remember of going down to the station with them and all that stuff.

Taylor: Were they segregated in the army, I mean were they recruited differently and sent off to train in different camps?

Mr. Moore: I think so, yes, oh, sure they were. All of them here went down to Des Moines, you know, the camp, what was it? Well, we'll just say Des Moines, the big camp down there. All from around here went there. From all around this part of the country I guess. Oh yes, they were still separated then.
Taylor: I was remembering that from 1915 to 1920 the historians talk about a great migration of Blacks out of the South. Did many Black people come to St. Paul between 1915 and 1920? Did the population grow at all?

Mr. Moore: Yes, I remember that they did. The only trouble was the railroad business wasn't as good as it used to be and they couldn't make a lot of money the way they did back in the old days. And there was then a lot of young fellows came here to go to school, go to the University, you know. And that's why the boys come here. I don't know where the devil they come from, 'til you go out and look at them on the street. You'll say to yourself, "I wonder where he came from?" Well, anyway, that's the way it was.

Taylor: Do you remember anything ... how did the Black community respond to the lynching of the three Blacks in Duluth in 1920?

Mr. Moore: Well, all I can remember is just hearing about it. I was ... what year was that?


Mr. Moore: I was a pretty old guy then, wasn't I?

Mr. Moore: I just remember it, that's all I heard about it.

Mrs. Moore: I don't think there was much they could do about it.

Taylor: I was wondering also was there any following, do you know Marcus Garvey? The Marcus Garvey movement?

Mr. Moore: No, I can't say that I do because I would say it didn't get this far west.

Taylor: It didn't get this far west?

Mr. Moore: No.

Mrs. Moore: That was in that World War I stuff that we had, you know.

Taylor: Were there people who were knowledgable about the Harlem Renaissance
that was going on? Harlem writers, Langston Hughes, and Arma Bontemps and Countee Cullen, people who were writing things about Black life and were people here interested in that type of thing then?

Mr. Moore: I would say not. We here, you know, wanted to be under the impression that everything's all right here, see.

Taylor: Um hum.

Mr. Moore: And after I moved East and found out that why we're just in the sticks out here. And that's the way it was.

Taylor: They also mentioned, a lot of people that I've talked to, that back in that early day - and they didn't say when, I don't know if it was before 1920 or maybe it was back at the turn of the century - that there was a very kind of color line in St. Paul, that Black society was kind of factionalized you know, against people who were dark skinned as opposed to people who were lighter skinned. Do you remember any of that?

Mr. Moore: I don't remember of it being a fact, but I can remember how they used to would talk, you know, that way.

Taylor: The blue vein society?

Mr. Moore: Yeah, the yellow people were all together, like my wife there, the yellow folk, and ... [Laughter]

Taylor: Well, Ida Comb said that at Pilgrim Baptist Church they had a problem with that one time where they noticed that all the light skinned people were sitting on one side of the church ...

Mr. Moore: Is that so?

Taylor: Is that true?

Mr. Moore: Well, it, they said it was.

Mrs. Moore: It could have been.

Mr. Moore: But ... oh, I don't know, maybe it was just imagination. [Laughter]

You wasn't sitting with the yellows, you know, why they took it for granted
something was wrong. But you see back in those days now, Pilgrim had a lot of light complected people in those days, so many I can remember that you couldn't tell them from white, like the James family and ... who else, Mother?

Mrs. Moore: The Howards.

Taylor: Howards?

Mr. Moore: Howards, the James family, why they were all related. But that just happened that way, I think, they just came to St. Paul and ... 

Taylor: Was there much interracial marriages and things like that at that time?

Mrs. Moore: No, I don't really think so, do you? Not too many.

Mr. Moore: Well, yeah, it depends on what you would call "many".

Mrs. Moore: Nothing like it is now. There's no comparison.

Mr. Moore: Well, of course it don't matter now, but ...

Mrs. Moore: I think that people kind of ostracized them and didn't have much to do with you if you were ...

Mr. Moore: You know back in the old days when people came up here and there were a lot of interracial....

[End of side 1; beginning of side 2]

Mr. Moore: I was getting ready to say that when I came back to St. Paul I was going ... you were asking me what did I do then? I went there and worked about ten years I guess, before I went in the post office. During the war they had to fire one of the white clerks and the manager asked me if I would care for a job as clerk and I thought he was kidding. I said, "You say take John's job?" And he says, "Yes." "Okay." So I was clerk down there for quite a while.

Taylor: How did the depression affect St. Paul? How did the Black fare during the depression years in St. Paul?
Mr. Moore: Well, I can always remember having this thrown to me, well, I was working at the post office, see, and of course it didn't matter, it didn't change our salaries or anything ...

Taylor: But it gave you steady employment.

Mr. Moore: But I was always employed. There was never any unemployment, but you know you'd have it thrown to you so, well, if you wasn't working in the post office, you'd be living just like I am, something like that, you know. And so I arranged it for myself.

Taylor: Was Mr. Murphy working with you at the time?

Mr. Moore: Yes.

Taylor: At the post office?

Mr. Moore: Yes, he was there. He was in the post office. He and the two Hickmans, old Hickman, John Hickman.

Taylor: Martin Hickman?

Mr. Moore: No. I mean the other Hickman family.

Mrs. Moore: John Hickman?

Mr. Moore: John and ... Morris. They were the first ones and George Willes ... This other man you mentioned was an undertaker.

Mrs. Moore: Simpson.

Mr. Moore: Simpson. Those old fellows were all there before I even went in. Of course I didn't go in until 1923. But they had been there quite awhile. And it was even tough going then trying to get in the post office. My God, they didn't want you in the post office. I guess if I hadn't cussed a couple of Swedes out there I wouldn't have got in.

Mrs. Moore: That's all your talking ...

Mr. Moore: No. Oh yes, I am. [Laughter]

Taylor: Well, did the Swedes really hold you down?

Mrs. Moore: You had Moos, you know, Moos was in the post office.
Mr. Moore: Was president.

Mrs. Moore: Yes, president of the old station.

Taylor: Mr. Moos was the postmaster general there at that time?

Mr. Moore: Yes, he was the postmaster there. He was the father of Malcolm Moos, and Malcolm looks just like the old boy. I remember seeing the old Moos going to the Minnesota Club, you know. He brought this guy down there when he was a kid in short pants. [Laughter]

Taylor: Was everybody out of work during the depression?

Mr. Moore: Yes. They tried to distribute work around you know, all the work and food and all that. It was tough going all right for people who had nothing or could get ahold of nothing you see.

Taylor: Were many Blacks in the WPA and PWA programs?

Mr. Moore: Yes, yeah. They had to be in that and they were.

Mrs. Moore: They had to get on the WPA.

Taylor: Well, did Blacks help to put up some of these projects around here that PWA and WPA ...?

Mr. Moore: Well, that WPA they might have, because they gave them jobs, you know, pushing a wheelbarrow around. But so far as belonging to the union and being able to be a bricklayer, or anything like that, they didn't do that then, any more than they do now. You see, you can't go out and go to union headquarters here and tell them you want a job, or I want to go in the union or anything. They just don't do it. Someone asked old Meany when he was on the TV during - I don't know when it was, well it's since the trouble started in Washington - and he was asked outright why is it you don't let all Negroes join the union? And you know what his answer was? Time isn't ripe yet, that's the answer he gave over TV. The time isn't ripe. Now that's just a couple of years ago, see, and to show you how they hold you back, no, they don't want you in the union.
Taylor: So that Blacks didn't get to work in the programs that the government had established to help people find employment during the depression?

Mr. Moore: Well, I think they did. I think I'd say yes to that, because the WPA, that was a sort of a work project, and they ... I know a lot of them were working that or maybe all of them were, they had to take them off the streets. They had to do something for everybody.

Taylor: I remember as a kid I used to see that wall over there by Maxwell School, that big wall, and it said put up by WPA in '32 or something?

Mr. Moore: Yes, I remember that wall there. See, they did projects like that just to give you a little money, you know, I guess.

Taylor: Then people who were in the post office didn't really suffer that much from the ....?

Mr. Moore: No, no government employees. I don't think those permanent employees were hindered in any way.

Taylor: Speaking of the union activities, do you know anything about the organization of the Pullman porters union here in St. Paul and Asa Phillip Randolph coming through here and organizing?

Mr. Moore: No, I don't know anything about it except that it is true, and he is an officer in the union.

Taylor: Um hum.

Mrs. Moore: We met him when he came through.

Mr. Moore: He's an officer in the big union, you know, yet and that gives old Meany and those guys a chance to say well, look at - what's his name, Randolph ...?

Mrs. Moore: Yeah, Phillip Randolph.

Mr. Moore: Asa Phillip Randolph, why he's one of the big men in the union.

Mrs. Moore: I remember when he was here.

Taylor: You do?
Mrs. Moore: Because Louis [Jr.] was just passing through, he had just come from Washington from the Department of Agriculture ...

Taylor: This was Louis, Junior?

Mrs. Moore: Yes, and he wanted him to come. He wanted some of the fellows to meet him because he said it was an outstanding position and he wanted them to see. So I remember particularly because I still have his picture.

Taylor: What about political activities? Did Black people around here vote very often or if they voted, what kind of party ...?

Mr. Moore: Well, there's one thing I know that - this came out and I know I paid attention to this even when I was a young fellow, you've got the opportunity in St. Paul to vote for anyone you want to and go to the polls and you don't do it, see, people didn't even bother about going in those days.

Taylor: Didn't?

Mr. Moore: No, no. They weren't interested enough.

Taylor: I remember that in the Appeal newspaper Adams was a Republican and he was always trying to get people out to vote Republican.

Mr. Moore: Um hum.

Taylor: I was wondering if there was many people who were Republicans around here?

Mr. Moore: Well, you know, I think the trend was to be Republicans, the Negroes to be Republicans in those days.

Mrs. Moore: That's what they always thought they had to be.

Taylor: That's interesting, interesting.

What about World War II?

Mr. Moore: World War II, of course I'm an old man then. Charles had to go to World War II.

Mrs. Moore: Charles went about three and a half years.
Taylor: Why how many children did you have?

Mr. Moore: Three.

Mrs. Moore: Three.

Mr. Moore: Two boys and ...

Mrs. Moore: And a daughter ...

Mr. Moore: ... a daughter.

Mrs. Moore: ... which we lost fifteen years ago.

Taylor: When were they born?

Mr. Moore: Well, they're fifty-nine, fifty-eight, and I'm talking about the ages now, ...

Taylor: Which one is fifty-nine?

Mrs. Moore: Louis [Jr.] is fifty-eight and Charles is fifty-six and Elizabeth had she lived would have been - let's see, six years younger than Louis - so she was about fifty-three.

Mr. Moore: Her son is just graduating from Dartmouth this Sunday. He's way up, twenty-one years old now.

Taylor: You said Charles went off to war. Where did he fight?

Mr. Moore: He went to France and he went over the English Channel and that ... what do they call it?

Taylor: The invasion?

Mr. Moore: Yeah, on the invasion, he went over on the eighth wave they called it, yeah. The eighth wave so he was over there pretty early.

Taylor: I'll bet he had a lot of stories to tell you.

Mr. Moore: Oh, yes.

Mrs. Moore: It was terrible. I didn't want to hear it. He told his dad.

Taylor: What was Black life here, community life during the war, the Second World War? Did people buy Victory Bonds and do all the patriotic things?
Mr. Moore: I guess that you were just about expected to do that and you were just about talked into it. Now in the post office where I worked being a government employee and you were asked to have them deduct money from your check, see, every month and that way they had you there and we thought it was the thing, I guess I'd say that we just thought it was the thing. It turned out all right, so far as the bonds were concerned.

Taylor: Did people plant victory gardens?

Mrs. Moore: Oh, yes.

Mr. Moore: Yes, they did that.

Mrs. Moore: I'll say they did.

Taylor: Did you have a victory garden?

Mr. Moore: Well, I always had something in the back yard, like flowers or would plant beans or something, but I didn't make a specialty of a victory garden.

Taylor: How long did you live on Central?

Mr. Moore: Where I just moved from?

Taylor: Yeah, because I used to live down the street from you, I remember.

Mrs. Moore: Almost fifty years.

Taylor: Really?

Mr. Moore: Forty-nine years we were there.

Taylor: And what was the address?

Mr. Moore: 622 West Central.

Taylor: So that was the family homestead then?

Mr. Moore: Yeah, you may as well say that because we were there a long time, longer than any place else. There was a colored family that lived in that house before we were there, Howard family, and they'd been around St. Paul a long time and then they moved to Winnipeg. So I was up to Winnipeg and I was asked if I wanted to see the - where is it they put
all the names down for a record?

Mrs. Moore: In the athletics, you mean?

Mr. Moore: Yeah. What do you call ...?

Mrs. Moore: The Hall of Fame?

Mr. Moore: We went to the Hall of Fame up there. The fellow whose family owned the house we lived in is enrolled in the Canadian Athletic Hall of Fame. They had moved to Canada before the 1912 Olympics and he made the Canadian Olympic team and I went in and saw his name, it's down in the Hall of Fame. So he was good, he had to be good.

Taylor: That's interesting.

Mr. Moore: Yes, that was interesting.

Taylor: I remember also on Central didn't the Allens used to live down from you?

Mr. Moore: Right next door.

Mrs. Moore: They still live there.

Taylor: How long have they lived there?

Mrs. Moore: Three years before we came. They moved in there three years before we moved in.

Taylor: Mr. and Mrs. Lionel Allen.

Mrs. Moore: That's right, Lionel Allen.

Taylor: What did he do for a living?

Mr. Moore: He was a railroad man. Of course they're both gone for years now.

Taylor: Now did the Colemans live right across the street from you?

Mr. Moore: They were there, yes, sir, they were there when we moved there.

The Colemans and Victor Calloway and his family.

Taylor: Victor Calloway? What was his address?

Mrs. Moore: 643 I think.
Mr. Moore: Yeah, that's close enough. And the girls lived there until - she's sick now I guess, the older girl - of course, you knew Victor.

Taylor: Yeah, yeah.

Who were some of the older families that lived on that block?

Mr. Moore: Oh, let's see, now those families we just mentioned were there when we moved in there forty-nine years ago, fifty now, whenever it was.

Mrs. Moore: There was this Reverend McDonald. They were there when we moved.

Taylor: Reverend McDonald?

Mrs. Moore: Yes.

Mr. Moore: Yes, but he's been dead some years now.

Taylor: What church was he in?

Mr. Moore: Methodist Church. He's been dead some years now.

Mrs. Moore: He was a Methodist minister.

Taylor: Was Camphor Methodist organized early?

Mr. Moore: No.

Taylor: What Methodist church are you talking about?

Mr. Moore: Oh, this was St. James.

Taylor: It's St. James you're talking about.

Mr. Moore: Yeah.

Taylor: Reverend McDonald.

Mr. Moore: Yes. That was before your time.

Taylor: Oh, yeah.

Mrs. Moore: [unclear] oh, but the Lees, you know, Jimmy Lee.

Mr. Moore: Yeah, but he hadn't - they hadn't been to town so long, Mother. I remember before they got married even. They lived there, yes.

Taylor: Do you think in going back over the years now, what type of outstanding events occurred in the community which always stood out in your mind? I heard some about the union picnics they used to have
every year.

Mr. Moore: Yes, well the union picnic was a big thing in those days and everybody went to it. It was always out at Minnehaha and as kids you know we used to have a lot of fun at the union picnic. St. Phillips picnic was on the train out to Spring Lake Park, Minnetonka and that was a little different. Here we'd get on a streetcar and go on out to Minnehaha.

Taylor: I saw in the Appeal that up until 1910 they were still celebrating the emancipation. Are there any emancipation ceremonies you remember?

Mr. Moore: No, I never went.

Mrs. Moore: We do have a picture of the emancipation ball.

Taylor: You have a picture of the emancipation ball?

Mrs. Moore: [unclear] The other one got broken. We let them have it, [Earl] Spangler, and they took it you know and they broke it in half.

Taylor: Oh, no.

Mr. Moore: Is that what that was?

Mrs. Moore: Yes, that was ...

Mr. Moore: They had it in the auditorium down here. I was thinking it was some other kind of ball.

Mrs. Moore: No, and Philip Peale’s marked the names of some of the people. There's Eddie Oliver there and oh, a lot of names on there. Anderson and S. E. Hall and it was his first tails and he's on there with his tails way down on the ground and Ed Hofsteader was directing the thing.

Mr. Moore: Oh, yes.

Taylor: The box cake walk?

Mrs. Moore: You know I meant to get it. It wasn't a cake walk, the other one, where they got together and cut ...

Mr. Moore: Oh, the cake walk?
Taylor: The comedy?
Mr. Moore: That's about what it was.
Mrs. Moore: It's probably the same thing.
Mr. Moore: The Grand March.
Mrs. Moore: They're all in their best dresses.
Taylor: I'd like to see that sometime I really would like ...
Mrs. Moore: Yes.
Taylor: How did you get around in those days? Did everyone have a horse and buggy or did you walk?
Mr. Moore: You walked. No other way, unless you had a horse and buggy.
Mrs. Moore: [unclear] had a horse and buggy because they still have the old blankets in the car out there that they use.
Taylor: That was kind of expensive owning a horse in the city though, wasn't it?
Mr. Moore: Yes, you had to have a barn in the back yard and that's all there was to it, you had to have a barn.
Taylor: Do you remember when the old streetcar barn burned down here behind Hallie Q. Brown?
Mr. Moore: Yes. Say, here's what I wanted to tell you something ...
Mrs. Moore: That was originally the old union hall.
Mr. Moore: Yeah, it was. The Rondo car went west as far as Avon at first.
Taylor: Is that all?
Mr. Moore: It went to Avon and she turned around and came back downtown. If electricity was strong enough to pull it down.
Taylor: Oh, you had the electric trolley car. I didn't know they had an electric cable car on Rondo.
Mr. Moore: No, this wasn't a cable car.
Taylor: I mean an electric street car.
Mr. Moore: We had an electric streetcar.
Taylor: ... trolley.

Mr. Moore: Yeah.

Taylor: As a kid I can remember the University Avenue streetcar.

Mr. Moore: Yes.

Taylor: I used to catch it out in the middle of the street, used to catch that trolley car going downtown but ...

Mr. Moore: Didn't you remember it? The Rondo-Maria?

Taylor: Well, yeah, but the old decrepit buses I remember ...

Mr. Moore: Is that so?

Taylor: ... yeah, because they had the tiger-striped seats and kind of a blue tinted windows or green tinted windows that you sat at.

Mrs. Moore: Yes, that's right.

Well, listen, you know out there – where is it, where the swamp was that you and the kids used to go and where you swam and where you used to go get your grubs to go fishing?

Mr. Moore: Oh, that was just this side of Lexington Avenue, it sat up high, you see, it was higher than this part of town and it grew all up in those great big long stalks you know, that you could walk through and no one could even see you and then as you left Lexington Avenue and went down the hill, why that was all full of water always, and there was snakes and frogs down in there. Where Curtis 1000 is on University Avenue and Chatsworth there was a permanent pond there and we would swim there in summer. These cattails would grow so close to the pond that we could swim and take our clothes off and swim in there. The cops were on horses then, see, and they usually paraded on Lexington Avenue and we could see them a mile off and all we would do was run into these cane brakes and the streetcars would go right by us, you know. Anyway, what else was I going to say about that?
Taylor: You mentioned the old Larpenteur House. Tell me more about that -
on the corner of Rondo and Dale Streets.

Mr. Moore: Right on this corner.

Taylor: The old Larpenteur House. When was that built, do you know?

Mr. Moore: No, I wouldn't know that, because the old man was almost a hundred
when he died, and he'd been here for another thousand years before
that. [Laughter]

Taylor: Now what did he do?

Mr. Moore: They named Larpenteur Avenue after him, of course. So far as I
could ever see, he wasn't doing anything. I don't know where he got
all of his money from or anything.

Taylor: You mentioned that there was a fort, the ruins of a fort right
where you are?

Mr. Moore: Yes, right about where this building is standing.

Taylor: How much of it remained? Just a wall or something?

Mr. Moore: Just the walls, yeah. That was all there was to one of those forts
anyway. It was walls and portholes, see, I call them, and ... 

Taylor: Of stone?

Mr. Moore: Stone, yeah, it was all stone.

Taylor: Was it the yellow stone like his house?

Mr. Moore: No, it was the old - what is all of our stone here?

Taylor: Minnesota sandstone?

Mr. Moore: It isn't sandstone, is it? I've seen them dig up downtown and
for a building and there's old ...

Taylor: Big gray type of stone?

Mr. Moore: Yeah. What do they call that?

Taylor: Like shell of something like that?

Mr. Moore: Yeah. Well, anyway that's what it was. And that's what this fort
was built of.

Taylor: Was it very big?

Mr. Moore: No, not very big, but big enough. If you had to protect yourself from a band of Indians, maybe it would be big enough.

Taylor: Oh, so this was just a private little stockade adjacent to the house?

Mr. Moore: Well, that's what it looked like, yes.

Taylor: Oh.

Mr. Moore: And then in his back yard he had a wooden one built, a little fort, a regular little fort, and it had upstairs windows to it and everything. But that was just wooden. I guess everybody had protection back in those days.

Taylor: What else do you remember about the community around here? The land?

Mr. Moore: Well, I was starting out telling you, the streetcars at first ran to Avon. It stopped there and went back downtown. And then a few years later they moved them all the way to Chatsworth.

Taylor: Chatsworth, eh?

Mr. Moore: Chatsworth and come back. And then from Chatsworth they moved back to Griggs where they ended up, I guess. And that was one little thing I remember.

Taylor: Did you ever go to the ball park? I remember there was a ball park out there?

Mr. Moore: The ball park was at Lexington and University.

Taylor: Right.

Mr. Moore: And they boarded in the whole half of that block and the ball park was so big you could knock a home run inside of the fence. It was that big.
Oh, and then another thing I always remembered, they were building the Capitol back in those buildings and all that square block there where the Capitol - well, it's two or three square blocks - I can always remember seeing the big high fence they put around it while they were building it.

Taylor: Did whites live down in there anywhere?

Mr. Moore: Well, just over the hill and over on Jackson Street and over there.

Taylor: Now I understand that when the new building, the Capitol building here, they brought Blacks up from Georgia to cut the marble because they didn't have any skilled whites that could cut that Georgia marble. Do you know anything about that?

Mr. Moore: Mr. Stevens, Sam Steven's father, came up here from Georgia and he worked on the Capitol. And I understand that they brought him up here and that's why he was in St. Paul and that he cut marble or stone or whatever you call it.

Taylor: Does he have any relatives left here?

Mr. Moore: Let's see, the boys went to Chicago. Mrs. Stevens died ...

Mrs. Moore: Sam Stevens is in Chicago, is that the same ...?

Mr. Moore: Yeah, that's who I'm talking about. And that's what I remember about that part of it. That's why he came to St. Paul.

Taylor: Because I understand that they were brought up with the idea that once they finished their work, that the people would send them back to Georgia, would give them money to go back and they never followed through. So they had to stay here.

Mr. Moore: Is that so? Well, that's possible. That's the way they did things. We'll do it our way.

Taylor: Was that roller skating rink up? Years ago I remember right next
to the ball park there was a roller skating rink that we used to play with.

Mr. Moore: Out here, you mean?
Taylor: Out on Lexington and University. Well, actually it's more like near Central. Right where Sandees and Arlans and that whole complex.
Mr. Moore: Oh.
Taylor: There was an old roller rink there, wasn't there?
Mrs. Moore: I think there was.
Mr. Moore: I just don't remember about that. I can remember more about the ball park. Then we had a little ball field downtown, you know.
Taylor: A little ball field downtown?
Mr. Moore: Yes.
Taylor: Were there any Black teams that were competing with one another?
Mr. Moore: Well, there were Black teams that came here and played, because there was a Negro League, you know, back in those days.
Taylor: Oh, I didn't know that.
Mr. Moore: And we had some of the best teams would come here and the St. Paul Association team would play two games with the colored team every year. And one at the beginning and one at the end. And the Negro team usually beat them, too.
Taylor: Really?
Mr. Moore: Oh, we had a little ball park down at Twelfth and Robert where the bakery is there, that square block, and they called that the "pill box". That wasn't big enough to play in even. But they played there daily, and out at the Lexington on Sundays, see.
Taylor: Um hum.
Mr. Moore: And ... it was quite a joke.
Taylor: I remember the "Hollow". A Hollow playground, what was that? Was that the recreation park for the Black community or something?

Mr. Moore: Well, that was - the Hollow was one of the few skating rinks that we had in town, outside skating rinks.

Taylor: And that was on, let's see, Kent and St. Anthony, as I recall it.

Mr. Moore: Yes.

Taylor: Because the Adams' house and the Neal's house was right on the edge there and the Adams ...

Mr. Moore: Nobody on the other side of Adams.

Taylor: No.

Mr. Moore: No. But it's - you know the house is there now, the ...

Taylor: There's a high rise apartments for the elderly.

Mr. Moore: The high rise occupies that whole block. Some people say well, there was a skating rink there once. Well, where was it? Well, I said, if you pick that high rise up, it was right there. The high rise built right in the skating rink actually.

Taylor: I remember there used to be a little green house there and we used to skate there when I was coming along.

Mrs. Moore: That's right, that's right.

Mr. Moore: A couple of the women living here now said they remembered when they were kids and they used to come over to the Hollow to skate. I said, yeah, everybody skated in this part of town. The only other outdoor skating rink that I can remember of was the Lafayette downtown.

Taylor: The Lafayette downtown?

Mr. Moore: Yes.

Taylor: As I remember, Jim's Bar used to be across the street from that. A tavern?
Mr. Moore: That's right.

Mrs. Moore: That's right. The interesting thing that Napolis was telling us - you were talking to some of the old timers - and there used to be a stream that ran down Rondo.

Taylor: Yeah, I heard that there was a stream because at Arundel and Rondo there was a big - two hills that went up very steeply ...

Mr. Moore: Yeah, Arundel and Rondo. Met at Rondo Street and the water would run down there when a heavy rain came along and the streetcars probably couldn't run because there'd be too much sand on the tracks. [Laughter] And as it all come down Arundel Street from both ways and naturally it went this way, too, from Mackubin Street and I wished you could see the water that'd go down there.

Taylor: I think I remember as a kid that the Black homes down there used to be flooded all the time when they had a bad rain.

Mr. Moore: Well, they could have, that could have happened. But some people said they remembered when there was a bridge across the Arundel Street, at Arundel Street in those days and an old man had a grocery store on the corner there and he would tell me - I can't tell you whether it was true or not - but he said these big posts in here [the store] were from the bridge that used to cross over Rondo Street. They were great big timbers like that.

Mrs. Moore: That's right, they had to gulf that stream that's supposed to have ...

Taylor: How did his store, if there was a stream down there, how did his store ...?

Mr. Moore: Well, I'll tell you, the stream wasn't actually there any more. I had never seen the stream. The only time I saw water was when there
was a heavy rain. Then it would all start coming down Rondo Street. And they had to send a work car out with guys with shovels to clean off the tracks.

Taylor: I can imagine, because that looks like a natural run-off that went through there because I remember coming up Rondo and by the time you got to Dale you were on higher ground.

Mr. Moore: You were up, you were at the top, yeah. Then it goes down again going further west.

Taylor: Wasn't there an Elks Lodge or something in the red building there or something?

Mr. Moore: That's right, between Dale and Kent Streets, on Rondo.

Mrs. Moore: That was there for years and years.

Mr. Moore: Yeah, well, it was rented out just as a dwelling ...

Taylor: And the brotherhoods, Car No. 16 Railroad Employees Union or something would be across the street from there in a green and white house?

Mrs. Moore: That was, let's see, that was between ...

Mr. Moore: I think they were in there one time.

Mrs. Moore: ... and Mackubin. That used to be the old [unclear]. That used to be his home.

Taylor: It was a white bungalow, white and green or something like that.

Mrs. Moore: Yes, that's right. It used to be his home and then they rented it.

They died [unclear]. You remember, 516 Rondo, wasn't it? Yeah.

Mr. Moore: Yeah, I think so.

You know, I'll tell you another thing that's hard to imagine. You know the city had no swimming beaches back in those days so the city made us a swimming beach on Harriet Island under the Wabasha Street bridge, and we had to go down and swim in the river. And I tell people
now I've seen many a dead horse and dead pig or cow float by us, oh, the water was always dirty.

Taylor: Oh, my, really, you're just kidding? A dead horse or dead pig was floating down the river?

Mr. Moore: Yeah, down the river. Easiest way to get rid of them for those farmers up above, you know, just take them out and throw them in the river I guess. No laws then, you know.

Taylor: It seems like you could catch something with all those germs and diseases in the water.

Mr. Moore: Well, that was it, it was nasty. It was nasty and I remember the last time I went down there to swim, there was a current all the time, you know, and that took me off my feet and I went under and I crawled on the bottom and crawled out of there. I haven't been back since.

[Laughter] You get a mouthful of that old dirty water.

Taylor: I remember an old streetcar line that used to go to Como Park.

Mr. Moore: Yeah.

Taylor: Did many Blacks go out to Como Park then?

Mr. Moore: Well, yes, that was their big park, that's where we all went in this part of town and of course it was nice.

Taylor: Um hum.

Mr. Moore: Yeah. But this was so nice and close out here. Everybody from this part of town would go out there on Sundays, you know. Big baseball game and everything.

Taylor: One thing I meant to ask you, were you involved in any social clubs when you were coming along?

Mrs. Moore: No, not many.

Taylor: Give me some of the social clubs. I know you have, I've seen the
pictures of you and Minnie.

Mrs. Moore: Oh, you did!

Taylor: But I was wondering like if women would have their social clubs and I didn't know if the men had anything that they would organize around.

Mr. Moore: The thing that everybody remembers around here was the Boys Culture Club.

Taylor: The Boys Culture Club?

Mr. Moore: Did you ever hear of that?

Taylor: No, no.

Mr. Moore: Seen no pictures of it or anything?

Taylor: No, no.

Mr. Moore: We had ... you showed it to me, you talk about pictures in there, are they in that carrying case?

Mrs. Moore: Well, I'll see. Because we have most of them put away but these Louis brought today.

Taylor: What did the Boys Culture Club do? When was it formed?

Mr. Moore: It was formed when we got big enough. Well, we got to the point where we wanted all colored teams, see, before that I know it was all white boys and a couple of colored boys. So finally we grew up and a Mr. Bowling from Pilgrim Baptist worked at the Y and he got a lot of paraphernalia from the Y ...

Mrs. Moore: I don't recall these, but Louis had these, you know, he came and ...

Taylor: "The Boys Culture Club was a social athletic organization founded in 1906 by Mr. Marion A. Bowling. The picture shown above was taken in 1908." Let's see, "Back row left to right: J. Douglas Crane; John Davis; James Robinson; Vernon Barksdale; Ralph Ward." Oh, I know Ralph Ward. "Henry Crawford. Middle left row to right: Alonzo Cotton; Lloyd
Hickman; Herman Cotton; James Green; and Sam Scott. Center: Ray Anderson. Front row seated," Oh here we go, "Louis P. Moore, Roy Scott and Paul Crane."

Mrs. Moore: Yeah, that's him there.
Taylor: Is this you here?
Mr. Moore: That's me.
Taylor: Ah hah. And what did you do?
Mr. Moore: Oh, well, of course this is a football team picture.
Taylor: This is the football team, a picture of the football team.
Mr. Moore: We had baseball team, football team, even had a hockey team. Well, that was about all I guess there was to have. We didn't play basketball in those days.
Taylor: How old were you at this time?
Mr. Moore: If that was 1908, I was about seventeen years old I guess.
Taylor: Seventeen years old, um hum. It's a remarkably well preserved picture.
Mr. Moore: Let me see who is alive yet.
Mrs. Moore: And this is this glass [unclear] that they broke that off when I let them have it.
Taylor: And you never found it?
Mrs. Moore: No, Louis brought it back but they had broken it down at the Historical Society. See, he asked for it, but you can see how the people ... But we wanted it back so we kept asking.
Mr. Moore: But that was taken on the floor though. Where is the rest of it, Mother?
Taylor: Spangler had these but did they photograph these at the Historical Society or just return them?
Mrs. Moore: I don't know, Louis just brought them back. I don't think they did.

You see he was quite an athlete, Mr. Moore was, whether he will tell you or not, but he was.

Taylor: Now this was the Emancipation Ball picture?

Mr. Moore: That's what my wife says, yeah. About 1906.

Mrs. Moore: Around in there, yeah. Some of the names are on there but ...

Mr. Moore: John Copware, I wonder what he ...? There's a lot of names on there.

Taylor: Now this is what team here?

Mr. Moore: That was a Mechanic Arts track team.

Taylor: Track team. So you were a track star, too? What was your fastest time?

Mr. Moore: Oh, I don't remember now.

Mrs. Moore: We had his medals and stuff but ... There's another one.

Taylor: This is another one.

Mrs. Moore: Of track stars, yeah.

Taylor: And this was in 1913. I think it's got Harris, '13.

Mr. Moore: Oh, back in the good old days.

Mrs. Moore: When was this picture taken?

Taylor: I guess it couldn't be '13 because you were in Washington then.

Mr. Moore: I was back then.

Mrs. Moore: This one, 1908, Louis, was that when you were at Mechanics?

Mr. Moore: Oh, that's a Mechanic Arts football, too.

Taylor: Oh, you were on the football team at Mechanic Arts?

Mr. Moore: Yeah.

Mrs. Moore: See, he got his fiftieth award, his fiftieth award, blanket you know they called it.
Mr. Moore: M Club.

Taylor: That's neat. How many games did you win that year?

Mr. Moore: Well, we won't go into that. [Laughter]

Mrs. Moore: Isn't that interesting?

Taylor: Yeah.

And Cleary Constance dancing here.

Mr. Moore: Yeah, one great big floor.

Mrs. Moore: And see the top had all the balconies around. People were sitting ... I hated that place after ...

Taylor: Well, you know they have those cards that you hang from your wrist upon which women reserved dances.

Mr. Moore: Programs.

Taylor: Programs.

Mr. Moore: You see any of them there?

Taylor: Yeah, here's one here.

Mr. Moore: Gosh, if it isn't.

Mrs. Moore: See that guy in the middle holding that handkerchief? It's Ed Hall.

Taylor: That's Ed Hall here in the middle?

Mrs. Moore: Yeah, and Louis is ... show him you, Louis, or do you know?

Mr. Moore: I wouldn't know. I think this is me right here. I had on a full dress suit then.

Taylor: And these tails ...

Mr. Moore: Yes, sir.

Taylor: ... are pretty long.

Mr. Moore: Ain't they lengthy though?

Now, the only other fellow on here who is alive is this fellow.

Mrs. Moore: That's Sam Ransom.

Taylor: Um hum.
Mr. Moore: Sam Ransom?

Mrs. Moore: Yeah, right here.

Mr. Moore: What year was that taken?

Taylor: That's a picture of Sam Ransom when he was a young man.

Mr. Moore: What year was that taken? I don't think Sam was in town then. He hadn't left the tobacco farm yet.

Taylor: The tobacco farm? Where is he from?

Mr. Moore: Oh, he and A. V. [Hall] came from Elgin, Illinois. Oh, no, Sam was from Chicago.

Taylor: Sam was from Chicago?

Mr. Moore: And A. V. [Hall] came from Elgin.

Mrs. Moore: He came in '05. Was Sam here in 1913?

Mr. Moore: Oh, yes. That's just a couple of years ago!

Taylor: Um hum.

Mr. Moore: That picture wasn't taken in 1913 though.

Mrs. Moore: That's you there. I was trying to think where you were standing.

Mr. Moore: Ain't I out near the middle?

Mrs. Moore: Yes, there you are there. That's him.

Mr. Moore: Oh, I was going to tell you, that's the only other fellow that's alive.

Taylor: What's his name?

Mr. Moore: His name is James Robinson. He's a fellow that can't talk. He's lost his voice. He comes in here visiting now and then.

Mrs. Moore: This is a long one.

Taylor: We have taped almost ninety minutes. I've got another tape for you though.

Well, it seems like Blacks really had a social life here then.

Mr. Moore: Well, I'll say so. Yeah.
Mrs. Moore: I think of one organization that used to have it, Sol Lit. See, the social literature ...

Mr. Moore: Sol Lit.

Mrs. Moore: ... and that was called the Sol Lit. That was one of the really society clubs of the times. It was quite an organization.

Taylor: Didn't the Hall Brothers have a club, The Three Gentlemen or The Five Gentlemen or something or other?

Mrs. Moore: I can't think of it.

Taylor: They threw dances and things. S. E. Hall was telling me about this.

Mr. Moore: Yeah, I think that - I know what he means, yeah. Someone's got a picture of he and two or three of the older men when they were young sports, yeah. I don't remember.

Mrs. Moore: Well, I know they used to have this social thing, that kind of thing.

Taylor: That might have been it.

Mr. Moore: You never got to meet Marion Bowling then?

Taylor: No, no.

Mr. Moore: He was interested in young fellows. He spent his money and time on us and everything.

Taylor: Now you said you belonged to the young men's culture club?

Mr. Moore: Yes.

Taylor: What other clubs did you belong to?

Mr. Moore: Now, we'll say that this club we had, we took part in everything. As I told you we had hockey, football, baseball.

Mrs. Moore: Now this other club I mentioned, the Social Literature Club, was for all.

Taylor: Was this male and female?
Mrs. Moore: Yes, this was male and female.

Taylor: When did that start, do you know?

Mrs. Moore: When I came here that was ...

Mr. Moore: Yeah, that was going ...

Mrs. Moore: 1910. Or even before that, maybe it was ... yeah, because there would be Nina and Ada Gibbs and ...

Mr. Moore: That was before Richard Stokes' time.

Mrs. Moore: That was before his time.

Mr. Moore: Oh, yes. He hadn't come to town yet.

Taylor: Why don't we shift gears here and get a fresh start.

Mr. Moore: I told you about the swimming pool over in the river. I had something else in mind, now what was it?

Taylor: Perhaps you could let the Missus speak and then you'll sit back and think and we'll wind this up. You'll recall things that you want to add on to that.

[End of cassette 1; beginning of cassette 2]

Taylor: Now you were born in New York. What do you know of your maternal great-grandparents, or your grandparents, or your parents?

Mrs. Moore: Well, my father was a lawyer in New York and my mother was a cateress and a beauty operator.

Taylor: Do you know if they were from New York originally?

Mrs. Moore: Oh, no, my mother was from Thomasville, Georgia. She was a school teacher. And father came from Virginia.

Taylor: Okay, now let's pick it up when you came to St. Paul.

Mrs. Moore: Well, I came in 1910, came to live with an aunt here, because I'd lost both parents.

Taylor: What was your aunt's name? Where did she live?
Mrs. Moore: Yeah, she lived out on Rondo.

Taylor: On Rondo?

Mrs. Moore: On Rondo, um hum.

Taylor: Her name?

Mrs. Moore: Cora Prichard. I was named after her.

Taylor: What do you remember about the early life in the St. Paul Black community? For instance, social life. What was the social life about that time when you came here?

Mrs. Moore: Well, of course I was just a youngster then. I was just about twelve. And I didn't become involved in so much of that until later, you know, later years.

Taylor: What social clubs existed?

Mrs. Moore: Well, let's see. You've got some of them, haven't you? Like the, as I mentioned this Soc Lit Club, and the ...

Taylor: You were in the Adelphi, weren't you?

Mrs. Moore: Yes, I am the oldest member now in there, that is, living member, but the number of years in there, I mean.

Taylor: Do you know any background to that at all? When did you join?

Mrs. Moore: I joined about forty, about thirty-five, forty years ago, um hum. Well, I can't give you so much because they have it all.

Taylor: What types of things did you do in the Adelphi Club?

Mrs. Moore: Well, we did just philanthropic work and we used to give nice concerts and it was strictly social, you know, and of course we did make things for the soldiers, you know. We made things for them, scarves and knit scarves to send overseas, and we visited the sick, and it was just social and philanthropic, that's all it was.

Taylor: What about the DYWYKs? Do you remember them?
Mrs. Moore: Oh yes, I remember them. I was in that about the same amount of years, and they were social, they did some philanthropic work, but mostly social. That's what it was.

Taylor: Was it Don't You Wish You Knew Club? Was that it?

Mrs. Moore: Yeah, yeah, that's right. [Laughter] Yes, that's what it was.

Taylor: And let's see, the Toute Bonnie Amis.

Mrs. Moore: No, I never went into that. I was asked to join but between the two of us we belonged to so many organizations.

Taylor: Was that a very big group? How do you pronounce that?

Mrs. Moore: Toute Bonnie Amis.

Taylor: Toute Bonnie Amis.

Mrs. Moore: Yes. No, I didn't, I never went into that because it was very similar to the others, you know, and then we were charter members and helped organize the Forty Club.

Taylor: Oh, yes.

Mrs. Moore: We were charter members. We organized it, let's see ... 

Taylor: When was it organized?

Mrs. Moore: It was pretty near, it's going into fifty years almost I think now.

Taylor: Um hum.

Mrs. Moore: Fifty years, pretty close. It just doesn't come to me just how many years, but there was Hattie Oliver and Louis and myself over here and Harold Coombs and his wife in Minneapolis. And that was, you know, about that, I mean it was just a social club, it started out dancing and ...

Taylor: There were the Credjafawn's. Are they an old group?

Mrs. Moore: No, they weren't quite as old, no, they were coming along but we never joined that. I guess that was about the only clubs other than - of course Louis belonged to the Rod and Reel and all those other, those
kind of clubs, but those, the DYs and the Forty Club were the most
prominent.

Taylor: What about institutional life now? What about the churches around
here? Do you remember anything about the churches at all?

Mrs. Moore: Well ...

Taylor: Well, you belonged to St. Phillips for ...?

Mrs. Moore: Well, I was a Catholic.

Taylor: Oh, you were a Catholic?

Mrs. Moore: I belonged to St. Peter Clavers.

Taylor: Father Theobald.

Mrs. Moore: Yeah, I was there with Father Theobald and ... shall I tell him?

One reason I didn't join, Louis didn't become Catholic, I was going to
give up my church - he was Episcopalian and I wasn't going to the
Episcopal church. We just married in the Episcopal church. And of
course I used to be the soloist there in the Catholic church for a long
time with Claude Jackson and Andy Jackson, a bunch of us for years and
of course I continued to go until after I married and then I went on to
the Episcopal Church with the rest of the family.

Taylor: But you didn't know anything about the people who went to St. James
or Pilgrim or ...?

Mrs. Moore: No, other than seeing them go, you know, I would see all the old
timers, you know, go down to Pilgrim Church.

Taylor: Was Sunday a big event in the Black community and the people come
out in their finest apparel?

Mrs. Moore: Yes, yeah, it really was. Everybody dressed up to go to church.

They really did.

Taylor: Do you remember St. James being down on James and Fuller Streets?
Mrs. Moore: Yes, yes. That's when Reverend Jones was the minister there. Jones, I don't know whether you ever heard of him or not, but we used to go down there occasionally and participate in it. In fact, I used to visit all the churches, although Catholics weren't supposed to do that.

Taylor: Do you remember anything about say the old building that Hallie Q. Brown is in, the old union hall?

Mrs. Moore: Oh, yes, um hum. We gave a big ball there one night.

Taylor: Union Hall?

Mrs. Moore: At the Union Hall, yeah, and we had it and that's one of the biggest affairs they'd had in the Twin Cities. I have a write-up on that, too.

Taylor: Who gave the party?

Mrs. Moore: We did. We gave the ball, Louis and I. My husband and I.

Taylor: You just threw a ball, huh?

Mrs. Moore: Yeah, that's what we did. And it was very beautiful. The place was all decorated with big canopies, with beautiful lights and we had an orchestra and everything.

Taylor: When was this?

Mrs. Moore: That was in '25. 1925, um hum.

And so it was Union Hall then. And then of course my family, all the family was just raised up in there. In fact, they participated in everything that came up and so we all did, the whole family, Louis and I and the three children, three children. And anything that was given we had pride and whenever they had anything we always got together and made costumes and that was all in there before Hallie Q. Brown came up. Then when Hallie Q. Brown finally did come into existence, Louis [Jr.] was on the board for a number of years, but he created the forums over there.
Taylor: The forums?

Mrs. Moore: Yes, Sunday afternoon forums. He was the instigator of all the forums over there. When Elizabeth came along the sorority always had their forums over there, too. And Louis [Jr.] being on the board, you know, Myrtle Cardin was there most of the time we were. And ... what was I going to say about Myrtle now? Oh, yes, so they wanted Louis, big Louis, on the board, too, but Helen Ouch came in. She claimed that they couldn't have father and son to be on board. She objected to that, so consequently Louis stayed on until he went to Minneapolis and Louie didn't worry about it any more. But then we managed to get Norman Lyght on ...

Taylor: Norman Lyght?

Mrs. Moore: ... the board and Father Kyle. Louis saw that he got on when he first came.

Mr. Moore: That was 1950?

Mrs. Moore: Yeah, um hum, and let me see, there was Louis Voss, a number of folks we did see that did manage to get on the board, and so we worked down through the years very faithfully over there and taking part in everything over at Hallie Q. Brown.

Taylor: Can you give me some kind of just overview about community life, the things that went on, anything and everything that comes to your mind?

Mrs. Moore: Well, of course it was mostly picnics and parties, parties, parties. I didn't want to see another one. [Laughter] Our life was just - well, as I say, we were good churchmen. The five of us always went together and then we did a lot of civic work, see, he worked for this - you remember when Wendell Willkie was coming in, you know ...?
Taylor: That was in the '40s?

Mrs. Moore: Yeah, then he worked on that, he and Elizabeth both, in fact, I have the awards that they got in - and they're down as charter members in New York City now, in the - well, it's called Freedom House now. Oh, they got any large amounts of money for that, that was one part of the civic work of the NAACP, see.

Taylor: I recall that Eva Neal was working with the Negro Democratic Women's Committee or something like that. Do you recall anything like that in St. Paul here?

Mrs. Moore: Well, maybe she was.

Taylor: She went down and talked to Eleanor Roosevelt when she came through.

Mrs. Moore: Oh yeah, well, Eva used to go to meet all those folks, you know, when they came in. I know she did because I remember getting a niece to go down and present an orchid or something, it was - I don't remember just what, but I have all that information in scrapbooks, a big scrapbook we have.

Taylor: You said that Mr. Moore went to Washington and to work there?

Mrs. Moore: Oh, yes, and he helped with the census, the national census. He was the only Negro to go from here.

Taylor: What was his relationship to President Taft that you were ...?

Mrs. Moore: Oh, now, well, Taft was the President, you know, when he was there and then they had this inaugural ball and he was supposed to contact the different people from St. Paul to go that wanted to participate and come, you know, which was unusual in that way back there, you know, that's a mighty unusual thing. So I don't know who signed up to go. Did anybody from here go down to that inaugural ball in Washington when Taft ...?
Mr. Moore: No, not from Saint Paul.

Mrs. Moore: I know they signed up, a lot of them signed up because Hattie Olive and the Willis's and different ones, the names on the program. And he was on the committee, so I thought that was interesting.

Taylor: You also mentioned something about your daughter being the first Black librarian at the University of Minnesota?

Mrs. Moore: Oh yes, not historian, librarian upon graduation from the University.

Taylor: The University of Minnesota?

Mrs. Moore: Yes, um hum. She was there three years from '43 to '46. And then she left to go to Columbia University and they created a position for her there at Columbia University in New York City. And from there she went to the Library of Congress library and was also in the city in a medical library in Washington, D.C.

Taylor: And you made mention that through her efforts the Black newspapers were collected by the University?

Mrs. Moore: Oh, yes, that's right. The Spokesman and the Recorder got on the University campus, which they had objected. Raymond Schultz was the head librarian at the time and he tried his best to see what he could do but during ...

Taylor: Why did they object?

Mrs. Moore: Well, they just didn't want that colored newspaper there, see. But she said she thought it should be there, and because she had charge of all the national and international papers and she compiled a book for the Axis-dominated countries, you know, and so she said she didn't see any reason. So she raised a storm, she appeared before the board about four times and the fourth time they accepted it.
Taylor: That's remarkable.

Mrs. Moore: Yes, I really think that was something.

Taylor: Did all of your children go to the University?

Mrs. Moore: Yes, um hum.

Taylor: When did they graduate?

Mrs. Moore: Charlie was in the ... well he, you see he had to go away, you know, ...

Taylor: To the war?

Mrs. Moore: Yeah, he was gone three and a half years and when he came back why, he went to Washington and his field was art, see, and he headed the Letcher Art School there. He was assistant there, the Letcher Art School in Washington, D.C. And so he didn't come back to the University to finish, although I had three of them in there at the same time.

Taylor: Three?

Mrs. Moore: Three in at the same time and so we ate a lot of beans and apple pie. [Laughter]

Taylor: I think that not very many Black people went to the University then, did they?

Mrs. Moore: No, no. And, see, they were so close together that threw them all in there at the same time. And anyway, he has finished because he's worked, he's going to retire, too, at the end of this month. He worked for the Pentagon and he was secret service officer. At the time that he was, he was one of the few Black secret service men in the country. And then he became a security officer and now he's administrator at Bowling Field, the Pentagon sent him there after twenty years.

Taylor: At where, Bowling Field?

Mrs. Moore: In Washington, D.C. And he is one of the two administrators there.
I have a nice article he sent me. He's received so many awards. And then of course, Louis, you know, I don't have to tell you about, you know about him. [Laughter]

Taylor: Board of directors at the Historical Society, it seems to me.

Mrs. Moore: But you know, they have such long things, such long things after their names of what they are and I can't remember half of the ... but when he left here, when he graduated in agriculture, see, why he left then and went to Washington, D.C., got there and so he was in all fields there, and then - he can tell you more about himself than I can.

Taylor: You know there seems to be a lot of Black people that have come up in St. Paul or passed through St. Paul and gone on across the nation to work.

Mrs. Moore: Yeah.

Taylor: Do you know of any more people like this? Because it seems like there's a lot of people that have done these things.

Mrs. Moore: Yeah, well, let's see if I can think of any. Can you think of any, Louis?

Mr. Moore: Fred Parker, young Fred Parker.

Mrs. Moore: Oh, that was way back there.

Taylor: Was his dad F. D. Parker?

Mrs. Moore: Yeah, yeah.

Taylor: The founder of the paper, F. D. Parker's son?

Mrs. Moore: Yeah, that's right.

Mr. Moore: He never came back.

Taylor: Where did he go?

Mr. Moore: The last I heard he was in Chicago. If he's alive yet.

Taylor: Um hum.
Mr. Moore: And one of the Hilyard boys went away to teach.

Taylor: In California?

Mrs. Moore: No, that was Jimmy. He went South. Jimmy Hilyard went South to teach.

Taylor: I know that old man Hilyard was married three times, wasn't he? I know that he had a daughter by his second marriage.

Mrs. Moore: I can't remember. This old fellow in the book, then, in that book over there, he was the grandpa, I guess. He was the old man, yeah, that's what he was.

Mr. Moore: The older man, yeah.

Mrs. Moore: Yeah, the older man Hilyard but ... what was I going to say? I forget something you asked me but I think what it was ...

Taylor: It was things about people that have gone on, passed through the Twin Cities and working elsewhere. Like I didn't know Carl Rowan had worked with the Appeal.

Mrs. Moore: Oh, didn't you? Oh, yes, ...

Taylor: Or no, it wasn't Rowan, it was Wilkins, Roy Wilkins.

Mrs. Moore: Wilkins, Wilkins, Roy Wilkins, yeah, yeah. He was a reporter.

Mr. Moore: I saw him on TV, too, last night.

Mrs. Moore: Oh, Rowan, yeah, I seen him.

Mr. Moore: Did you happen to see him?

Taylor: No, I didn't. No, I was in a class last night. What else do you recall? What things stand out in your mind of all the many years?

Mrs. Moore: I remember that I worked on the board of the YWCA, women's, several years down there. That was interesting. Because Reverend and Mrs. Bradshaw were the leaders then at the time.

Taylor: Reverend?

Mrs. Moore: Yeah.
Taylor: ... Bradshaw's church, were they affiliated with ...?

Mrs. Moore: I think it was Presbyterian, I'm not too sure. But they left here, they haven't been gone so long either, about two or three years, they left. But that was interesting work. See, I was mostly a housewife, I never worked outside, and I never made a nickel. [Laughter]

Taylor: Nothing wrong with that.

Mrs. Moore: Just stayed home and raised my family. So that's all I did. And then let's see, I'm trying to think, so many things come to my mind but I forget them. He's going to show you something.

Mr. Moore: This is the one who just died lately and when teaching down at La Croix.

Mrs. Moore: Oh, that's his mother and dad there.

Taylor: Um hum. We can turn it off for a second if you want to think.

Mrs. Moore: All right.

[Tape recorder temporarily turned off]

Taylor: This is interesting. I've heard a lot about the Postal Alliance. What did ...?

Mr. Moore: The Postal Alliance is the Negroes national association of Post Office employees. They formed one of their own because they'd had trouble years before. They wouldn't let the colored men on the railroads join the railroad postal organization so they formed their own and out of that, why we just went right on through and formed a colored organization they called the Alliance.

Taylor: Um hum.

Mr. Moore: And they're still going today.

Taylor: The Colored Postal Alliance?

Mr. Moore: Yes. Not colored, just National Alliance. And they have to recognize us as a ...
Taylor: As a bargaining agent?

Mr. Moore: Yeah, as a bargaining is the main thing.

Taylor: Well, who were the early members here?

Mr. Moore: See, the thing started in '13.

Taylor: 1913 it started?

Mr. Moore: Yeah. And all of us who were in at that time, of course, you might call early ones, but there were some there who were there before I was. I wasn't thinking about this. And everybody who was in the post office around 1920 were members of the Alliance, and that's what it is, anyway, just a colored organization. We have our own national offices, president, all the way down. We have our national ... what do you call it when you all get together?

Taylor: Conferences? Conventions?

Mr. Moore: Convention. We have our own national convention and of course we can go to the other convention too because most of us belong to both organizations.

Taylor: What was the other one you mentioned? Something about credit union or something like that?

Mr. Moore: Yeah, we have a credit union, that is the post office credit union.

Mrs. Moore: And then the Retired Men's Club, you belong to that.

Mr. Moore: Oh well, that's - yeah.

Mrs. Moore: Well, it's a club, I mean he was asking about the clubs and about the national organization. Did you mention the national NARFE, that's another ...?

Mr. Moore: Well, that's nothing separate, that's for everybody.

Taylor: Um hum.

Mr. Moore: NARFE, yeah.
Mrs. Moore: And his Rod and Reel Club. You were almost a charter member there.

Taylor: When did the Rod and Reel Club start?

Mr. Moore: Gee, it was going when I joined them way back ... years ago, but that started perhaps forty years ago.

Taylor: Forty years. Is it still going now?

Mr. Moore: Still going. Louis [Jr.] belongs to it now. And they have a lodge, quite a few acres up on ... what's the name of the lake?

Mrs. Moore: Spicer, I think it's Spicer Lake.

Mr. Moore: Yeah, and they're going pretty good too. It's about a hundred and fifty miles up there.

[End of interview]