

Dr. Greene at his home

5-20-75 11:45 A.M.

Part I

I was born in Ansonia, Connecticut on November 16, 1899.

**TITLE:** Dr. Lorenzo J. Greene

**JOB DESCRIPTION:** Emeritus Professor of History

**WHERE INTERVIEWED:** At his home

**INTERVIEWED BY:** Elbert Bennett

**AGE WHEN INTERVIEWED:** 75 years old

**LENGTH OF SERVICE AT**

**LINCOLN UNIVERSITY:** 42 years

In 1888 (remembered as the year of the blizzard), they married, my mother at that time was 18; my dad twenty years older. They went to Connecticut. As you might surmise, the main reason for migrating was that economic and social conditions were better for Negroes in the North, at that time, than in the South. They had nine children--five girls and four boys--I was exactly in the center. My early education was taken in the public schools of Ansonia, Connecticut. I was graduated from high school in 1917. Incidentally, I was the first Negro to be graduated from my high school.

Dr. Greene at his home  
5-20-75 11:45 A.M.

Part I

I was born in Ansonia, Connecticut on November 16, 1899.

Ansonia was a bustling industrial town which included all sorts of nationalities and ethnic groups, although the number of Negroes was very small.

My parents were Willis H. and Harriet (Coleman) Greene. I should like to say a little something about them. They were born in the South; my mother in Arlington, Virginia; I believe my dad in Maryland, although sometimes he said that he was born in Pennsylvania. They both had a meager education. My mother went to grade school in Arlington, Virginia where she was born. Later she said she attended old M. Street High School in Washington, D. C., probably for a year. My dad's education was even more limited. He probably went to the third grade. At an early age he worked on the tow paths driving the mules that pulled barges on the Potomac River. Later he worked at a wholesale and retail grocery store in Georgetown. There he met my mother.

In 1888 (remembered as the year of the blizzard), they married. My mother at that time was 18; my dad twenty years older. They went to Connecticut. As you might surmise, the main reason for migrating was that economic and social conditions were better for Negroes in the North, at that time, than in the South. They had nine children--five girls and four boys--I was exactly in the center. My early education was taken in the public schools of Ansonia, Connecticut. I was graduated from high school in 1917. Incidentally, I was the first Negro to be graduated from my high school.



I liked debating and I think my interest in history began there (if it didn't begin, it was certainly increased there). In high school I happened to win the Pine Scholarship History Prize. It was the first time it was offered, and it gave the winner a trip to the battlefield of Gettysburg and sufficient funds for him to tour the site for a week. Upon his return he was to write an essay of what he had seen and deposit it at the bank in the adjoining town of Derby, Connecticut.

How did you happen to go into History?

Well, it's a long story. My high school principal wanted me to take law; I wanted to be a poet. However, since people told me that lawyers were great liars and poets starved, I decided to go into medicine. Getting an education was not easy for me. I had to work my way through school. I came from a large family--nine children--four girls and five boys. We were poor. My father worked six days a week, ten hours a day for \$12 a week. I hated to see my mother washing, ironing, cooking, and cleaning in order to augment the family income. My brothers and sisters helped by carrying clothes, odd jobs, and that sort of thing. I don't want to stress that too much. I had to work my way through high school; doing all sorts of work, shining shoes, working in a drug store, digging ditches, and grubbing stumps and so forth. Meanwhile, we had a garden and I had to help take care of that, too.

In my grade and high school classes I was generally the only Negro, as we called ourselves at that time. Occasionally there were two, and in high school there were only three black students.

In my high school graduating class I was the only one of about 60 or 64. Those were my happiest days. We didn't consider such things as racial prejudice important. There were all sorts of nationalities, locally. Most of the opposition and prejudice was religious--between Catholics and Protestants. I was treated like anyone else. I used to say generally, I didn't know whether I was Negro or not, unless I looked in the mirror or some kid let go with the epithet "nigger" whether in English or in his own language. Of course that was a fighting word.

Incidentally, I had the opportunity of winning history prizes. I won in the seventh grade but lost it because a German boy and I refused to participate in the ceremonies because we didn't like the teacher. We lost our prizes of five dollars each and won a whipping upon reaching home. When graduating from grammar school, I lost out to a white girl by two points, simply because I was too sure of myself. I let her take my history book, declined to accept it when she offered to return it, and she beat me on the final examination by a score of 100 to 98. You can imagine what that did to me. I made up my mind that I would never be too sure of myself again. Therefore, in high school, when a man by the name of Pine donated a certain amount of money which was to be used as a history prize, I made up my mind that I was going to try for it. Although there was a polyglot group of about six of us in the race, an Italian, two Jews, an English chap, and the same girl who had defeated me for the history prize in grammar school, I won the prize, giving me an opportunity to visit the



battlefield of Gettysburg. I was given funds to stay for a week, defray expenses, and returning, write an essay of the trip that was to be deposited and was deposited at the Derby Trust Company in the adjoining town. I did a lot of debating in high school, but you don't want to know too much about that, you want to know about me, so I had better cut that short.

Let me say this, I went to Howard University. I worked for two years in order to earn money to go to medical school. I did the premedic work in two years, then decided to take a third year which would permit me to get a B.S., after my first year in medical school. It was called a combination course; one could earn the M.D. after three years in the medical school. Instead, I became more attracted toward the social sciences and finally wound up by deciding on the bachelors degree in the arts. Another reason for foresaking medicine was that teachers like Professors Dyson and Dr. Charles H. Wesley persuaded me to go into history.

Also, a teacher by the name of Leo Hansberry, who was working on a book about Africa way back there in the 20's, asked me if I would come back to assist him with his study and do some practice teaching, but I couldn't see that. He wanted me because I had quite a bit of foreign languages. In high school I had had four years of Latin, three years of German, two of French, and one year of Spanish, followed by German, French and Portuguese in college.

I told my folks about it and they couldn't understand the meaning of a Ph. D. The result was that I decided to go into

social sciences.

When I sought to enter the Graduate School at Yale, Dean McLean advised that I enter the Extension Division of Columbia University, take a year of history there (which was 30 hours), then come back to Yale. Yale was only 8 miles from my home and I always wanted to attend there. But the Dean informed me that my nine quarter hours in history would not qualify me for a sophomore standing in history at Yale. So I went to Columbia.

It was very difficult for black students to get into Ivy League colleges and universities at that time, and although I was an honor student from Howard University, I was put on probation. The Dean informed me, however, that if my work came up to their standards, I could carry on as a graduate student. I did the work, I liked the professors, and they liked me. Instead of staying for one year, I remained for three years. By that time, I had done all the work that was required for the Ph. D., with the exception of writing a thesis and that was the big thing. The title of my thesis? Well, I didn't know anything about Negro history and cared less, so I decided to extend my masters essay--"The Anti-Stamp Act Movement in Connecticut, 1764-1766", into a doctoral thesis. However, one of my professors, Dixon Ryan Fox, assigned me the topic of "The Anti-Slavery Movement in New England during the American Revolution", and that's how I happened to develop some interest in New England slavery. But I couldn't stay at Columbia. I had to leave because I didn't have the money. I got a job as research assistant to Dr. Woodson, founder and Director



of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, and for the next fourteen years I spent everything I earned working on "Slavery in Colonial New England". In 1933 I came out to Lincoln to get in out of the depression storm. I didn't apply for the job; Dr. Woodson telegraphed President Florence that he had a man available in history if he could use him. President Florence got in touch with me in New York, took me to a baseball game, and then to dinner. We talked. At the time the National Urban League of New York was waiting for some money from Washington to have me make a study of Negro unemployment in two blocks of 127th Street in New York. I had already done a study of unemployment among Negroes in the District of Columbia. The funny part about the Lincoln job is that Woodson advised me to ask for \$4,000. I did so and Florence laughed because as President, he was only getting \$4,200 himself. But I came out, nevertheless. Yet, if anyone would have told me that I would have settled in Jefferson City to teach, I would have laughed at him.

Let me tell you my first reaction to Lincoln; it was not a good one. I arrived here the day after Labor Day, hot, hungry, and I was broke. It was difficult, no it was impossible to find a place to eat or a place to sleep, or any public accommodations. School was not open although President Florence had asked me to report on Labor Day. So you can imagine me a lone stranger on campus. Luckily the Dean of Men, McMorries, was on the campus. He told me that the teachers wouldn't be in for a couple of days and assigned me a room in Foster Hall, the Freshman dormitory.

It was a nice new building; it was clean with showers and so forth. I made myself comfortable, but when I went to get something to eat I found that I was confronted with a racial stone-wall. The President had told me that everything was open. The screen door of the lone Negro restaurant at the foot of the campus was so covered with flies and bugs that the first night I walked down to the East End Drug Store, bought a pint of ice cream, went back, and ate it with a wooden spoon. So, disheartened and lonely, I cried the first night I was here. I was determined to go back East as soon as possible--after my first pay check. But I didn't; the teachers started coming in and I found I was in good company.

How do you rate the other teachers and colleagues?

I rated most of them as very excellent--a small staff but a good staff. I don't think there were more than thirty on the staff. And within a few years we had people like Professor Blue from Harvard and Michigan Universities in English; Dr. Maxwell from the University of Colorado in chemistry; Dr. Kildare and Don Edwards in Physics; Dr. Minor in Sociology; and Dr. Reedy in Education. Dr. W. Sherman Savage headed the Department of History and Government. I replaced the Government teacher, Mr. Robinson, in the department. In fact, the only two persons in the department were Dr. Savage and myself. I received my Ph. D. in History from Columbia University in 1942. For a small institution we probably had one of the best faculties of any school in the country. I don't believe that the University of Missouri could equal



us man for man. There came also in that same year, B. T. McGraw, candidate for the Ph. D. in Economics from Harvard University, and T. Thomas Fletcher from Columbus. All the other faculty members, women and men, had masters degrees, some of whom were working toward their doctorates. Stans from California had a Ph. D. in Economics. I rated the faculty very highly.

I don't think the faculty is as strong now as it was during my few years. That is probably due to several factors. First, other opportunities have opened up in white universities for black teachers, offering higher salaries and greater prestige than they would ordinarily have received in black schools. I think that we were strongest probably from 1933 to 1938. Then, as the school began to expand, the quality of the faculty tended to become weaker in spots. Dr. Scruggs became President in 1939. I believe that he had been Supervisor of Elementary Education in Kansas City, Kansas, and consequently lacked the high academic outlook of President Florence. The results were that we got certain additions to the faculty who did not have the professional strengths that the others had. After the Supreme Court Decision in 1954 we began to integrate the faculty. Then came the civil rights of the 60's and later the black power movement. Now Lincoln has a much larger faculty reflective of the international community. Our student body, which was only about 350 when I first came here, now numbers about 2,500.

The social life of the student was also restricted when I joined the staff. There was almost no place for students or

faculty members to go for amusement. There was a very small restricted area in one theater where the seating was available for blacks. The other theater and public accommodations barred students and faculty alike. So, we had to have movies on campus once a week for the students, because a growing pride in race would not permit us to go to places where we had to be discriminated against. Only when something important came up--a movie or something like that, would we go to Columbia. But Columbia, too, was segregated. Blacks had to go through the side door and sit in the balcony of the theater. All other places were closed to us.

At Lincoln there were student organizations, Greek Letter organizations, football, golf, and basketball, but no baseball. Students were always dissatisfied with the rules; they wanted more freedom. They had to be in at a certain time. I think that at 7:00 they had to be in the dormitory, unless they were at the library, and they could be there only until 9:00. They had to sign out and state their destination, even if they were going to the library. The freshman girls, of course, had less freedom than the upperclassmen. I guess there is a lot more that could be said about the students and their efforts to acquire more freedom. Some of us younger teachers felt that the students should have more freedom. I recall when I first came here that there was a ban on smoking by the girls but the boys could smoke. If teachers or administrators walked into the "Blue Tiger", a restaurant where most students congregated, the girls would hide or throw away their cigarettes. To me such action was immoral. My point of view was if



the girls wanted to smoke, and their parents did not object, then let them smoke. In fact, it was commonly accepted at that time that women smoked and I didn't believe that we should be developing hypocrites at the school. We were supposed to be turning out men and women capable of going out and doing the work of the world. In faculty meetings I suggested the girls be permitted to smoke. It brought forth a lot of opposition, but was finally approved that the girls could smoke in their dormitory. Another problem was what time the student should be in the "dorms". However, as far as the male students were concerned, they could come in anytime. But for the girls it was different. The latter were supposed to be in, according to their classifications: freshman had to be in their dorm at 7 o'clock and nobody could be out after ten on weekends. The senior girls could stay out until 11 o'clock. I believe the juniors could too. But the whole question of how long the students could stay out was not settled until 1969, and was then resolved in a way in which none of us wanted. It came as a result of the students burning the book store and damaging the student union.

Now it seems there is no limit at all. Girls sign out and they, to a great extent, come in when they want to. They don't have to say where they are going. In other words they have the freedom, which generally resulted from the age of turmoil and permissiveness during the 60's, not only at Lincoln but most institutions of higher learning.

You asked how the black and white students got along; I

would say they got along fine during the 60's. The fact is that black and white students and some of the professors worked hand in hand in trying to open things up for all Lincoln University students. As soon as white students were admitted to Lincoln, the city began to improve Lafayette Street to eliminate the old buildings and to get persons whom they thought might be more or less obnoxious to white women students off the street. As you know, Lafayette Street now is a nice wide street with a playground including tennis courts. Dilapidated buildings, including a hotel which served more or less as a house of prostitution, were eliminated by urban renewal. Incidentally, urban renewal also removed Negro businesses, leaving nothing to replace them.

There were many things in the field of civil rights on which the black and white students cooperated. They also enlisted the aid of such organizations as the Missouri Association for Social Welfare, local and state, Civil Rights Commission, the local and State N.A.A.C.P., church and civic groups and liberal whites who joined with the students and the faculty to make Jefferson City and the surrounding community more acceptable to the black students. Although employment, education, and public accommodations presented obstacles, I would say the most difficult problem was housing. In that the Missouri Association for Social Welfare, the Missouri Council of Churches, the local N.A.A.C.P., the mayor and other organizations joined. But it wasn't until a few years ago that the city, following federal proscription against discrimination in housing, made it possible for black and whites to live



together; which meant that blacks could move into white neighborhoods. I think that the federal government, as shown by the United States Commission on Human Rights, had encouraged housing discrimination by its failure to put veterans' homes, which were being sold, on an open market. The federal government also refused to integrate neighborhoods. Representatives of the F.H.A. would say, that if a neighborhood was all white, it should remain white, and if it was all black, it should remain black. Again, banks were hesitant in advancing Negroes loans for mortgages in order to buy or lease a house, or even to rent a house when it was desired by a black. To some extent this has been rectified but there is still a lot to be done.

Insofar as the curriculum at Lincoln University was concerned, I rated it as very good especially when I first came. We newcomers thought that the curriculum was as good as that of any small college in the country. Now, the curriculum, in my opinion, has been broadened. But I don't believe that it is as good as it once was. Or, I would say that the standards are not as high as they once were. I would have to answer the question on training and relevance in two ways--I think our curriculum, that we were offering, enabled our graduates to enter the best institutions in the country, and they did. Now, insofar as the curriculum preparing the student for taking his place in the community, I have certain misgivings about that. I felt that we were to a great extent actually doing very little to make them into responsible men, women and citizens. They came here, more or less, as children

and we treated them as children instead of guiding them to choices and to accept responsibility. It took a long time for us to get to the point where we felt that it was necessary and right to allow them more freedom. The real function of the college is to train students so that when they left the institution of higher learning they would be considered men and women capable of living a satisfying life in a competitive society. In fact, that was my thing all the time. I felt that way when students first entered my classroom. I tried to make them feel that they were Miss "So and So" and Mr. "So and So".

The dorms were inadequate for a long time. I don't believe that even now that they are as adequate as they could be. When I first came here the men's dormitories were in pretty fair shape. Foster Hall had been built just before I came, but it soon became dilapidated. Then Allen Hall was built and the same happened. Other dormitories were built but like the others they were not kept up. Adequate funds were not forthcoming and I don't think the students did their part either in caring for them. The women's dormitories were likewise inadequate. Barnes-Krekel, the dorm for women, was one of the oldest buildings on campus. Located on the quadrangle it has since been torn down. There was another building--Yates--for juniors and seniors. That building sat where the library now stands. It was not a good building at all; the plaster was loose, sanitary conveniences weren't what they should have been, and it was roach-infested. In all the dormitories inadequate plumbing, broken plaster, and vermin made the living quarters



miserable for the students. Anthony Hall was built for freshman women and for a time was the pride of the campus. Bennett Hall later was built for junior and senior women. When Martin Hall was built, the sophomore women were given Bennett Hall and the juniors Martin Hall. When the latter proved inadequate, The Tower for senior women was built. I understand that certain members of the faculty, administration, and even some students question the moral tone of the Tower. Meanwhile, additional dormitories--Allen, Tull and Perry Halls--were erected for male students.

What about the Library?

The library was not adequate. The library at first was housed in Young Hall. In fact, Young Hall housed virtually all academic facilities when I first came here. The library was inadequately staffed. Miss Lovey Anthony, the librarian, did the best she could with the staff, most of whom were students. Her only trained assistant was a part-time worker. The number of books was insufficient and inadequate for the work which the school was supposed to do, especially after 1940 when graduate work was forced upon Lincoln, the old library became even more outmoded. In the late 1940's or early 1950's a new library was built. Even the new library lacked adequate space, books, pamphlets, and other first-hand materials for graduate work, and even for some senior studies. I don't know whether it has been sufficiently enlarged or not to meet the needs of a growing university. It is situated in such a spot that it cannot be enlarged in any direction because of unavailability of land. So, I think that before long we will have

to have a new library.

You ask about my involvement in Community Work.

I engaged in community work for a long period. The status of the Negro when I first came out here in 1933 was one which badly needed elevating. There was discrimination and segregation in all areas throughout the State and so I joined the N.A.A.C.P., worked with the Urban League of St. Louis and Kansas City, the Missouri Association for Social Welfare, church groups and other organizations and individuals to help eliminate or at least minimize it. I also worked with liberal teachers and students at the University of Missouri who were interested in doing away with discrimination and segregation there in education. I joined the Association and soon found that I was giving a great deal of my time to that organization. We sought to educate the people in Missouri to the need of looking upon people as individuals and I think it paid off well. At first we came near losing the organization. In 1950, or thereabouts, the question was raised as to whether we should permit Negroes who are members of the organization (and there were mighty few) to have to scrounge around to find a place to eat or to lodge. This problem presented itself whenever the annual meetings of the organization convened in Kansas City and St. Louis in alternate years. At this meeting in Kansas City the Association took the stand that it would not meet in any place where all members were not treated equally. This was high ground to be taking at that time. Although many whites opposed the change, a slight majority decided that the Association would



thereafter work toward the goal which it originally set for itself, namely to work for the "health and welfare" of all the people of Missouri and that included Negroes. As a result, the Association lost about half of its membership. The President among other persons resigned, but we developed a strong human rights organization within the Association and I am proud to say that we deserve a lot of credit in conjunction with organizations like the Urban League, church and civic groups. The Post-Dispatch, and other sympathetic agencies cooperated with us in influencing the establishment of the Missouri State Commission on Human Rights, municipal commissions on human rights, including one here in Jefferson City. We worked for open housing and finally got that; we worked to integrate the school system (we weren't successful, however, until 1954); we worked for better nursing homes, for better mental health facilities and so forth. We also got the State to pass F.E.P. laws. We even succeeded in getting the State to abrogate the statutes prohibiting intermarriage. These activities were quite gratifying to us in helping open up public accommodations, recreation facilities, and to improve employment opportunities for black Missourians.

What about integrating the bowling alleys?

The integration of the bowling alleys was a problem which the students started. I think the Lincoln N.A.A.C.P. student group started that; but they were not making as much progress as they desired. Dr. Hoard, who was the Dean of Students, asked me if I would help, because of the work I was doing in human relations.

I finally told him I would the next day, which was on a Monday. I talked to Mayor Whaley, who promised that he would do all in his power to see that the bowling alleys were integrated. I talked to the head of the Chamber of Commerce, at that time headed by the former, Mayor John Christy. I then got in touch with the head of the Missouri Commission on Human Rights, Gregory Scheinert, and also my pastor, the Reverend Arnold Mintz of the Grace Episcopal Church, also an ardent worker in civil rights. He readily agreed to help. I then called upon the Governor. He was out of town, but his Executive Secretary assured me the Governor certainly didn't want any unfavorable publicity over civil rights in Missouri. He promised that he would do everything possible to get the bowling alleys peacefully integrated in Jefferson City.

We finally met with the bowling alley proprietors, who agreed to meet with us as soon as their lawyer could come down from Kansas City. The student N.A.A.C.P. group got the State N.A.A.C.P. lawyer, Mr. Swenton, of Kansas City, to come to Jefferson City to represent them at the meeting. We met at Grace Episcopal Church. At this meeting Mr. Swenton, the N.A.A.C.P. lawyer for this area, Dr. Hoard, the minister of Grace Episcopal Church, the lawyers of the bowling alley proprietors, the proprietors themselves, and myself discussed the issue. We finally decided after five hours of negotiating, that the bowling alleys would be integrated. However, the students really got more than they sought, because they had been demanding that the bowling alleys be opened to students only. But both proprietors agreed that both alleys should open up at the



same time. Moreover, they should be open to the entire Negro community of Jefferson City; that is the off-campus Negroes as well as the students. Although we thought we had this thing settled, there was some misunderstanding. The result was (perhaps deliberate) an effort to boycott the bowling alleys by marching and so forth. We had to get out on a cold, snowy night with sleet and rain and proceed to Westgate Bowling Alley. Out there was the Sheriff with his deputies. He was quite angered that the students had to march since all other accommodations had been opened up. We told him we thought the problem had been settled during the afternoon, and he said he was not going to let anything happen to the students. The students finally left, and from that time on we just went out there to bowl like anyone else, under the same conditions. We could not use the bar at first, but finally that right was granted. There has been a Lincoln University team at both bowling alleys for the last ten or more years.

What role did you play in the integration of the movie theaters?

Well, the movie theaters dictated the same type of action-- for instance, the Association, N.A.A.C.P. students and others kept after the proprietors of the movie picture houses. When I first came here, Negroes could only attend a little theater on Monroe Street, and there was sort of "crow's nest" set aside for Negroes up there. I went up there once and decided it was not for me. While some folks would rather go to Columbia, Columbia was almost as bad, because we had to go upstairs through a side entrance.

There was another theater here called the State Theater, and since most of the faculty refused to go to Columbia anymore, we tried to get the State Theater opened to Negroes. The best we could do was induce the owner of the theater to set aside some seats for Negroes since they wouldn't let us sit anywhere we desired. Then, later on, the Capitol Theater was built and after a struggle, the same compromise took place. Negroes were allowed to sit in the gallery; the rest of the theater was off limits to us. A strange thing happened, however, indicating that the tenor of the attitude of some whites in Jefferson City was changing. I recall one night, while my wife and I were sitting behind the rope, a white couple came in and sat beside us. The usher hysterically rushed up and told the couple they could not sit there, that area was reserved for Negroes. The man replied, "Look, I've paid for this seat, I like sitting here and I'm not going to move." The usher got the manager, but those folks did not move for him either. Later on in the early sixties they took the rope down. The social climate, due to the civil rights movement and declining movie attendance, was having its effect. It was a task to get the various recreational facilities like swimming pools and so forth opened. They finally built a swimming pool down on Marshall and Dunklin Streets. Although it was not supposed to be just for Negroes, it was in the Negro section. Later on, after the Supreme Court decision, Negroes came out to the park in the West End of the city. Now all parks and pools have been open to all segments of the population for several years.



What committees did you serve on on campus?

I served on a lot of committees: the Library Committee, the Educational Policy Committee, the Graduate Council, the Personnel Committee, and several others. Many of these committees were not too important; some, of course, were. The Graduate Council was extremely important and so was the Library Committee. Well, the Educational Policy Committee was important, but I think I got my biggest kick out of the Library Committee, the Graduate Council and the Personnel Committee.

What committees did you serve on the longest?

Probably the Graduate Council and the Personnel Committee.

What was the attitude of the community toward Lincoln University?

When I first came here, it was the same thing as one perceives in any college town. There was rivalry between "town" and "gown". Particularly was I interested in the fact that, although Lincoln University, a Black College, sat right in the midst of the Black community, very few local Negroes attended it. Several of us tried to induce persons to go to school, finish high school and to go on to college, but it was very, very difficult to do so. For some reason, local Negroes looked down on us, called us Easterners "foreigners", and felt we had no interest in them (which probably some didn't), but there was some of us who did. However, I got along well with the off-campus Negroes. I remember one young fellow whom I persuaded to go on to college. He got an athletic scholarship, but he broke his shoulder and,

of course, without the security of a scholarship, he could not continue his college work. But it helped him. Now he is living in Detroit, Michigan, married to a school teacher, and doing well. He calls or visits me whenever he comes to town. More Jefferson City Blacks are going to college now than ever before, and I think it bespeaks a closer communion between the Black people and the University.

What was the attitude of the White Community toward Lincoln University?

Well, if I may say so, when I first came here, I don't think that the whites regarded Lincoln University as anything more than just something in the community in which they had no interest whatsoever, except to receive the money which the teachers and students spent with them. There was no real association between the community and the school, and not until later on after the Supreme Court decision of 1954 when there was talk about doing away with Lincoln University or making it into a Junior college or something like that, that the various merchants and other organizations began to regard Lincoln as something more than an institution whose members were pouring a million or more dollars a year into their coffers. Then, of course, they began to take more interest in the school. However, I think the greatest involvement of the community came when the school was integrated. One reason was white students were attending Lincoln; parents and students found Lincoln valuable to them as the only institution of higher learning available in this area. Furthermore, the white community



did not want to see the white girls and fellows go up Lafayette Street. Part of it, called the "Foot", had disreputable places-- including an old hotel which was no more than a place for prostitutes. Yet there was also an excellent grocery business owned by Mr. Turner, late husband of Mrs. Mary Turner, a Lincoln librarian. When they widened the street, urban renewal did away with several other Negro businesses, barber shops, filling stations, and restaurants. They took Turner's store; it was a new store and he was making a very good living there.

Is he living now?

No, he's dead. Earlier he moved the store to the corner of Clark and East Atchison Streets. He had a store there for a while but he couldn't make it and gave it up. That was an instance of urban renewal doing away with Negro business in the town. Of course, later a couple of stores were opened up. Mrs. Young had bought a building or had a building built there on one side of what they still call the "Foot". On the other side, there now is a playground with tennis courts, etc. The loss of Negro homes and objection to the placement of a Juvenile Detention Center in that area are the two main objections which the residents, led by the N.A.A.C.P., have against the city's proposed East Miller Street project.

What was your attitude toward the white community?

My attitude toward the white community was the same as it was toward the black community. I considered all people as human beings. I believe that there is only one possible way to get along and that is for persons to respect each other's personality

and to regard all persons as human beings. I thought there should be more interaction between the white community and the black community. It came gradually, the consequence of hard work. In my opinion, we are getting more and more cooperation now under President Frank. I believe that under Presidents Scruggs, Dawson, and Daniels, who preceded Dr. Frank that we began to get more community-university involvement. The integration of the churches was also a factor. The Catholic Church first integrated, then the Grace Episcopal Church, the Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian churches followed, although not too many Negroes attended those churches.

Who were some of the outstanding students?

That's hard to say, there were so many. I can think of students with marvelous potentials who had been harmed because they had not received the type of public school education they deserved before coming to the university. But, on the whole, when I came here we had a group of students who, I am quite sure, could have made it anywhere. Students like Guinevier Guy, Cynthia Bolt who majored in history, took a M.A. in psychiatric-social work at Boston University and sent a daughter to Lincoln University, is another. Cynthia, (now Mrs. Bonner, is the wife of a physician and politician) lives in Jamaica. She is the aunt of Mr. Antonio Holland of our Division. For years she did volunteer work all over the island. She is now helping in the revision of the public school system of Jamaica. Ethel Rhodes was another brilliant student from St. Louis. Ethel came here at the age of fifteen.