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"Colored" baseball in Mt. Vernon, Ohio; George Booker recalls sports in the local Black community.

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## Interview with Mr. Booker Booker

**Sheffield:** First of all let me, (since we're keeping a historical record), let everyone know that I have the pleasure and the privilege to be sitting here this afternoon with Mr. Booker of Cooper St. in Mt. Vernon, Ohio. And, Mr. Booker was gracious enough to agree to meet with me to talk about some of the local black history of Knox County and Mt. Vernon. So, Mr. Booker I have to thank you again, I am so indebted to you over the years because of all of the time you have spent with me and my students and my colleagues in talking about the history of this community. So, thank you very much and belated happy birthday to you. Your 90<sup>th</sup>, I cannot believe, your 90<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Mr. Booker, as I had mentioned to you, what I had hoped to do was to talk to you about a couple of different topics. The first one in my mind is really about the history of athletics as you came to know them growing up and living in Mt. Vernon involving the African-American community. I know I had the pleasure in the past talking to you about the all-Negro or all-colored baseball team back in the 1920s or 30s. That is one of the main issues that I would like to talk about but also any other sort of recollections you have about sports participation or really fine athletes from the black community from days gone by. So, wherever you would like to start is perfectly fine with me. If you would like to talk about the all-colored baseball team, the photograph that you showed me several years back, some of the players on that team, where they played, or who they played; that would be wonderful.

Mr. Booker: Dearest pleasure for me to be in this environment this afternoon. To see the football games on Saturdays I used to ride my bicycle from Mt. Vernon to Gambier and those were the days. (*Sheffield laughs*) That was fun. Now they have the bike path coming down through there. But, I'll get on with it. Athletic participants, some of the fellows from Mt. Vernon, there was particularly.... I think baseball was one of the first things that attracted me to athletics. I actually grew up off a sandlot where you strike the ball and go down there through there and hit some corn stubble and raise up and hit you in the face. It wasn't that nice smooth fence that they have now. The black community played against the (*undistinguishable*) more or less the city (*undistinguishable*) (3:10). They had a field down at the end of Vine St. That's where most of the games were played. They'd bring teams in from all over the state...all over the United States. They'd come in and play some black team from around Mt. Vernon and possibly a star player maybe from Newark or Mansfield just enough to come in sometimes if they need a pitcher or catcher or something like that...a second baseman...

Sheffield: Do you recall when that team came into being? Who started it? Was it a local man?

Mr. Booker: Frank L. Turner was a local black business man and he was very instrumental in seeing athletics advance in Mt. Vernon so he proceeded to own a restaurant on W. High St. and he owned a taxi cab too. So he equipped the team and bought the uniforms. I don't know exactly what name was on the uniforms. I think it was MV and that was about all that was on there. Then he searched the place and find some

sandlot players that showed promise and he would kind of push them forward to... there was a --- system to his ball team...adult team. No matter if you were in High School you could join a men's team. You don't realize I don't think, how many teams that was national because they had a national black baseball league ----. And there was no mixed playing, only around the farm at home and something like that. There were people you grew up with, they played each other, white teams, black teams, intermix of teams, that's what they've done.

Sheffield: MmmHhm Do you know whether this team, this all black team, had a name... the Mt. Vernon .... Whatever the nickname was, or a mascot...or anything like that come to mind?

Mr. Booker: I can't really think of any team...I think they were called Mt. Vernon baseball team and had MV and then baseball across the bottom of the uniform. And had the same uniform as Ohio State... had a red jersey and grey pants and that was the way the uniform was. They had the old fashion hats with a round crown on it. And as I said they played at the end of Vine St. which is still an athletic thing, it's soccer now. And then they had the grandstand and the little things they would sell. Teams would come in from St. Louis, from Pittsburgh, Chicago, to play this little team in Midwest they called them. And they'd come in and say well we're gonna beat these chumps and sometimes --- well they were pretty adept at playing ball...

Sheffield: They were pretty good huh?

Mr. Booker: Yes they were very good, and sometimes they'd bring special teams in to play a game from Pittsburgh or St. Louis or something that where everybody was whistling.

Sheffield: So Satchel? (7:47) actually played here in Mt. Vernon?

Mr. Booker: Yes he played at the lot at the end of Vine St.

Sheffield: Huh. Now this was the field that used to be the old Mt. Vernon football field, down there across from the greenhouse down by the Elk's Club?

Mr. Booker: They had all outdoor enterprises there. They had football, baseball, of course they didn't have basketball because it was played in the gym in the high school. They had, let see...

Sheffield: Did you ever get to watch Satchel? Paige?

Mr. Booker: Yes, I did. Small young fellow, only about 19 years old or something like that and he would throw the ball around in his hand like that, then all of a sudden he would rear back and throw that thing down through there and he'd fan out about everybody and it was wonderful and everybody would applaud every time he would fan someone out. They all loved him...

Sheffield: Now, what kind of attendance did those games get...the all-colored team?

Mr. Booker: When big teams would come in... big white teams would come in sometimes too and play and...

Sheffield: Oh, so they would play the all-colored teams?

Mr. Booker: Yeh, and I know that I remember they had white players on the colored team there. They had two or three of them that looked like they played anyhow and yeh, they were very well mixed.

Sheffield: So the audience that came to watch those ball games...

Mr. Booker: Everyone...

Sheffield: ..they were both black and white.

Mr. Booker: Everyone came.

Sheffield: if a big star like Satchel Paige came would you have ...

Mr. Booker: Backed up. Backed up.

Sheffield: Hmm, did they have bleachers?

Mr. Booker: Yeh, they had a grandstand, it was about ..oh.. I'd say maybe half way across the field. If you could visualize it, maybe about 100 ft. And it had four tiers and was all wood and everything like that. And it was always filled with people coming to watch the ball game.

Sheffield: Did they have any vendors there? Selling?

Mr. Booker: Yes, they had hotdogs

Sheffield: Some of the local black business men?

Mr. Booker: No, didn't remember seeing anyone, any black selling. Adam French... really...if people want to sell something they go down there and hawk it, sell it. People buy it like they do now at the games. And it is interesting to see that they had beer at that time if I'm not mistaken and then the ----(11:00) went dry and of course they had knee-high and all that old sotners? and no more beer. And weren't allowed in the park with it, but there was always people that would slip something in there. No, black

Sheffield: Any names of any of the ball players come to mind? You said that Frank Turner was the one who founded or started the team as part of his business savvy. Who were some of the young players who participated on that team over the years?

Mr. Booker: John Kelly, and there was Lance Smith and Clarence Sites and Horace Rouse. Your mom would know, he sold ---- (12:02)

Sheffield: Oh he did? --- Hammonds did?

Mr. Booker: Uhuh, he was very interested in baseball

Sheffield: But he never played?

Mr. Booker: No, he didn't play, but I had an uncle named Buddy Reynolds, he's a player. I'd say everyone had a hand in the team because they weren't on the field they had relatives out there... it's a lot of names, I wish I could remember them all.

Sheffield: I wish I had the photograph to show you for you to point them out and tell me.

Mr. Booker: I wish you did have that because I didn't know all of them on there

Sheffield: Yeh, I just wish I had a copy of that, you know...

Mr. Booker: You didn't a copy? I thought it was in the paper at one time. They have that paper that comes out every year, you know?

Sheffield: No, I've never seen it, if it was I'd love to get a copy of it.

Mr. Booker: I think there's one in there.

Sheffield: Well, I'll go back and take a look through all of those and see...I've never...The only time I've seen that photograph was when you brought it over and showed it to us that one time.

Mr. Booker: Now, I don't know who has it. I might have it up there somewhere. I'll look around and see if I can find it. My house is such a shambles in particular, I've got so much stuff in there just stuck in there. It was a wonderful picture though.

Sheffield: Oh, it was marvelous. I just thought it was wonderful, and it was the type of thing that I wanted the younger generation to know about. You know, my younger son had studied the old negro league and they sent me a note telling me they had some of the old negro league baseball players here on campus about two years ago. And my son was so fascinated and I said well you know there's an all colored team in Mt. Vernon and he just couldn't believe it. And I wanted to show him pictures, but I just didn't have a picture to show him.

Mr. Booker: This team we had here was pretty well known through out the country. I mean, they played some pretty good teams that would come in there over the weekend. They'd play Saturday and Sunday and of course you know on the train going back to Cleveland and Columbus and wherever...they brought in a few players once in a while that --- (14:41) all that they needed. But most all it was typical a city team. Everyone from Mt. Vernon. I'm trying to think of some more players. I should have sat down and wrote them out.

Sheffield: That's alright.

Mr. Booker: If I thought about them, you know...For entertainment during the half, they had a man they called Gus Goins and he had the full brigalia for Indians, the whole...feathers... and everything...he'd move through all these rituals then take his rifle out and twirl it all around there or something like that then right at the end he'd fire it and everyone would jump, you know. That was one of the entertainments they had.

Sheffield: Huh. Fascinating. So it was like an Old West Show or something?

Mr. Booker: Yeh, yeh...he'd end up...

Sheffield: Gus Goins?

Mr. Booker: Yeh, Gus Goins. They'd call him Poss, Goins because he was always grinning. And anybody grinning in those days we'd call them poss because you know how possums grin.

Sheffield: Sure.

Mr. Booker: So his name was Pos Goins

Sheffield: Then, do you know if Gus Goins was part Indian? Is that why he...?

Mr. Booker: Yeh, he sure did look like a full blood Indian. He was tall and had face with high cheek bones and complexion of a real Indian. And on Halloween he'd always dress up and do downtown and stand and look like a drugstore Indian

Sheffield: Like a cigar store Indian?

Mr. Booker: Yeh,

Sheffield: Huh. Did he have other family members in the area?

Mr. Booker: He did. He had Bill Goins and his brother, had three or four nieces and Berce Goins

Sheffield: I just happen to have a picture of Rose Goins right here on the front.

Mr. Booker: Yeh, that's who, that was his wife. And she was a wonderfully good entertainer. She could sing and dance and tell jokes and was a real cute little woman. I mean, she enjoyed. She one day...they bring her down through the aisle... and they said here comes the good part of the Goins family. And she had a whistle that she taught me how to blow and it sat on her nose and you didn't blow it with your mouth you blowed it through your nose. And it had a real high clear beautiful tone to it. I've been looking for one of those for a long while.

Sheffield: Do you remember, was it called something like a nose harp? Or...

Mr. Booker: A nose whistle I think... It could have been a nose harp.

Sheffield: I just remember reading something from an old newspaper in the 1800s about a nose whistle or a nose harp or something.

Mr. Booker: It could have been called a nose harp. Sometimes you better had a real good clean head cause you blow something out. The piece fit in your mouth then another piece fit over your nose and blow like that....she played that and she could play guitar and she could...she was just a wonderful entertainer. Both of them together...they could put on a whole show. My mother had a ----(18:39) one time at high school, they had her and Gus come down through the audience, then on stage....they brought the house down...

Sheffield: Do you remember any of the other places they might have performed other than the high school?

Mr. Booker: Oh yeh, I imagine that they might have performed at the old opera house down there.

Sheffield: Woodward opera house in Mt. Vernon? But you don't remember if they ever did during your time?

Mr. Booker: No not during my time I remember because that opera house was fading out then, they were just letting it go, we used to go out there and they had crates up on the wall and that's where we'd play basketball until the lawyers run us out when me made too much noise. That was well used and that was a lot of entertainment but I don't remember...My mother's high school diploma and speech that she made when she was graduating then you had to make a whole speech, big long ----- (20:03) .....You've heard that one no doubt?

Sheffield: I'd love to see the speech, I didn't realize you still had that.

Mr. Booker: ...I'll look it up... it had a lot of depth to it....

Sheffield: Sorry I didn't want to interrupt you performing I was just going to ask you ...

but since you were talking about the performance or playing basketball up in the old opera house with peach baskets or whatever you had up there, did you ever go see any shows there? Any entertainers?

Mr. Booker: No

Sheffield: It was pretty much gone as a theater by that time?

Mr. Booker: It was out. Maybe in about 1900 or something or up through 1925. They might have had something up there, but not much of anything because it was always...nothing there...just the place you're trying to fix up now. But it was pretty ornate at that particular time.

Sheffield: Yeh, I've gone through it a couple times, it's really just beautiful.

Mr. Booker: They had a stage and the curtain down and everything.

Sheffield: How did you get in? Did you know kids that...?

Mr. Booker: We always took the steps and slipped through the door because the door was ajar, you know, and there was always ways for kids to do things. Sometimes it would be open, I don't know why it was, but it was. My mother and my niece would go there all the time when they had special entertainment, she was showgirl or whatever, she had shows

Sheffield: I am trying to remember whether she was involved in the colored womens league club? I thought I had seen something...

Mr. Booker: Yeh. -----(22:25) real cute. This thing here was showed by my mother, more or less. They all look like him....on page 8. Of course him being a black boy....dressed up well like white Indians. I couldn't tell.....

Sheffield: Let me ask you some more about some of the athletic performers, players of Mt. Vernon that you may recall over the years. I know my mother has shared with me some of the people from her yearbook in the 1940s in highschool. There were Stanley White...

Mr. Booker: Yeh, Stan White...

Sheffield: And I think they had some Ralls, or Rousses.

Mr. Booker: They had Rousses.

Sheffield: I'm trying to remember what she told me. Blakes maybe? Other families. Are there people that come to your mind as people who stood out as ball players whether it's football, basketball, baseball, tennis or..."

Mr. Booker: I come to my mind that there was Ken Payne, I don't know whether you've heard of Ken or not...

Sheffield: I have. Now, what did Ken...what did he do?

Mr. Booker: He played half back

Sheffield: Okay

Mr. Booker: On the high school football team.

Sheffield: Okay. About when? 19.....

Mr. Booker: I'd say 19....oooh, late 20s. Middle 20s....23 something like that, 25 maybe. See I forget how old I am, if I say in the teens well then I was 10 years old, 1923. So you have to be careful....There was Crip Carter or Sheffieldhard Carter, he no doubt, he had a son who played, Sheffieldhard, then Robert also played...football. I think my uncle played football and baseball.

Sheffield: And who was that? Who was your uncle?

Mr. Booker: His name was Harry Lambert Simmons. He was the one I was telling you about who graduated from...

Sheffield: Sure, yeah. In fact, we had him listed in this booklet and if I'm not mistaken we had him listed as the first member of the Mt. Vernon Football team – the first black football player I think...yeah 1900. Harry Simmons, first black student to play on the Mt Vernon Football team.

Mr. Booker: He used to play, then he went on to play for Oberlin and of course Oberlin and Kenyon played each other because they were both small schools...not small, but Oberlin played Ohio State at one time.

Sheffield: Right, yeah.

Mr. Booker: Then let's see, then there was.... Joe was telling me the other day, that Joe Books, he never played anything, just a little track that's about all. Joe Books and what's that other kid's name? Rouse. He wanted to play college ball at -----(26:23)

Sheffield: I don't know which one that was, no.

Mr. Booker: I can't think... Buddy Rouse, do you remember Buddy?

Sheffield: No, I don't. This would have been Betty's....?

Mr. Booker: Betty's husband's brother. He played football at Ohio State, not Ohio State, but Mt. Vernon also went to Wilberforce and played on the team down there. I think he

got a scholarship from ..... It's difficult to pull all.... Johnny Payne, Johnny Payne I know you've heard him.

Sheffield: Sure, sure. Was he Joe's classmate? Sametime around when Joe was in highschool?

Mr. Booker: Yeah.

Sheffield: Yeah I remember him playing. He played, I think, with Jim Byrd.

Mr. Booker: Yeah Jim Byrd that's right. I'm glad you're bringing him up. They were there about the same time. And Jim Byrd was a talented athlete...

Sheffield: Sure...

Mr. Booker: And I guess he got a full scholarship down in Cincinnati but he never followed through. My head gets rattley but I know there's so many in there I can remember but I can't call offhand...

Sheffield: Do you remember any of the guys in the '40's like Stanley White?

Mr. Booker: I remember Stanley fairly well, yes.

Sheffield: I'm trying to think of Stanley... I think Stanley played football and ran track.

Mr. Booker: I think it was both. He was very, very swift. Joe Books was too, Joe Books was about the fastest one I've ever seen at Mt. Vernon. The guy would get the ball and take off and you'd think he clear in the field, then Joe would kick off and you better hurry up because he'd get to you before you get to the goal... very swift...of course when she came along, she played...

Sheffield: She was something else? And her name was?

Mr. Booker: Tonya... I went out for football and I was doing pretty good. They out me on the second team but I found out that the second team was about to be used for tackling dummies. You grab that ball and take off and you know you was going to get slaughtered before you get somewhere. So three of them get me one time and knock me about half unconscious and I was just looking up there and saying this is football huh? Turned that suit in three days later, I said that's not gonna kill me. My aunt had talked me outta playing, she was -----(29:11)-----Peterson. He had a little ---- and we'd go around and play at High School Dances. He was quite a singer and entertainer too. And that was much better than sitting on the side of there... the hall where the dance was...all look up and not being able to move

Sheffield: Now about when was this. Give me a time frame here. You graduated in what year?

Mr. Booker: '32. I was suppose to graduate in '31 but I had a good time through out high school. This was in the late '20s.

Sheffield: Uhuh. So you were playing high school dances and bands and parties?

Mr. Booker: Just a lot of playing at home, every once in a while you'd play a get together at the school, but it was all fake... I didn't know what I was playing, just as long as we were banging on something, keeping that time...they was satisfied. Life....I'm trying to think some more.... you don't wanna hear about...

Sheffield: Well I also wanna hear what your sense was of how they were received by their teammates and schoolmates having these black athletes on their football teams, basketball teams and baseball teams.

Mr. Booker: They were very well received. Mt. Vernon....Mt. Vernon... seemingly they had a few people who were fond of degrading?(30:42) if you can, but...if you do that, well then, when they call your name next time....on the football field....they'd find out that they wouldn't want to play for a week or two because they would destroy...same thing... Horace Fair in Mt. Vernon... could have been name calling or something like that. The bad part was when they'd go play out of town.

Sheffield: What would happen then?

Mr. Booker: Then the out of town people like Zanesville and Cambridge, near Coshocton, some of those teams would come and yell... they'd come in...there was name calling and stuff like that then.

Sheffield: Hmm. Well, what would happen then? Would the high school coach do anything?

Mr. Booker: Well there wasn't much he could do. He'd say go get 'em. He'd close his eyes if he heard somebody...because they heard his people on his team...----- (32:00) and Cambridge standing over there on the sideline he had been in the game...and so.. here come long haired guys and bounce in there and run into him and knock him down and hurt his back and everything else and everybody in the stands said "Get 'em, Get 'em!" talking about this black boy. They'd say get up and get him. If they play unfair they could see it was unfair...hit him right in the back and knocked the heck out of him. It wasn't bad. It wasn't too bad. They always had the weapons too.. like they had someone on the line on the street with mouthful of chewing tobacco...he'd spit in there face...couldn't see for a while. It's things like that... I don't suppose they do that anyone do they.

Sheffield: I hadn't heard of that...no. But I just wondered if those things happened because of racial issues... just because....

Mr. Booker: It wasn't too bad there. I mean...I'd say...they'd make a dirty tackle and clothesline and do that....but...they were pretty fair, all over. They come in here and play baseball and they were always fair...they didn't try to clean anybody...didn't seem like that...and you'd come around the bases. Take our team and come to Gambier and play and Danville and go to New Castle and go to Bladensburg and sometimes to Newark to play. Now that was the team I was telling you about...Frank Turner's team. Traveled to play the game ....wouldn't play for anything just play...take up a collection...they'd take up a collection then send somebody to the bootleg and buy a couple gallons of whiskey and both teams would drink out of the same bottle. So how could they be fighting you know? Because this thing maybe people don't know but that was a...just a good jolly time, teasing each other.

Sheffield: Now during this time when they had an all colored baseball team. Do you remember any of the young black boys or kids playing on the high school team? During that same era or...

Mr. Booker: Oh yeah. They'd get on any team they had. That's one thing about Mt. Vernon, if you could play they let you play...the Blake boys, then all those kids around there that had many number....then three years straight they won the city championship for church leagues... the Baptist church had a dirt team then shifted off to the Methodist and back and forth for a few times...and Baptist boys played on the Methodist and Methodist came up to play in the Baptist league...------(35:38) yeah they played...

Sheffield: I wonder if there were any pictures taken of those teams...the Baptist team...the Methodist team...

Mr. Booker: The only one I know, of course he's dead now...Buddy Morehead. He called games and he was a coach of these teams that win the city championship. Now, the newspaper might have pictures of him...I was sitting today thinking that I should have been collecting everything they had in Mt. Vernon news...my aunt collected a lot of stuff...deaths and funerals and that kind of stuff and she had quite a pile of stuff and...it'd been nice....I collected when I was old enough to recognize what it was I had quite a nice pile of various histoSheffieldal...

Sheffield: I know Betty Prophet has done a lot of that too. She's collected articles and things in the paper for years and years and years....huh.....I wonder if she ever saw any of those pictures...I'll have to check back with her if she's feeling up to it

Mr. Booker: She might have some. I know I gave her some pictures and stuff like that...Mt. Vernon people. Her dad played music and I had a picture of my aunt and my uncle and her dad and....Clarence Sipher I was telling you about played drums and had quite a nice little group there. They played at the Country Club and all that kind of stuff. My aunt was a really accomplished musician...you'd set it down in front of her and she'd play it...Some of those clippings you read...I might have clippings at home and it's histoSheffieldal just to sit down and read them..

Sheffield: Sure, sure... In fact I hope to, I think I mentioned I want to... I don't have a chance to interview Joe because I know Joe ran track in high school... and I'd like to get Martin and Tonya's addresses and try to write to them and ask them about their experiences playing basketball

Mr. Booker: Sure... Their period was even different than ours because I remember going to West Virginia with my girlfriend and went to a restaurant and sit down and eat and what in the world did I ever think I'd be sitting here in this restaurant... Trying to find my background history... and I've found quite a bit... I found out in place down in West Virginia... they had Batfields... my father's father owned quite a bit of land... 1000 acres that he got when the Civil War was over. My dad was set free when he was 10 you see... and was hidden in the barnfield where-----(39:29)

Sheffield: Sure. In fact I wanted to ask you about that area because in my old research I'd been trying and trying and trying to find this man named Alexander Turner and I finally found him back in 1880 in Cambridge, Ohio... So I was thinking about that whole area... Cambridge and Barnsville and trying to figure out how many folks in Mt. Vernon had come from that Cambridge area.

Mr. Booker: Quite a number...

Sheffield:.....------(39:58) come to mind to you?

Mr. Booker: There is a Silky Turner who's all the way up there.... don't know about now... but.... of course you mention the name Turner and that runs in my mind... Silky Turner was a slave and when they sold her they had the papers on her...

Sheffield: She settled in Mt. Vernon? Silky Turner?

Mr. Booker: No she settled in Cambridge.

Sheffield: Okay.

Mr. Booker: She almost.... Cambridge... came in from West Virginia/Virginia----- (40:42) more or less.... That's where a lot them.... all of the Turners and Misses, oh so many. My dad came in from Beverly, West Virginia. He was set free...

Sheffield: But he went from West Virginia to Barnsville... and this Kap tina? (41:00) that I've heard so much about... was Kaptina... I know it was the name of a church too... but was it the name of a little town or village...

Mr. Booker: Bout like Bangsville.....

Sheffield: Where was it in relation to Barnesville or Cambridge....

Mr. Booker: Barnesville...right in the middle of the town/square...I just think you keep on going south and that road takes you out that way...on the right is a grove and up on the left a church and the adding house is gone... I think someone burned it down...that was Kaptina... If I could find it I've got a picture of the church with my dad and somebody else standing out front...did you have a picture of it?

Sheffield: You know, it seems to be that I'd seen....I do have....I bet you I do have it...If you remember we had a student named Johanna Holbrook working on the history of the A and E church...if I'm not mistaken that was one of the picture of either you or Betty Prophet or somebody....

Mr. Booker: I'll try to find out some more things...I don't know...remember something...Charles Chasler...This was the Masonic lodge...I was in that...

Sheffield: You were in that? What year were you in the Masonic lodge?

Mr. Booker: Had to have been about '47/'48. There's Frank White and his tavern on page 17...that's him of course...He come from Barnesville.

Sheffield: Here's the picture, I think, of the Kaptina Church..

Mr. Booker: That's it. That's the picture I've got too.

Sheffield: So we must have gotten that from you when we were doing this project.

Mr. Booker: Could have...Mr. McMichael....

Sheffield: When we worked on that project there were Turners...with respect to your church...that we were real curious to whether they had come from the Barnesville/Cambridge area...

Mr. Booker: I don't think they did. I think the Turners came .....I don't know they was here forever...a lot of them came through----- (44:32)

Sheffield: Is your family here?

Mr. Booker: Yes. My family's here. I've got that picture up on there. This is Ethel...she married Mon...

Sheffield: This is Mon Hammond's second wife I think...

Mr. Booker: Second wife. Yeah.

Sheffield: So that was Dianne's mother then, is that right?

Mr. Booker: Yeah, uhuh. And that's....the one who graduated from Western Reserve...think it's mentioned here. Then this is Willard Hughes...educator. He couldn't get a job here so he went off to the south and taught....ended up in ----(45:15)Texas. His grandmother lived in Harrisburg------(45:17)....

Sheffield: It was a pretty remarkable family, the more I read about that family. Athletes and scholars and doctors...

Mr. Booker: ------(45:54) he was my stepgrandfather.....-----of course was my father. Master down there name was Earl.

Sheffield: Earl?

Mr. Booker: Yeah, John Earl. Yeah he owned slaves and everything. He mentioned only one and her name was Margaret and she was his wife's hand maid. Then, my dad had, I think, three sisters and two brothers...so when set him free, the man gave him a horse and a wagon and said please stay here and help me with the plantation....he grew up there...this is your home, you'll always have a home...gave him this cabin and something like that and said ------(46:47).

Sheffield: And this was in Beverly, West Virginia?

Mr. Booker: Uhuh. Oh, they got a nice museum down there sometime when you and your wife want to look up on some black history I daresay you might find something about a family of yours....

Sheffield: Well I have a friend here who teaches at the college whose family is from Beverly, West Virginia.

Mr. Booker: Welllll.....

Sheffield: Yeah, his name is Mason

Mr. Booker: Yeah, that name down there.....

Sheffield: And Mason came from Cadiz, Ohio, do you know where Cadiz is?

Mr. Booker: Oh yeah.

Sheffield: Up by Stubenville I think...his family moved up to Cadiz...

Mr. Booker: Now that's odd that you bring that up because .....you got people who moved from Beverly to Cadiz or that area down there....I tellya it's scary how people are so mixed up and a name will tell you a whole lot if you listen real close.

Sheffield: Well, I plan to—well I promised my mother I would drive her to Barnesville because she hasn't been there in so many years and we're doing a little bit of that family tree geneology and I said sure, let's go and take a look...although I realize that all the records are gone now because I think they had a fire in the courthouse...

Mr. Booker: Yeah they did.

Sheffield: But I said let's take a drive over that way and see what we can sort of dig up about where her grandfather's farm was....and Fischers and Edwards and folks she doesn't know that well

Mr. Booker: They were now, more or less wealthy people....

TAPE ENDS

25:10

34:16