

ORAL HISTORY AGREEMENT
FARISH STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT PROJECT

I agree that this magnetic tape recording of my voice made during an interview with Ms. Mary Street (interviewer) and a transcript made therefrom, may be catalogued and deposited in the Jackson State University library (and some designated place in the Farish Street Historical District) with the records of the Farish Street Historic District Humanities project. The tape recording and transcript may be made available for research use in the preparation of the final products of the NEH Humanities Project in 1983 and after 1983 for research by scholars. Any title or literary rights to this material are hereby relinquished to Jackson State University.

Ms. Mary Street

Oral Author (interviewee) Signature

9/14/81

date

Mrs Carrie Washington

Oral Recorder (interviewer) Signature

9/14/81

date

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Tape number

Interview with Mrs. Carrie Washington
Date of Interview: September 14, 1982
Interviewee: Mary Street
Transcriber: Mary Street
Final Typist: Terry McDonald

Street: My name is Mary Street and today is September 14, 1981. I am going to interview Mrs. Carrie Washington on the Farish Street Historic District.

Mrs. Washington, would you like to tell me something about yourself as an Historic resident in the Farish Street area.

Washington: Baby, I am 86 years old and I don't know-- it will take a little time but I will tell you what I can. I was born February 10, 1895. I came to Farish Street in the year of 1933. My biggest work was cooking, nursing, and raising white folks children. I never had any trouble. I don't have anything against my living around here. I use to walk to work with paper sole shoes with holes in the bottom, but honey, I just loved those days. Business was good. Sardine cost a dime and all the crackers were free. You could buy a nickle worth of lard, sugar, flour or meal. Child, we didn't know anything about cold storage meat. Lord, the business has really changed. If you ain't got a dollar you had better sit down because you wouldn't be buying much. Shoes use to cost \$1.00 and when it was a sale they were \$.50. Fabric was \$.10 a yard. When I was cooking for the white folks they use tp give you all the left over food. You could carry it home, but now you can't bring nothing from their house. I don't know because it has been years since I was a cook.

Street: Mrs. Washington, tell me how did you have fun as a teenager and as a young adult and as a senior citizen.

Washington: Baby, as a teenager we went to ball games, birthday parties. We played jump rope and church. We really enjoyed that because my mommy believed in church. As a young adult I use to piece quilts, take flour and meal bags and make table cloths and window curtains and share with others. Honey, I was 15 or 16 years old before I could tell the time on a clock. I didn't get no further than the 2nd grade in school. I want to let you know if I was in the white house and everybody was talking about politic I would have to set down. But talking about God they would have to set me down, yes Lord. At my age and no education, I can remeber good. I have asked people to come and write me letters and they would say the words, "You can't write", but thank the Lord. Mae always come and do all my writing. I want the life I live to speak up for me anytime. The street cars you could ride for a nickle. I was so scared of them. I never did ride them unless someone would get on with me. I can remember when there was a hosiptal on Amite

Washington: Street. I think it was St. Dominic. In the early 50's or late 40's white people were on the top floor and blacks were down in the basement.

Street: Mrs. Washington, can you recall any more buildings that were on Farish Street but are not there now?

Washington: Let me see. There use to be a nickle and dime store on the corner of Farish and Hamilton Street. After it there was Home Dining Room. There use to be a Jitney Jungle where Thomas _____. I think it was on Amite Street. There use to be a drug store on the corner of Farish and Hamilton where the Sander's Shop was. I can't think of the name of it. Hill Hall use to be on the corner of Griffin where Harvey's Department Store is. Farish Street and Mill Street has always been just what it is now. It just have a little more pick up about it.

Street: Mrs. Washington, will you explain to me what you mean about Farish and Mill Street have more pick up about it now?

Washington: See, back then the school teachers and nurses use to hide what they did, but now they are open with it. I never did go to any dances, never been in jail, but to visit and I was scared then.

Street: Mrs. Washington, can you remember the flood of 1927?

Washington: Yes, it was awful to me the way people were losing things in that flood. I was living on John Hart Street, so I wasn't in it but I remember the soup lines.

Street: What are some of the songs you all use to sing and are they different now?

Washington: We use to sing "Amaze and Grace" and "What a friend we have in Jesus". They sing different, but for me I like the old time songs best and also the old time preaching. People would build brush harbor and that was where we would have church on North Farish Street. Dinner on the ground was good. We had plenty of fresh chicken and chicken feet dumpling, potato pie, molasses bread, and water melon. Everybody was happy.

Street: What was your first experience with a telephone like?

Washington: It was in 1923. The white folks learned me how to use that phone. Child, I didn't know nothing. I was scared of telephones, but with the help of Jesus I have one of my own. In the 20's I can remember water and sewers. It would have been earlier. Electricity was \$2.00 and \$3.00 a month. I got my cold oil lamp today. The price of rent was \$3.00 a week. There was plenty of midwives. I didn't know what a hospital was. You use to have babies and stay in a month. We would go and see about each other and pray together.

Carrie Washington

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Street: Mrs. Washington, I have really enjoyed this morning with you
and thanks for all the information.