

Excerpt of interview with Fannie Anne Rebecca Brownlee Misch for the Tulsa Historical Society & Museum Collection

Interviewer: Pendleton Woods

Interview Date: January 17, 1972

Interview Place: Tulsa, OK

Woods

Misch Just at suppertime on a pleasant evening, the Race Riot was started.

Woods Did you see any of that?

Misch (laughs)

Woods Well, tell me about it.

Misch Uh huh, I won't tell about much of it.

Woods Well tell me about some of it.

Misch I lived to it pretty close

Woods Well, that is why it ought to be recorded, you know.

Misch About suppertime on a pleasant evening May 31st, a disastrous racial war started when two carloads of negro men stopped by the courthouse to reportedly, they said, to release a prisoner in the top floor of the courthouse. They were all armed with shotguns. And it was just at the time that some of the stores were closing, it was very quiet all over town. Some of the stores were closed. Well, of course the citizens, white citizens, quickly armed. They broke into the all the stores, took out all the ammunition, guns, and hardware of all kinds. And the real battle started at the railroad station. Trains didn't go through here for 3 days, and of course Marshall Law was quickly declared. And there was an engineer and a fireman killed in their cab on the train, that's why they stopped the trains. And of course, about 800 houses burned. And Reverend Able had them set up, the Red Cross came in here from quite a few towns to take over because of course so many people were burnt up and their homes were burnt up. And it burned for days, three or four days, and of course Marshall Law was declared, and you had to lay on the floor, you couldn't lay in front of a window. But anyway, he setup a Red Cross station in the basement of our church and the refugees and wounded were taken down there and cared for.