

Excerpt of interview with Eunice Jackson for the Tulsa Race Riot (Massacre) Commission
Survivor Testimony Interviews
Interviewer: Eddie Faye Gates
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Interview Place: Tulsa, OK

Gates Interviewing Eunice C. Jackson, age 95, who is a survivor of the Tulsa Race Riot of 1921. When I first started doing research on this, I located 17 survivors. Eunice Jackson was one of the first I located and she has been most gracious to be interviewed to give information about the Riot. And we are just delighted to be here today. We want get her on record today on how the incident of the riot, how it affected her personally, also how it affected Samuel Malone Jackson, whom she married in 1923. And she is the widow of Jackson.....

[break in recording]

Gates Mrs. Jackson was a 16 year old Junior, she was getting ready for the end of school at Booker T. Washington high school, and like other girls, she was probably getting ready for the prom. In 1923, she would marry Samuel Malone Jackson, who owned Jackson's Funeral Home, he was one of the most prominent business people in the Greenwood and Archer area. His funeral home was at 615 E. Archer

Jackson 7

Gates 617 E. Archer, which crosses Greenwood. So she will be talking about her own personal experiences and Samuel Jackson and the Riot. Mrs. Jackson, thanks so much for sharing with us today. First tell me about your experiences; you and your mother and how you had to flee your home, and where you went and how that Riot affected you. And then tell me what it did to your future husband's funeral home.

Jackson Now the night of the Riot, we were sitting out in our yard. And the people started coming through the gate, just running through, going out the back. So they came so fast, my mother finally asked 'em where were they going' and they said ' they were having a riot over the hill.' Which was known then as Brickyard Hill. We lived north of that. And they were just running, didn't know where they were going. And about, must have been about eight in the morning, we persuaded Mamma to let us go and get with the crowd. We didn't know where we were going. And when we got to Pine and Greenwood, the homeguard had come from Oklahoma City. And they stopped us there and they marched us from there down Pine to Cincinnati, from Cincinnati and Pine down to where the...

Gates Mohawk

Jackson No, downtown on Brady, where is that?

Gates Oh, Convention Hall?

Jackson

Convention Hall. And when we got to the Convention Hall, they searched us before they would let us go in. And my mother had picked up my oldest brother's service revolver before we left and had it in a little satchel. And they wanted to see it and she said, 'I don't' have anything in here but important papers.' And one of them said 'well, old dogs have new tricks like young ones.' And they searched it and took the pistol and gave her bag back. So we went in and found some seats. And we sat there until, it must have been 4'oclock in the evening, when a white family my mother worked for, had been there twice to ask about us, because she had given our name and we never answers, so when they finally turned us loose, they said 'if you have a home that you think you can go to, you may be excused.' So we walked from the Convention Hall to left forty-five, north Denver, where she had food prepared for us. And when we left, she said 'Betty, you can go home, and if you don't have a home,' said ' you can come back and we will put some cots up in the basement for you.'

But we had some real poor white neighbors who lived across the street, and every time the fire bugs would come to set the fire to our house, these neighbors would come and put it out. That is how we happened to have a home after the Riot.

And I don't know how they got these cards printed so fast, but everybody had had a little id cards, school children and all, that told what you did. And you had to have that little ID wherever you went. I kept mien for a long time and eventually got rid of it.