

**T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History Collection**

**ABSTRACT**

**INTERVIEWEE NAME:** Bessie Davis Moton

**COLLECTION:** 4700.0630

**IDENTIFICATION:** East Baton Rouge Parish native, 1944 McKinley High School graduate and later school secretary

**INTERVIEWERS:** Shawnda Hollins and Shanta Jenkins

**SERIES:** McKinley High School Oral History Project – History of McKinley High School

**INTERVIEW DATE:** June 20, 1995

**FOCUS DATES:** 1940-1944, 1950s

**ABSTRACT:**

**Tape 914, Side A**

Moton born in East Baton Rouge Parish on August 28, 1926; parents' names; parents graduated from elementary school; father was a laborer; mother was a housewife and seamstress; Moton attended McKinley from 1940 to 1944; students worked hard to get good grades; became school secretary at McKinley in 1953 under President A.H. Jackson; was in high school choir; sister who was a teacher was her role model growing up; was average student; all her teachers inspired her; relieved to receive her diploma in June of 1944; rivalry between McKinley and Capitol High schools; prom was on Temple Roof; attended Southern University after McKinley; worked as secretary at Southern University's dining hall for three years after graduation; names all McKinley principals with whom she has had contact; importance of McKinley to black professionals nationwide; McKinley strong in Civil Rights Movement; had no lockers or lunchroom when she attended; carried books and lunch from class to class; had only football and basketball for athletics; pep rallies; cheerleaders held pep rallies at local elementary schools, too; describes hair styles and fashions; goals were to finish high school, go to college, become parent; current hobbies; worked in business; good education at McKinley; people came from other parishes to attend McKinley; Frazier was strong principal, students couldn't get away with anything; Moton declines invitation to sing alma mater; respect and fear kids felt for Coach Kraft; loved being a secretary; praises the oral history project; advice for aspiring McKinley graduates; was happy as both a student and employee at McKinley; suggests others to interview.

**TAPE:** 1 (T914)

**TOTAL PLAYING TIME:** 18 minutes

**# PAGES TRANSCRIPT:** 14 pages

**OTHER MATERIALS:** None

**RESTRICTIONS:** None