

**LOUIS LANDERS, JR.**

**Interview 180b**

**January 5, 2010 at the History Center, Diboll, Texas**

**Jonathan Gerland, Interviewer**

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**ABSTRACT:** In this interview with Jonathan Gerland, Louis Landers reminisces about integration at Diboll High School. A member of the first integrated football, basketball, and track teams, Louis recalls the first football practices, life at school and in classes, and other daily school events surrounding desegregation at Diboll High School. He was good friends with many of the former H.G. Temple High School players, especially sports standout Johnny Jones. Louis also remembers Coach Jim Simmons and Coach Billy Bert as instrumental in helping that first step of the integration process go smoothly. He mentions several instances where Diboll's early integration caused problems as the teams traveled around East Texas, particularly at a basketball game in Groveton and a restaurant in Nacogdoches.

**Jonathan Gerland (hereafter JG):** Today's date is January 5, 2010. My name is Jonathan Gerland and I'm at the History Center with Louis Landers today. He was a member of the 1967 Diboll High School graduating class, the graduating class of '67, which was the first integrated graduating class in Diboll's history. So, today we are going to talk about his memories of school integration. I guess Louis, maybe just to begin just tell us what was your first knowledge of integration? How did you know about it? What was your first experience?

**Louis Landers (hereafter LL):** I guess it would be from television, newspapers, and things like that. There was a lot of talk going on and things like that. Really, here in Diboll since we are a company town we all knew everyone and we were kind of I guess, loosely integrated already here. I remember my junior year our coach was telling us that we would probably be having some new players next year and we knew what he was talking about so those wheels were in motion for possible early integration then. And I remember when we reported for the two-a-day practices, I guess it was in about the middle of August, there were like five or six guys already suited up, but we knew them 'cause we grew up with.

**JG:** This would have been your senior year so, the August of '66?

**LL:** Yes, but we already knew them because like I say, we grew up with them and all our folks worked together at the factory and stuff like that. I recognized all of them, Johnny Jones, Harold Phipps, Otis Scott, Zachary Smith, who am I leaving out...Otis Scott, Vertis Hardy. I believe that is all of them.

**JG:** How did you know them by name, you said growing up, anything specifically?

**LL:** Well really it might have started around I guess, I don't know like in junior high. Their school was H.G. Temple and Temple Tigers and we shared the same football field. Usually we would play on Friday nights and the Temple Tigers would play Saturday afternoon or Saturday night, you know. I guess the festivities or pre-game and all that would take place early in the afternoon and it would just carry on. It was quite a show and we would just...

**JG:** Did ya'll ever scrimmage with one another or anything?

**LL:** No, no, no.

**JG:** So nothing formal, for sure.

**LL:** No, but we would...if you were an athlete at school you could go to their games and tell them you went to Diboll High School and you played football or something like that and you could get in their games free and I suppose they could do the same for ours. I do remember our freshman, sophomore, and junior years there were some blacks at the games, some of the players you know.

**JG:** As spectators?

**LL:** Yes.

**JG:** Did you go, you yourself, did you go see some of their games?

**LL:** Oh yes, I sure did.

**JG:** All sports or football?

**LL:** Just football.

**JG:** Just football.

**LL:** Yes, they didn't have any facilities over at Temple except the gym and you know just for basketball I guess, but I just watched the football games.

**JG:** So they played on Saturday afternoons?

**LL:** Yes, and like I say, it really started probably the pre-game show the band would be out there and I guess they had a drill team and things like that and they played a lot of music, loud and very exciting, lets say. I remember, I don't know, Eric Rivers, the quarterback, Harvey Williams he was a tackle and a good friend of mine. Roy Lee Davis, he was in the early sixties, and I think he was the first one to sign a pro contract, a professional football contract with the Kansas City Chiefs.

**JG:** Where did you sit as a spectator watching their games?

**LL:** Oh we would just go to the field house at the old football field where it's at now and we'd just stand around on the sideline and things like that.

**JG:** So not in the bleachers?

**LL:** Oh no, we'd just stand around 'cause you could kind of move around down the line where the play was going, you know and things like that.

**JG:** Were there many white spectators in the stands?

**LL:** I would say there was a handful, there was always some there and there might have been some scouts there from some colleges because I think a lot of them went on to play at Prairie View A&M down in Houston.

**JG:** How about the black community? How well attended were the H.G. Temple football games, the black community, the spectators how well?

**LL:** What do you mean?

**JG:** How well attended were the games in comparison to the whites, to y'all's games? How many people came to watch the games?

**LL:** Well in the early years when we played we didn't really put an A team or A game out there, you know. We were pretty awful and it was mostly moms and dads and a few people like that. It was okay, but I think, it seemed like the whole community turned out for the Tigers.

**JG:** Oh really. So there were more people came to watch the Tiger games than the Lumberjack games?

**LL:** Yes, I would think so.

**JG:** That is interesting. So, you mentioned you had, you know, been in tuned with current events in the news and you heard about school integration as a subject. Describe that first, maybe the first practice y'all had, the first integrated practice. Do you remember that or maybe one of the firsts experiences with them?

**LL:** I just remember coming to the field house you know, and we were going to get suited out and everything because like I say, we were...we had the same coach that's from the year before, so he had kind of let us know that something might happen.

**JG:** And this was Jim Simmons, the head coach?

**LL:** Yes, Coach Simmons and Coach Bert, Billy Bert. So, but we didn't know for sure. There was some buzz around town that, you know there might be some players coming

over and stuff like that because they had cut out athletics at the Temple school. So when we got there they were already getting suited up and everything. Everybody was getting suited out and I thought it was cool. I knew we were going to do good. They didn't bother me at all. I was looking forward to it.

**JG:** Talk a little bit, you mentioned Coach Simmons, talk a little bit about Coach Simmons. What do you remember of Coach Simmons?

**LL:** Well. (laughter)

**JG:** And specifically in this context of integration.

**LL:** Oh I think he was great. He was super and he was the right man for the right job at the right time. And, like I say he did not see color, he just saw players; I mean he was very super. Our last game of the season, our last home game of the season was, I think they call it family night now, but back then it was just called Dad's night, where they salute the dads and everybody's father had to be there. They would walk them out on the field and Johnny Jones, who was probably our star player on the team, his dad...

**JG:** He was a black player?

**LL:** Yes, Johnny Carl, yes. His dad owned the cleaners over there in the quarters and he just couldn't make it in time so, as it got nearer and nearer to Johnny's name being called out, because we went by our number, his dad still hadn't got there yet. So, Coach Simmons ran up to Johnny and said "Johnny" said... 'cause Johnny was really worried about that. He said, "Johnny I'll be your daddy tonight," or dad tonight. So, he walked him out on the field and everybody applauded and it was real moving, real moving.

**JG:** Talk a little bit about some of the experiences you had both say what you might call locker room experiences and then maybe out in the community such as when Diboll, the integrated football team would travel to other towns, to other schools. What...was there any since...what were some of the reactions? And let me back up, were any of the other schools, did they have integrated teams? Did you play against any other teams that had black players?

**LL:** I really can't remember that, but I know all I saw was jerseys when I played. I really didn't see... that is all I saw was jerseys. But there were two instances. One happened over in Trinity County and we were there at a basketball game and Johnny, again Johnny he was one of our stars on our basketball team. Super athlete. The Trinity High School refused to take the floor if Johnny was going to be out there. We had Harold also, Harold Phipps, another black that was on our team also, but they weren't going to take the floor because they weren't going to play with any blacks, against any blacks. They just weren't going to do it. Of course our coach, who was Coach Bert at the time, he was really our football coach but he coached basketball that year, that was all right with us because it would be a district win for us so if they forfeited it. Eventually we all took the floor and I think we won that game. But, there was a tense situation there for a little bit.

**JG:** Enough so that you as a player knew it was happening.

**LL:** Yes, and I was kind of embarrassed. I couldn't believe someone was acting that way.

**JG:** And it was clearly known the reasons why?

**LL:** Oh yes.

**JG:** All the players knew?

**LL:** Oh yes, the "n" word was thrown out there a few times.

**JG:** What was another, you mentioned there were a couple of instances?

**LL:** Oh, the other one was during track season, which was right after basketball season. And another time, there were only two of us advanced to region. That was me and Johnny; me in the mile and Johnny in the broad jump and the 880 yard dash. We went up to Nacogdoches and we stopped in Nacogdoches at John's Restaurant. It was a real popular restaurant at the time, kind of like IHOP would be now I guess. And it was just four of us, me and Johnny and Coach Simmons and I believe Coach Bert was with us. We were on our way to Kilgore, I believe, but we were going to stop and eat breakfast there or something. We went in there and the guy said, "I'll serve y'all but I'm not going to serve him," talking and pointing toward Johnny. He said, "We just wanted to sit down and get a bite to eat." That is what Coach Simmons was saying. He said, "No I'm not going to serve him, now ya'll can sit down and eat if you want to, but he is not." So, Coach Simmons....I didn't...that situation was very tense also and I didn't know what Coach Simmons was going to do because he was a pretty good sized guy. But he had a lot of common sense and he was quick with wit and things like that. So, he said, "Can we order some sandwiches and we will just take them out to the car and eat them?" The guy said, "Yes, that will be fine." He said, "Okay." So he went into this big long detail about all these sandwiches he wanted and all this stuff, you know, and the guy was writing it down and all that stuff. He went on for about ten minutes describing all these sandwiches, how he wanted them made and you could see the cook or the owner back there talking and see the cash register going off in his head about all this food he was selling. And finally after he got through Coach Simmons asked him if he could wrap each individual sandwich. He said, "Yes." He said, "Okay then take them all and shove them up your...where the sun don't shine." And we left and we went on up the street to Shepherd's Restaurant.

**JG:** This is still in Nacogdoches?

**LL:** Yes, and the Groveton track team was in there and they had...we recognized the quarterback Carroll Roden and a bunch of others there. They had a similar situation happen to them earlier at the same restaurant.

**JG:** Groveton did?

**LL:** Groveton, yes.

**JG:** Groveton had black athletes too?

**LL:** Yes, I think his name was Callahan I believe or Horace or something like that.

**JG:** They had a similar incident at the same restaurant that y'all had?

**LL:** The same restaurant, John's Restaurant, yes.

**JG:** But y'all were served at this new one at Shepherds?

**LL:** Yes, Shepherds Restaurant in downtown Nacogdoches, right on the square right there.

**JG:** Y'all were served there?

**LL:** Yes.

**JG:** No problems?

**LL:** No problems, no.

**JG:** What about in the classroom, integration in the classroom? Anything you experienced, anything that you witnessed or other reactions say from your white friends?

**LL:** No because like I say, most of the athletes had all the same classes together plus we were seniors. I guess we all just kind of palled around together but there was no problem at all with Johnny or any of them. In fact, he was not only a star athlete but really just an all around great guy and really a leader. They would, when I say they I'm talking about the five black seniors. They were always on time for class, always had their homework, very respectful, didn't misbehave or anything like that, didn't cut up or anything like that. No pushing and shoving in the hall, or anything like that. They were really like one of us and we was one of them. It didn't matter, you know. It was really good. It was a good transition. We had one teacher, he was our senior English teacher and he seemed to kind of rub them the wrong way, I think. He was always singling out a couple of them for something, you know. I know he made one remark one time he told Johnny that, you know, Johnny was a very bright guy, he told him that for a B+ that was good for a Negro, or something like that.

**JG:** Publicly, in front of the class?

**LL:** It was in class, yes. And another time we were reading some kind of story or something and it had to do with slavery and things along that line and he had made the remark that, and again he went to Johnny I guess because Johnny was kind of the leader of the bunch you know, and he said that for a young buck like him he would go for like two or three thousand dollars back then. I didn't even know what that meant at the time, you know. (laughter) Johnny just laughed it off you know, and things like that.

**JG:** You mentioned five and we've got the roll here just for the sake of the recording mention those five people you are talking about.

**LL:** Sure, Johnny Carl Jones, now later on he got killed in Vietnam on Thanksgiving Day 1970. Harold Phipps, he was one of the football players and also one of our basketball players. I think he had a nickname like 'the shooter' or something like that. Otis Scott, he was one of our fullbacks and also one of our tackles. Charles Moses, number 22, he was one of our running backs. Vertis Hardy, he was one of our wingbacks or flankers. And Zachary Smith, he was also one of our running backs and he actually scored the first, he was the first black to score a touch down as a Lumberjack, September 16, 1966.

**JG:** So actually I think that is six isn't it? One, two, three, four, five, six.

**LL:** Yes that is six. There have been reports that there were seven but I don't know...this is it right here.

**JG:** Did you have classes with each one?

**LL:** Yes, Johnny, Harold and Otis. I didn't have as many with Charles but I did have almost all of them with Harold and Johnny and Otis.

**JG:** What were some of the other...were you observant to see how maybe other students reacted to the blacks being in class?

**LL:** They were just like one of us. There was no animosity; there wasn't any hostility. I mean you know, no pushing or shoving in the hall "accidentally" or any of that. They were just model students. They were just...like I said we grew up together. They were just one of us.

**JG:** Do you care to share the name of the English teacher, if you remember?

**LL:** It was Fred Douglas.

**JG:** Okay, now besides that incident which was maybe somewhat negative and then Coach Simmons you mentioned, was there any other teacher or maybe the principal, any type of school administrator that, and again if you remember outside of the coach... For instance you mentioned the coach shared with the team, "hey integration may be coming" in the context of the athletic program, but just overall from the school administration

itself. Do you remember if there was any type of...like the first day of class some type of announcement over the PA or anything?

**LL:** I don't remember any of that. I'm sorry. I'm sure our coach gave us a talk, like I say we spent most of our time around our coach. That is why so much is said about him. Of course, he had a law too that if you misbehaved in class he would take care of you later. But no, now Mr. Ramsey was our principal and Mr. Pate was our superintendent and I don't remember them having any trouble with anyone. I'm just seeing it as one person out of forty here.

**JG:** Right, right.

**LL:** I'm not speaking for the class. I'm sure there was somebody that didn't like it or had a problem but I didn't see it. I didn't stay in athletics I was also active in school affairs so if something was going on I probably would have known about it.

**JG:** Okay, I'm sorry go ahead.

**LL:** Like on the weekend, Friday and Saturday there would be dances down here. It would either be at the gym or it would be at the old scout house.

**JG:** Now, when you say down here what do you mean, the white community, the white school?

**LL:** Yes, Diboll yes. Johnny he would be there, Otis or Harold they would bring their girlfriend, and they would dance, you know, so that was integrated also and that had never happened before.

**JG:** So that was during the school year? Not prior to the fall of '66 but during that school year is that what you are saying?

**LL:** Yes, and before that I guess, you know how segregation is. Everything was in its place and you know the boundaries and stuff like that. But like I said this was the first time they actually attended one of our dances. Now if it was a concert somewhere around town where celebrities showed up or a singer or something you know, everybody would go to that. But this was different; this was like our school you know and things like that. But, it showed that the believed they were a part of our school and they were. We accepted that and they accepted us. That is the way I look at it.

**JG:** I'm actually backing up now as a community as a whole, but also in the context of segregation, integration. Do you remember some of the Diboll Day activities before the schools were integrated? For instance the separate parades that they had and things like that? I know working here at The History Center, you know, we've seen pictures and read about it in the newspapers.

**LL:** No, I've been here all of my life but I did not know it. I did not know they had separate queens or anything. I knew that usually when we got a swimming pool, our new swimming pool when I was a kid...

**JG:** And you were born and raised here, born in '48 and raised here, spent your whole life? I'm sorry go ahead.

**LL:** Yes. Like Mr. Temple was like our daddy let's say. If one child got something, the other one got it too. And, if when we got a swimming pool, they got a swimming pool too.

**JG:** Talking about if the white community got a pool then the black community...

**LL:** Yes.

**JG:** So you knew of it in that instance I guess, but other than...

**LL:** Well I knew they had like a Juneteenth Queen and Splash Day and stuff like that, you know and things like that. We'd have a Splash Day Queen or whatever but as far as a Diboll Day Queen I did not know that.

**JG:** Okay. What about say life at the grocery store, the motion picture show, how did you see segregation there? Again, was it even noticeable or just weren't....I know...

**LL:** I knew this question was coming up and last night I wrote down...I was going to write down the first time I remember seeing a black. Not like that, but you know, the only one as a kid, I just remember a gentleman by the name of Chester Willis. He worked for the company but on the weekends he would deliver groceries for the Village Supermarket, our main food supplier here, grocery store here.

**JG:** Chester Willis, yes.

**LL:** And, that was it. And I never did see any whites [blacks] in department stores or grocery stores or anything. I knew they had there own separate community over there. When I say over there, I'm talking about in the quarters over there.

**JG:** That would be behind the mill.

**LL:** Yes, I knew they had grocery stores and clothing stores too, but you know, we shopped ours and they shopped theirs. That is the way I remember it.

**JG:** Did you ever have, you as a white person but say maybe if you knew of other people was there any reason for a white person to go over there? I think the Pavlics had a grocery store over there. Did you ever frequent that or go over there?

**LL:** No, but I knew one of my classmates, Joe Mack Tanner, his dad had a grocery store over there also, Tanner's. Actually at one time it was right next to Diboll Cleaners, which was ran by Johnny Jones's dad.

**JG:** So it was just more a case of knowing of rather than first hand knowledge I guess. But like, so the blacks...well let's back up a little bit even more. For instance the Pine Bough Restaurant, did you yourself ever go there as a child?

**LL:** Oh yes, many times.

**JG:** Okay. Do you ever remember seeing any blacks there?

**LL:** The cooks.

**JG:** The cooks.

**LL:** Just the cooks and the ladies back there, that was it.

**JG:** Would that have been a place you would have gone during high school, say like your senior year?

**LL:** Oh yes, in fact during our senior year we would have our pre-game meals there sometimes when we were going on the road. And, I thought about that and I was wondering if maybe Coach Simmons knew that where we were going, he checked ahead to see about meals and they said no. So, maybe that is why we had our meals at the Pine Bough usually at three or four o'clock in the afternoon and then we'd head out.

**JG:** So this would be for Friday night football games?

**LL:** Yes.

**JG:** Well I guess your basketball and track would be weekends? Track, was that typically Saturday?

**LL:** Well most of the time it was Saturday except for district and that was usually on Friday but track meets were usually on Saturday. That is the only instance in Nacogdoches with the track meet.

**JG:** You mentioned Johnny Jones a good bit and I know y'all had a special friendship, any other friendships with some of the other blacks?

**LL:** Well outside of football players, well they were football players too but like a class behind me, a guy named Pop Huddleston or Charles Huddleston.

**JG:** These would be like eleventh graders your senior year?

**LL:** Probably sophomores, I guess, tenth or eleventh grade.

**JG:** But at the time you knew them?

**LL:** Oh yes, and Roy Levias and they were probably two of the younger ones that I was real good friends with.

**JG:** And how were you friends with them, through the sports?

**LL:** Through sports and....

**JG:** 'Cause you didn't have classes with them did you?

**LL:** No, but I think they were two I met when I was attending the Temple Tiger football games.

**JG:** Did y'all ever talk about what was going on say in the bigger world with integration and society as a whole?

**LL:** No, that is strange but no we didn't.

**JG:** Civil rights or any of that ever come up?

**LL:** No. I'm sure it was in the back of our mind but nothing was ever said or anything. I don't remember not one single incident my senior year involving anything like hostility or jokes or bad jokes played on anybody or anything like that.

**JG:** I think you were saying earlier when we were talking about the process of integration and I don't want to put words into your mouth but if you can remember what we were talking about, but I remember you said something along the lines that you didn't really hear much being said about it, integration, it just sort of happened and everybody just seemed to go along with it. Is that a fair assessment from your memory?

**LL:** Yes, that is pretty accurate. As I look back in the papers now I can see where, you know, in high school you're young and stupid you know. You don't read the paper or anything like that and you're not really...all you care about is high school or whatever. But, I can see now where the wheels were in motion back then for future integration.

**JG:** I know we've talked too about that next year or two after you graduated that there were possibly instances that weren't as positive.

**LL:** Yes, I've heard some bad stuff.

**JG:** Yes, and as part of this project we will try to get everybody's story but without going into a whole lot of detail did you care to share a little bit of that or would you rather just keep that to those people's experiences and their remembrances? Or maybe

say when did you first learn of a different experience other than your own? Was it shortly after or...

**LL:** Oh no it was like years later. We would be talking about the old days or something like that and I'd say "I had so much fun my senior year, blah, blah..." And they'd say, "Well I didn't, I hated it, I hated it."

**JG:** So this is many years later?

**LL:** Yes, two or three friends of mine. And, they were saying like as we were talking about the basketball games at Diboll and Hudson. They were so violent like in '68 and '69 that they just shut the gyms down and had them at Angelina College. That is how bad it got. It was a lot of aggression as players but it also involved, you could see where some prejudice had come into play there, you know. I heard that somebody put an outhouse or something on top of the school building back in '69. You know a year or so earlier, you remember, '68 was a bad year. Robert Kennedy got shot and Martin Luther King got shot. I guess it was just a bad time and I guess maybe that caused problems too. But...

**JG:** But again, where were you physically during those times?

**LL:** Okay in '68 I was in Huntsville and Nacogdoches going to school.

**JG:** In college?

**LL:** Yes, and in '69 I was in the Army. And I did notice that at the end of the '68 school year that Mr. Pate who had been our principal since '42 had retired. So, maybe there was too much pressure there I guess somewhere. He couldn't control what was going on in the schools or something, I don't know.

**JG:** Okay, well.

**LL:** But, like I said my senior year was great, it was like I said no problems. I'd give it an A. We set all kind of records in sports and everything.

**JG:** I think you posted a school best record 6-3 and 1 in football.

**LL:** Oh now days you'd get fired for that you know. But back then that was...we laid the foundation that is the way I look at it. (laughter)

**JG:** Do you think having the integrated team was a part of the reason?

**LL:** Oh yes, a big part of it, very important part of it. Very important.

**JG:** What were some of the records prior to integration roughly? Can you remember? Did you have...you had winning seasons did you or not?

**LL:** We had one winning season since eleven-man football began and it was like 5 and 4 and our year it was 6-3-1 but really we should have won. We only really lost two games that year. (laughter) The way I look at it.

**JG:** 6-3-1 and you should have been, what, 8 and 2, is that what you're saying?

**LL:** Yeah, we really only got beat, the other two games one was a tie and the other we got beat by a field goal.

**JG:** What position did you play?

**LL:** I was a wing back, a running back and defensive back.

**JG:** What did Johnny Jones play?

**LL:** This is really unique because Johnny was so good he actually had two jerseys to start off with. When we wanted him to play tackle or maybe a nose guard or linebacker type position he'd wear 73, you know. But, he had real good hands and we used him as a wide receiver sometimes and he'd wear 44. So it was whatever offense we were going to run that week I guess, whatever way Coach wanted to use him. So he had...(laughter)

**JG:** Now you couldn't change jerseys in the middle of the game could you? (laughter)

**LL:** Oh no, no. (laughter)

**JG:** So he had to be one or the other.

**LL:** Yes. Back then you could wear any number in any position but now it's changed up a little bit. Johnny made All Team First Team, All District First Team in football and basketball. That is saying a lot because all these other coaches had to vote for him. I think one of the greatest games he played was at Splendora. We're talking about Johnny Jones the fellow that got killed in Vietnam. I think there were 33 running plays and he was in on every one of them. If he didn't make...he either had the solo tackle or he assisted in the tackle on all 33 plays.

**JG:** And that was at Splendora?

**LL:** Splendora yea.

**JG:** He was playing defense, involved in all the tackles – sounds like Mr. Jeffero. (laughter)

**LL:** I believe you can look this one up. Also, I think he set the record in the broad jump in high school, I mean at our high school also. I think it was like 22 feet or something like that.

**JG:** Say in the locker room were the black football players, specifically football I guess, did they dress out beside each other? Was it all mixed in? Did y'all...just how...

**LL:** Whatever your number was that was your locker.

**JG:** Okay, so it was by number.

**LL:** Yea, by number. Charles Moses, he was on one side because he wore 22 and I was 21. I can't remember who wore 20 but no they didn't bundle them together or anything like that.

**JG:** Just did it strictly by numbers regardless of anything else.

**LL:** We actually had our first integrated football team, basketball team and track team.

**JG:** Did ya'll have numbers from one year to the next? You said you were 21 your senior year, was there any special significance to keeping a number or a returning player or did it not matter?

**LL:** I just liked the number 21. One time I did tell coach I wanted to change my number to 44 because Donnie Henderson was a big running back at the time at Texas Tech, an All-American and all that. He asked me why did I want to change it, and I said I wanted to change it to 44 because 21 wasn't dangerous enough a number. He said, "Well, make it dangerous." (laughter) So, I stuck with it.

**JG:** That is good. (laughter) That is good. I was specifically meaning, again getting back to integration, racism whatever, you know, was there any issue with getting a number, like with a black player or a white player getting a certain number?

**LL:** Oh no, no, not at all.

**JG:** Any preference or anything, or it didn't matter?

**LL:** It didn't matter, but the running backs would try to get the usual numbers and stuff like that. That is all. There wasn't any fights or any...

**JG:** There wasn't any white and black person arguing over you know, "That was my number last year."

**LL:** No.

**JG:** Because Johnny Jones and all them would have had their numbers too from when they played.

**LL:** Yes.

**JG:** I was just curious if that was any kind of an issue. Did all the black players...did...I don't know what the best way to ask this...did they start? Were they starters?

**LL:** Let's see.

**JG:** Or maybe you didn't have a big enough team. I don't know how many people were on the team, but...

**LL:** I think they all started but some of them were on the offense and some were on defense because it was split up and of course like Johnny he's a two-way starter like offense and defense.

**JG:** Right.

**LL:** I think he was the only one that was a two-way starter as I'm looking at these photos here and remembering back.

**JG:** Now you mentioned earlier about other players that are younger than yourself like Mack Mitchell.

**LL:** Yes, Mack was a freshman.

**JG:** He was a freshman, your senior year he was a freshman. Now, but you said y'all practiced together sometimes. Is that right?

**LL:** Yes, I think the football players that were left behind at Temple High School, I think there was an agreement or something that Coach made that they could still work out with us while still being a student or enrolled at Temple. Because I never did see the players in school so I'm just assuming that they were over at Temple School. But, we always...

**JG:** Those who weren't seniors that were playing?

**LL:** Yes.

**JG:** Like Mack Mitchell, freshman football player.

**LL:** Like some of the freshman they were way down at the other end of the school so I might not have seen those, but some of the others that were sophomores or juniors they were closer to where the seniors were and I never saw any of them.

**JG:** You just never saw them but you still don't know, regardless. Now, we were looking through this annual earlier, but did you say that Mack Mitchell was included in the white annual?

**LL:** Yes, he was on our basketball team.

**JG:** Basketball team. But he wasn't in the class photos with the freshman class.

**LL:** No.

**JG:** But in the sports section he was included.

**LL:** Yes, he was in the team picture.

**JG:** And again we are talking about the white...I guess you would call it white since Temple did have high school that last...H.G. Temple did have the black high school.

**LL:** That was the last school year 66-67.

**JG:** So I guess even for clarification for the recording the segregated publications.

**LL:** When you look at their senior class I think it was like 7 or 8 and they were all girls. So, this was the senior boys this group here. But, I still think the others stayed over there and came the next year when they fully integrated. I think they came then.

**JG:** Well that is about all I had that I thought of beforehand. Is there anything that I've neglected or anything that you would like to add in this context of school?

**LL:** I can't think of anything off hand. It was a privilege to play with them and I'm glad I had the opportunity, too.

**JG:** Okay Louis, thank you very much and we'll conclude the recording.

**END OF INTERVIEW**