

[Clarkdale]  
[1964, July 3]

AFFIDAVIT--LEWIS SITZER--REGISTRATION

I walked into the Osage County Courthouse with four Negro citizens and asked if they could register to vote. The secretary said that the room was full and that we had to wait. I then saw two white people come out of the large side room used for filling out the registration forms. After a few minutes I asked if the room was still full. The secretary said that it was. I asked if there were any empty seats and the secretary said, "No, when there are I will tell you." Then I saw a white man come out of the back room with a filled out registration form. He handed it to Mr. J.W. Smith, the registrar, and then left. I asked Mr. Smith if there were two rooms where people could register. He said that the woman in the front office was sick and so he moved the woman in the back office, i.e., the back room, up front. He said that some people have filled out applications in the back room because the side room was crowded. I asked Mr. Smith if Mr. Jackson, a Negro citizen with us, could register to vote in the back room. Mr. Smith said, "No, I'm not going to crowd him in there." Two more white men came out of the back room with applications. A white woman then entered the front office and asked to register to vote. She was immediately taken to the back room. I said to Mr. Smith, "Mr. Jackson is still waiting to register, sir." Mr. Smith replied, "When one comes out of there (pointing to the side room)-he can go in." A white couple then entered the office to register to vote and were also immediately ushered into the back room. All four Negroes were eventually able to register in the larger side room. They were taken three at a time. But no Negroes were permitted to register in the back room while many white citizens were permitted to do this.

sworn affidavit sent to the US Commission on Civil Rights, Wash.  
7/3/64--YMK