

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with William A. Clement, Jr.

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## Overview of the Collection

<b>Repository:</b>	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
<b>Creator:</b>	Clement, William A., 1943-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with William A. Clement, Jr.,
<b>Dates:</b>	March 27, 2007
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2007
<b>Physical Description:</b>	5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:15:55).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Corporate chief executive and entrepreneur William A. Clement, Jr. (1943 - ) is the co-founder of DOBBS, RAM & Company and, as of 2008, serves as the President and CEO of the Atlanta Life Financial Group, Inc. Clement was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 27, 2007, in Atlanta, Georgia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2007_114
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Entrepreneur and corporate chief executive William Alexander Clement, Jr. was born on January 22, 1943 in Atlanta, Georgia to politician Josephine Dobbs Clement and Executive Vice President for North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company William Alexander Clement, Sr. Clement received his B.A. degree from Morehouse College in 1964, majoring in mathematics and business administration, and his M.B.A. degree in finance and insurance from Wharton Business School at the University of Pennsylvania in 1967.

Clement worked as a credit analyst for NCNB Corporation (predecessor to Bank of America) in Charlotte, North Carolina, as a registered representative for Bache & Company as well as a representative for The Robinson-Humphrey Company prior to becoming vice president and senior loan officer of Citizens Trust Bank in 1973. In 1977, Clement was a political appointee in the Carter Administration and served as an associate administrator of the United States Small Business Administration. While in this position, he served as senior management officer for the federal government's largest minority business development program. Clement also received a presidential appointment by President Jimmy Carter to join the board of directors of the National Consumer Cooperative Bank in Washington, D.C. In addition, he was founder and former chairman and chief executive officer of DOBBS, RAM & Company, a systems integration company. Founded in 1981, DOBBS, RAM & Company was engaged by the United States Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to maintain its E-Filing System.

Clement became an outside director of Atlanta Life Insurance Company in 1992, and in 2001, the board of directors named him chairman. In 2008, Clement was elected president and chief executive officer of the Atlanta Life Financial Group, Inc., and worked in this position for three years. He also served on the boards of two publicly-traded companies, Radiant Systems, Inc. and TRX, Inc.

Clement has been active in numerous civic and community organizations. He was former chair of the board of Opportunity Funding Corporation, a trustee of the Maynard Jackson Youth Foundation, and a former trustee of the Woodruff Arts Center. He served on the board of directors of The Commerce Club and the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce. Clement was also a charter member of the 100 Black Men of Atlanta, a former co-chair of the Atlanta Action Forum and a former chair of the Atlanta Business League. He has served as a member of the trustee board ministry of Antioch Baptist Church, as co-grantor of the Brown-Clement Endowed Scholarship Fund at Morehouse College, and a member of the Society of International Business Fellows.

Clement is married to R. Ressie Guy-Clement and is the father of two daughters and the grandfather of two grandchildren.

William Alexander Clement, Jr. was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on March 27, 2007.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with William A. Clement, Jr. was conducted by

Denise Gines on March 27, 2007, in Atlanta, Georgia, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. Corporate chief executive and entrepreneur William A. Clement, Jr. (1943 - ) is the co-founder of DOBBS, RAM & Company and, as of 2008, serves as the President and CEO of the Atlanta Life Financial Group, Inc.

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## **Restrictions**

### **Restrictions on Access**

Restrictions may be applied on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of The HistoryMakers®.

### **Restrictions on Use**

All use of materials and use credits must be pre-approved by The HistoryMakers®. Appropriate credit must be given. Copyright is held by The HistoryMakers®.

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## **Related Material**

Information about the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview, as well as correspondence with the interview subject is stored electronically both on The HistoryMakers® server and in two databases maintained by The HistoryMakers®, though this information is not included in this finding aid.

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## **Controlled Access Terms**

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

### **Persons:**

Clement, William A., 1943-

Gines, Denise (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

## **Subjects:**

African Americans--Interviews  
Clement, William A., 1943---Interviews

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African American businesspeople--Georgia--Atlanta--Interviews

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## **Organizations:**

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

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The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

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## **Occupations:**

Entrepreneur

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Corporate Chief Executive

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## **HistoryMakers® Category:**

BusinessMakers

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## **Administrative Information**

### **Custodial History**

Interview footage was recorded by The HistoryMakers®. All rights to the interview have been transferred to The HistoryMakers® by the interview subject through a signed interview release form. Signed interview release forms have been deposited with Jenner & Block, LLP, Chicago.

### **Preferred Citation**

The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with William A. Clement, Jr., March 27, 2007. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

## Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 2/5/2020 by The HistoryMakers® staff. The finding aid was created adhering to the following standards: DACS, AACR2, and the Oral History Cataloging Manual (Matters 1995).

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## Other Finding Aid

A Microsoft Access contact database and a FileMaker Pro tracking database, both maintained by The HistoryMakers®, keep track of the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview.

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## Detailed Description of the Collection

### Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with William A. Clement, Jr., Section A2007\_114\_001\_001, TRT: 0:28:30 2007/03/27

William A. Clement, Jr. was born on January 22, 1943 in Atlanta, Georgia to Josephine Dobbs Clement and William Clement, Sr. His maternal grandfather, John Wesley Dobbs was a railroad worker, a landowner, and a Prince Hall Mason. Clement's paternal great-grandfather, Rufus Clement, was an enslaved man in Rowan County, North Carolina. After the Emancipation Proclamation, he married Emma Clement, and worked as a sharecropper. The Clements also operated a laundry service. Clement's paternal grandfather, Arthur Clement, worked for the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company, and was also a landowner and bail bondsman. He owned a farm on Edisto Island in Charleston, South Carolina. Clement's father was of Geechee heritage and also worked for North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company. Clement

describes how his parents met. He was raised in the Buttermilk Bottom neighborhood of Atlanta, Georgia before his family moved to Durham, North Carolina where his mother became the Durham County Commissioner. African Americans--Education (Higher).

Prince Hall Masons of America.

African American families--North Carolina--Durham.

African American businesspeople.

Video Oral History Interview with William A. Clement, Jr., Section A2007\_114\_001\_002, TRT: 0:28:20 2007/03/27

William A. Clement, Jr.'s grandfather, John Wesley Dobbs sent his six daughters to Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia. One daughter, Mattiwilda Dobbs, was an acclaimed opera singer; another, Irene Dobbs Jackson, was the mother of Maynard Jackson. Clement recalls his childhood neighborhood in Durham, and attending white summer camps in Boston, Massachusetts. He also talks about his five siblings including HistoryMaker Alexine Clement Jackson. Clement attended W.G. Pearson Elementary School, Whitted Junior High School and Hillside High School in Durham where his favorite teacher was Mr. Thompson. In 1960, Clement graduated from high school and enrolled at Morehouse College, in Atlanta, Georgia. He talks about his professors and university president Benjamin Mays. At Morehouse, Clement also worked as an agent for North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company. He remembers his experience of segregation and the Civil Rights Movement in Durham, North Carolina.

Mays, Benjamin E. (Benjamin Elijah), 1894-1984.

Morehouse College (Atlanta, Ga.).

Durham (N.C.)--Race relations.

African Americans--Civil rights--North Carolina--Durham.

African Americans--Education.

Video Oral History Interview with William A. Clement, Jr., Section A2007\_114\_001\_003, TRT: 0:28:40 2007/03/27

William A. Clement, Jr. worked for North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance while a student at Morehouse

College in Atlanta, Georgia. He remembers the desegregation of Rich's Department Store and hearing Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. speak on campus. After graduating in 1964, Clement worked for Connecticut General Life Insurance Company in Hartford, Connecticut and enrolled at the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. In 1967, he began working for the NCNB Corporation. He talks about the bank's history and his decision to enter the brokerage business at Bache & Company, and later, Robinson-Humphrey Company. He was a financial backer of Maynard Jackson's mayoral campaign during which time he met Jesse Hill Jr. and Herman Russell. In 1973, Russell offered Clement the position of vice president of Citizens Trust Bank. In 1977, he became a political appointee of the Carter Administration to the Small Business Administration. His first wife was Patricia Homes-Washington.

Jackson, Maynard, 1938-2003.

NCNB National Bank.

Wharton School.

Morehouse College (Atlanta, Ga.).

Students--Political activity.

United States. Small Business Administration.

Video Oral History Interview with William A. Clement, Jr., Section A2007\_114\_001\_004, TRT: 0:28:40 2007/03/27

William A. Clement, Jr. was associate administrator in the U.S. Small Business Administration from 1977 to 1981. In 1981, he started The Dobbs Corporation, a management consulting firm. In 1986, the firm became DOBBS, RAM & Company and focused on business with federal agencies. That same year, Clement married R. Ressie Guy-Clement. In 1992, Clement joined the board of Atlanta Life Insurance Company (now Atlanta Life Financial Group) as an outside director, and became the board's non-executive chairman in 2001. He describes his work at Atlanta Life as well as the company's national presence. Clement also talks about his participation in 100 Black Men, the Maynard Jackson Youth Foundation, Opportunity Funding Corporation, and Friends of

Morehouse. He also serves on the board of Radiant Systems, Inc., and is a member of Antioch Baptist Church North in Atlanta, Georgia. Clement was the executor of his parents' and Maynard Jackson's estates. He talks about politicians in his family.

Carter, Jimmy, 1924-.

United States. Small Business Administration.

Mentoring in education--United States.

Mentoring.

Video Oral History Interview with William A. Clement, Jr., Section A2007\_114\_001\_005, TRT: 0:21:45 2007/03/27

William A. Clement, Jr. talks about his two grandchildren. He also shares his advice for future generations as well as his advice in business matters. Clement reflects upon his legacy, his hopes and concerns for the African American community, and what he would do differently. He concludes by narrating his photographs.

Business--Vocational guidance.