

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interviewee: Effie Jane Brooks Oxendine

Interviewer: Dexter Brooks

Date: July 10, 1973

B: This is Dexter Brooks interviewing Effie Jane Brooks Oxendine. Mrs. Oxendine, when were you born?

O: I will be seventy-six years old this coming August 27.

B: So, you were born in 1897?

O: That is right.

B: Who were your parents?

O: Effie Hunt and Sammy Brooks.

B: Where were you born?

O: Well now, I can remember when I was two years old and we must have lived down there near Black Ankle. I can remember just as good when we hit old Johnnykin Swamp, where we was a coming to live. My daddy was moving and I believe he called it the old Stackhouse place. He raised all of his children there.

B: Your father was a farmer?

O: Yes, that is all the poor fellow knew. Now, my daddy, I tell you, he had a good head, but what he would read mostly was the Robesonian or the Bible. You know the Bible is an interesting book and what you read in there is God's word. And you could not stall him in the Bible to do him any good. But, there are words in the Bible that I cannot pronounce today. I bet you cannot hardly pronounce some.

B: There are a lot of them.

O: When he was a boy, he wore nothing but a shirt in the time of the old Revolutionary War [sic], when the nigger was freed. He was a boy and said he could plow a little, that is all. He wore a gown that was made straight. They did not have any britches or shirts like now.

B: And his mother had to make this for him?

O: Well, Granny Mitty never raised him. The old man Sink Lowry and his wife raised my daddy.

B: Why was this?

O: Well, she just gave him to old man Sink Lowry.

B: Were they related?

O: Not that I know of. But, what learning my daddy got, was from sitting by a fireplace. Maybe, at times, just the coals of a fire.

B: He taught himself, how?

O: Yes, he taught himself. Because, he would not let my daddy go among the darkies. We had no Indian schools, whatever, for years and years. The nigger had their schools and the white man had theirs. Well, what learning my mother got-- she could not write enough to know what her name is. But Sink Lowry would not let my daddy go among the nigger.

B: Do you know anything about your family history beyond your grandmother Mitty?

O: No, I do not.

B: Do you know anything about your other grandmother?

O: My grandmother Martha?

B: Mitty, now, she was?

O: My daddy's mother

B: She lived where?

O: She lived up there around Chapel.

B: What did she do for a living?

O: In those days, when Granny Mitty was living, she had a little place. She told my daddy, if he would pay the taxes on it, he could have it. He would give her the money every Fall to pay the taxes. My daddy turned it over to your daddy. John, your daddy, was a school teacher at that time. My daddy knew that he would not be able to work and make the payments like he wanted. So, when your daddy got in a shape where he could help himself, he deeded it all to him. So, nobody had anything to say about it, it went on over.

B: Do you know how this land came into the family?

O: No, I do not. I never did learn that. Granny Mitty was a Brooks and she married a Jones man. She had my daddy before she was married, you see. That is why Granny Mitty, I reckon, gave my daddy to Sink Lowry's family. She knew the old man Sink, at that time. He was a pretty outstanding Indian among the Indian people, at that time.

B: Mr. Sinclair Lowry and Henry Berry, were...

O: He was young when Henry Berry was in the woods. He was not in the woods with Henry Berry; he did not take to the woods like those outlaw boys. But, they would go to my granddaddy's.

B: Your granddaddy's, that would have been?

O: Old man Arlen Hunt.

B: You say they would go to Mr. Arlen Hunt's.

O: Yes, they would go there and have parties--dance and have a good time and drink whiskey. I never knew my daddy to drink any, but you know those outlaws did.

B: Mr. Arlen Hunt, he was a farmer?

O: Yes, we dug the dirt. I opened with the minion a many a day; plowed for him.

B: You worked for him?

O: Yes, I would go to his house and stay sometimes for two weeks and help Aunt Lindy and Aunt Ora. Well, old man Uncle Doc, he was getting pretty stiff-legged, then. He could not hold out plowing all day. He Aunt Ora, she was the hoe hand. He would put her in the cotton. Like in the morning, and by night she would be across it. Hit a lick here and hit a lick yonder. Next Monday morning, he would go out there and look, "Ora, get your hoe and get that cotton again! Ain't a'gonna do it. Ain't a'gonna do it." She was going to get that hoe as hard as she could. Knocked down bunches of grass out in that cotton. Now she was funny and she did not talk ugly to him, or anything like that. But, those are old people that I studied about today, I can just imagine and see them.

B: Tell me, when you went down to your grandfather's, did they tell any stories about Henry Berry?

O: They would tell me about how they used to come there. You know, one day, he threatened to slap Aunt Lindy, about pulling his moustache.

B: Henry Berry did?

O: Yes. (laughter) Yes, he was wanting her to sit in his lap; she did not want to. She and my mother were young girls, and I know they were good-looking; yes, sir.

B: Was Henry married?

O: Henry Berry? Not that I knew of. I never heard tell of them having any wives or anything like that. Now, how did they come to go into the woods? The white man come through here, oodles of them. They would go to the Indian people's houses (everybody's house) and take every mouthful they had. And if you had any bedclothes or anything they wanted to take, they would take it too. They would take everything you had. You would not daresn't say anything.

Right across the millpond over here. It was one of those Culbreck men, a white man. He had put out a whole lot of threats against these boys, these outlaws. He did not like it. He was going to kill that man that was threatening them. There were two--my daddy showed it to me many a time--two big gum trees growed together at the bottom. He says, "If he does not get me tonight, he will not get me." Because, he was that close to where he going to get on the train and leave this country, scared to death.

B: The Culbreck bunch?

O: Yes, the white man. Those outlaws killed him right there on the dam.

B: On the dam there at Mossman?

O: Yes, on this side.

B: Do you know which one killed him?

O: Henry Berry.

B: What did your father think of Henry Berry as a person?

O: Well, now my mother told me--she was getting up pretty big, about twelve, fifteen years old. My granddaddy would go along with them, with these party things that they would have, the dancing. But Granddaddy did not mean any harm by it. But if you said anything about those outlaws and they heard tell of what you had threatened them or something, they would kill you. They would kill you for it. Because they killed that old man Culbreck and oodles and oodles of people. You know who you love and who you like, and if you know anyone that is making threats against you, you would not like it.

B: Did the outlaws ever kill any Indian people?

O: No, they did not bother the Indian people, unless they wanted to die. They would not hurt you.

B: So, the Indian people supported them, like your grandfather?

O: Oh yes. If they came to your house and they asked you for a piece of meat or something like that, you would just walk over to the smokehouse and get it and give it to them. They would come back and get it, anyhow. That is the way they would do. See, poor Indian people working hard, raising meat and hanging in a big smokehouse. Those outlaws killed some of our worst people. They went to their house and shut them up in the smokehouse and locked them up and killed the old man. And put that old lady in there, and I reckon, they burned her up.

B: What people were these?

O: The Indian families.

B: Do you know their names?

O: No, I did not. But, my mammy used to tell me about what brought on this war, you see. They were going to Indian people's houses and taking what they had and they would leave you in bad shape.

B: What people were doing this?

O: That is the way the white people were doing us, they would do it today if they could.

B: Tell me, how many children were in your father's family?

O: Fourteen.

B: How many girls?

O: They had six girls.

B: Eight boys. What position would you be in?

O: Well, I am a little over two years older than sister Margie. You see the condition she is in now. Margie's health is bad. My health is alright, but I was in a car wreck and I got messed up, broke up. I cannot get around like I want to.

B: When you were a girl at home, had any of the kids left your father's?

O: Oh yes, all of them practically. Me and Margie and your daddy and Pete and Joseph.

B: You were the ones at home. Where were you living?

O: Down there on old Ash Pole Swamp. Right on the hill. There was a swamp on one side (Ash Pole Swamp) and Johnnykin Swamp on this side. Boy, we young'uns would have us a good time when there would come a big rain. We would wade in that water.

B: Could all of you swim?

O: No, we could not swim. We would wade in the swamp.

B: None of you could swim?

O: I think some of those boys could swim a little.

B: You were not afraid of the water?

O: No, we took a tub down there one day. Now, brother Joe was a little small thing, I do not think he was walking. We slipped him off from the house from our mother. She was out washing. We got us a washtub and carried it down in that swamp and put that baby in that tub--just carried him all over that water.

B: Joe was the baby?

O: That is right. I will never forget it. I forget a heap of things, I do. That I never forget.

B: Was life pretty hard on the farm? Was there a lot of work involved?

O: Well, at that time, I am going to tell you, they did not raise a thing in the world, but cotton, corn, peas, potatoes, and stuff like that.

B: The corn and potatoes were for the family?

O: Yes. We would carry corn to the mill and make corn mill. He would always buy a barrel of flour every month.

B: Where would he buy the flour?

O: Dillon, South Carolina from old Tom Dillon.

B: He would drive all the way there?

O: A two-horse wagon. We had two little dogs following. Those dogs would go sometimes and they would stop along the road and lick out cans, beside the road; a sardine can and any

can that had meat in it. Sometimes, they would not come back till the next day; they would come by themselves.

B: I wonder why he would go all the way to Dillon?

O: Well, he rented that place from old Tom Dillon. That is where we were raised, we come up pretty good. He did send us to school, what little we could get out there at the old Dogwood Church.

B: There was a school down there?

O: Yes. Let me tell you, we had a schoolhouse that was not any bigger than this room. The teacher would sit over yonder. Sometimes there would be twenty-five head, or more. They would come here toward Chapel to teach. There were lots of men--old man Buggy Hunt's boys--they were bigger than the teacher. He was scared to death of them.

B: Who was your teacher?

O: He was a Samson.

B: Oscar?

O: No, not Oscar. I went to that man, I believe, for four or five sessions of school down there at Dogwood. We would not have that long to go.

B: About how long would you go?

O: Whenever I remember starting school, out there at Dogwood, we would not have but about two months in the winter of going to school.

B: When you went to school, what time would class start?

O: Nine o'clock.

B: When would it turn out?

O: Well, you were supposed to stay until four o'clock. Sometimes it would be near dark when we would get home.

B: Would it take you that long to walk back home?

O: Yes, Lord! We had to walk four miles.

B: Four miles to and from school.

O: Yes. And we would go through fields and cut off all we could to get home as soon as we could, but nothing could help it. It would be almost sundown when we would get home.

B: What were the subjects you would study in school?

O: Well, I never did learn too much, because when you go to school just that short a session, there is not much to it.

B: And everyone, regardless of age, was in the same room?

O: Yes. We had a little heater, and it was boxed up. They put a stand all the way around it and made a box "concern" and set that little heater right in the middle. All of us would be near frozen when we would get to the schoolhouse. Lord have mercy. But, my daddy would make us go.

B: Why do you think he made you?

O: Because he was eager for us to learn something. Some of them learned pretty good. Sister Lindy and Sister Betty both of them, they had good learning.

B: But they had left the home by this time?

O: Yes.

B: Did you learn how to read and write?

O: Oh yes. I could beat a spelling match sometimes.

B: Did you study things like geography?

O: Well, we had one little geography and we had, what do you call these books that tell you about your body?

B: Health?

O: Yes, some kind of a health book. It teaches you all about your body. We had a speller--they did not grade you then like children are today.

B: There was no kind of grade given at all?

O: No. Just whatever the teacher said. Well, I am proud of my old daddy in the grave, because he did all he could to get his children some knowledge.

B: He encouraged you to go to school?

O: Yes, he wanted us to go to school.

B: Did he talk about that quite a bit?

O: Oh yes. "You see how I am," he would tell you. "I never had the chance of it." Back then he thought we young'uns were a floating in the schools. Look at them now, look at what little time they are out of school. Now, whenever that cotton came out of the field, that is when we could go to school. It would take, practically, all winter to get it out. Sometimes you would make twenty-five, thirty bales of cotton.

B: Before you could go to school, you had to get that cotton out?

O: Yes, sir! You did not go to school until you got that cotton out.

B: You say your father taught himself how to read and write?

O: Yes, old man Sink Lowry taught him how.

B: What about your mother, could she read and write?

O: She could write her name.

B: But, other than that she could not?

O: No. Well, it was a tough time, but he did not let us perish.

B: Was your father a religious man?

O: Yes. We had to go to Sunday school just like we did everyday school. And if you would wring around and did not want to go, sometimes he would let you stay home. If you were complaining you were hurting somewhere. He would say, "Now, let me tell you, if you stay at home you are not going anywhere else when I come home. When I am home, you are going to be home." He would not let you leave Sunday school and ramble here and yonder like a lot of boys do today. We were glad to go to school, Sunday school. We would walk it too.

B: How far was that?

O: It was about four miles to New Bethel church.

B: Your whole family would walk to church?

O: No. He and Mama would ride on our old buggy and mule. Sometimes we would take the two horse wagon and all of us would get on.

B: Your father was a faithful church-goer?

O: Oh yes, he had to go to church. But, I will tell you, he did not believe in any night meeting. I do not remember any night meeting in New Bethel church, but one time. One night he took the two-horse wagon and carried us all to the church; what they called the night-watch meeting. You have heard of that?

B: Yes. What would they do at the night-watch meeting?

O: They would have preaching, shouting, singing, and clapping hands and just a glorious time.

B: Was this a regular?

O: They would do it once a year.

B: Is it kind of like a revival?

O: No, it would not be but one night.

B: One night.

O: They had to go out there to see the new year come in and the old one go out. Boy! would they have a time, son.

B: Oh, this was a New Year's Eve celebration.

O: A night meeting! Now, that the only night meeting I ever went to in my life, when I was at home. But now, they take part of the week in prayer meeting. It was not so when there was nothing but Methodists.

B: Most of the people back then were Methodists?

O: Yes.

B: Do you know how the Baptists got started around here?

O: Well, the Baptists are mighty scarce, yet. Some preachers would come through and they preached everything Baptist.

B: Were these preachers white?

O: No, Indian people. We got to where we could preach.

B: Where would the Indian preachers come from?

O: Well, I reckon they studied up just like my daddy did. My daddy could get up and do a good talk.

B: Your father began preaching?

O: Well, he was a good exhorter, that is right.

B: What do you mean by exhorter?

O: Get up in front of the church and tell people how we should live, and so on. And what the Lord has done for you and brought you a whole lot of things. You want me to tell you a story about myself?

B: Yes.

O: Back here in the Spring, I reckon that it was along the first of April. I laid down one Thursday night here, and I do not believe Dexter, I was altogether asleep. But, I was dreaming and I thought I was dying. I went to heaven--just as pretty as you ever seen in your life. Well, I just knew that I was dead and over there with my mammy and my daddy and all of them. My friends and my sisters and my brothers and all were there. I could see them so good. I did not know what this was and I was so happy, I wept.

B: You say you were from a close-knit family?

O: Yes.

B: All your brothers and sisters got along well together?

O: Yes, they sure did.

B: Yes.

O: Raymond was the only one that stayed off.

B: He left home at an early age?

O: Yes, he stayed in Florida. He would come home once and again. But I could see your daddy. I could see my daddy and Brother Arlen and just oodles and oodles of people. I have two children buried out there in my graveyar. It has been quite a while since Ellen was put out there. I could see her bouncing around so good. You know, that was the "heavenest" thing that ever happened to me. I studied to myself, "Wonder if it is coming to pass?" Some day it will come to pass. Some people told me it was just something that would come to pass some day and I would see everything that I had seen, again.

B: It sounds like you had some happier days back then. What were some of the things you liked about your father?

O: Well, he always tried to keep us going and it was a hard time back then. So, it is not like it is now. Very few people would raise tobacco, but, I can remember my daddy raising some, one time. He did not get but three cents a pound for that tobacco. And Brother Andrew, he was in the tobacco barn, one day, and my daddy took a notion to tear that tobacco barn down. A josh struck him [Brother Andrew] right in the head and knocked him dead. Well, they just knew he was dead, because it busted his skull up and the whole skin was busted.

Cotton, nothing but about three and four cents a pound. Well, we got along somehow. We always managed to have a little something to eat, all the time. So, I summed it up, we had a pretty good daddy. It looked like he was always crazy about his young ones, more crazy over Sister Lindy than he was anybody.

B: He liked Lindy more?

O: Lord, yes. He done his best to send her to college up here.

B: I wonder why?

O: Oh, I do not know. She had a bright mind about her, brighter than the rest.

B: She was real smart in her books?

O: Yes. But Sister Betty, she was never much in her books. She would stay home to keep from having a hard arithmetic lesson. If she had a hard arithmetic lesson, she would stay home.

B: Who would make most of the decisions at home, your mama or your daddy?

O: Well, I guess they would make it up themselves, both together. You know what the old Hunt says about drinking coffee?

B: No.

O: Like that old Hunt says about drinking coffee. Long as she could get her coffee, she was happy. She did love her coffee. She is like me today, she likes to cook green peas and cabbages and collards--vegetables and the like.

B: Did the family eat well? Have a lot of food?

- O: Yes, we would have a blessed plenty. My mother did not plant one pea patch, she planted some every two weeks. Every two weeks you would see her poking about over at the field planting peas.
- B: What kind of meats did you have?
- O: Well, they were always pretty lucky about raising hogs. We had a big swamp down there. When we wanted to, we would kill a bunch of meat. Then when it was gone, my daddy would go and get whole middlin's at the time from down there at Tom Dillon's. You could get anything you wanted to eat. So we got along pretty good, considering.
- B: Did your father do much visiting? Did he visit other families from here?
- O: Now, the biggest visiting my daddy ever did was right in the middle of the summer, when people were holding big meetings. He would go to Chapel up here and stay week in and week out; and he would walk it.
- B: Why would he walk? He did not have any horses?
- O: Well, he did not have horses. He had two old mules and he did not want to drive his mules up there that far when he was going to stay the whole week. He would stay with Brother so-and-so this night, and the next night stay with somebody else's. Just sit around and talk and laugh.
- B: What kind of meetings would they have?
- O: They called them protracted meetings, big meetings.
- B: What would they talk about?
- O: They would have preaching and revivals. That is what it was but, then they did not call it revival.
- B: Did they pitch a big tent?
- O: No. They had a church, Chapel church. They would come down there to New Bethel and stay a whole week with us, lots of times. People would pull fodder--you know, to feed the horses. [They] do not do it now.
- B: So, he would go by himself?
- O: Yes.
- B: He would not take the family?

O: No.

B: How would you get along while he was gone?

O: Fine. We would cook and eat.

B: Would you do any farm work, then?

O: If it was necessary. We would hoe, cut grass out in the cotton patch. That is just the way it was.

B: Did you kids play with any neighboring kids?

O: Well, we had some. Now old man Caroway Oxendine and his wife. They did not have but three children--two boys and a girl. Well, if I understand it now, all of those children are dead, that we went to school with.

B: Those were your playmates?

O: Yes. They had one girl, her name was Franny. I will never forget her name. The first body that was buried at old Dogwood church; up there on the hill where we go across to cut off, on our way home. When she died, that is where they buried her. There is a big slant there, going down to the swamp. We would go down there to get water to drink.

B: Down where?

O: Back of the graveyard, down there at the end of Ash Pole Swamp.

B: So, this was the only family that you kids played with?

O: Well, those were our nearest children, unless it would be some colored girl, something like that. Way back then, people would go along and play with colored children. But now, we did not have colored children in our school. No, sir. That is one thing I want to see put out so bad. I do not know what in the world--it just burns me up whenever I get to studying about these darkies hanging around with the whites and Indian. They ought not to have never allowed that law to have been passed. Of course they look at it like this, they say "we do not have any buses now to haul the young ones on. If we are going to have a division between us, we have to have so many more buses and we do not have the money to buy them."

B: Would you kids play with the colored children?

O: Oh, there were some colored people that stayed close to us. Nearest family was colored people. You know they had a

little small homesteads. It was not like it is now. That is the reason I stayed here, it will come along way. Now, we had to live in old shacks. That old house we stayed in, that was a great long house and half again between it. I do not know why the wind did not take it away but, it stood there. Now, they tore it down. You cannot tell where the house was. I went by there one day.

B: Did you ever play with any white children? Were there any white people living nearby?

O: Well, there were some white people that stayed close to us and they were good neighbors, too. They loved my mother just like I love her--Old Rocky Martin.

B: Did they have any children?

O: Oh yes.

B: Did you kids play together?

O: Yes, some. They were not spiteful old things.

B: Did you get along well with them?

O: Yes.

B: What sort of games did you play?

O: I have almost forgot any of the games we would play. Now and again I think about them.

B: Did you play things like jump rope?

O: Yes. We would ruin our shoes with those ropes. We would go in the woods and pull grape vines down out from the trees and take a knife and trim the knots off.

B: So, you did not have regular ropes, you used grape vines?

O: No, we did not have rope. We would get those nice grape vines and trim them up. Lord! we would have a time.

B: But, you would wear your shoes when you were jumping rope?

O: You have to or you would get beat up. Your feet would soon get ruined.

B: How many pairs of shoes would you get a year?

O: Well, my daddy always would buy us some of the hardest shoes to wear I ever seen in my life. What they call the brokebacks.

B: Brokebacks?

O: You got old brokebacks. See, it was made right straight down the heel. Thick and stubborn and hard pasteboard or something or other in them.

B: So they would last?

O: Yes, you could not kill them. But, you had something to hold.

B: Did young people date like they do today?

O: No, sir.

B: How would a young girl meet young men?

O: Well, it was pretty shy because they would have to get a certain age before they were allowed to go to such as that?

B: What age did a girl have to be?

O: At least sixteen or seventeen.

B: And how would the two meet each other?

O: Well, at churches and at picnics about, you know. Now and again, they would have picnics.

B: Who would have picnics?

O: The church. Most of them would have a day set aside for picnics. They would have a table full of different things. That is what they called it, and then they would go in the church and have service and whoever could have the prettiest speech--they would have speak to us.

B: Would the speaking just be for the young, the young teenagers?

O: Yes.

B: Were girls and boys participating?

O: Oh yes. We always had a way of getting acquainted with one another--just like they do now.

B: Did young men go calling on girls?

O: Well, I can tell you they did not have any automobiles and they did not have up-to-date clothes to wear, like they have now. That was something that people back then did not have much pride in. Now, we have got some. They do not care whether they look at you or not. It is a pity.

B: Young men could go to a family's house and talk with the girl?

O: Yes, they did allow them to at home. Oh, yes.

B: Did they ever allow them to leave together?

O: No.

B: So, courting was done in the home, or at social gatherings.

O: Yes.

B: Did they have weddings?

O: I do not remember any weddings. They would just go and get a preacher and read the matrimony to them, and they were man and wife.

B: So marriages were performed in the homes?

O: And in church. Well, I reckon they would have done better if they had something to have done better with. That is the whole truth. Now, there is a great, great difference in young folks, today.

B: How old were you when you married?

O: I was about seventeen.

B: How old did you meet your husband?

O: I met him at Sister Mary's and Chesley's up there. You know where Donald Buckley's place is?

B: I know where Chesley lived.

O: Not Chesley, Donald Buckley.

B: No, I do not.

O: Well, Chesley lived there and he bought there at St. Anna and he sold his place to his brother. That is where I saw Henry the first time, I know.

B: You were going up there for a visit?

O: Yes, I come to Roland and got on the train to Pembroke.

B: You rode the train from Roland?

O: Yes. I rode on those trains for right smart now, down there from Roland to Pembroke. I liked it.

B: From the time you met him, how long a period elapsed before you were married?

O: Well, it was some three or four months.

B: You went back home and did you see him? Did he come down to your father's?

O: Yes, he came.

B: Did he ask your father if you could get married, or did you all just run away?

O: No, sir. I would not ask my daddy about him.

B: Why was that.

O: Because I married him. But now, my mother liked him all right. He came on Friday evening and stayed with us all night and went back the next day.

B: Your mother liked him, but your father did not?

O: He did not say anything about him, whether he liked him or not. But, there was nothing he could do about it any more, I do not suppose.

B: Was your father very talkative person?

O: Oh, he had enough for me and you and the whole family.

B: What were some of the things he would say?

O: Oh, he would see a fellow like Henry was at that time, he could sit all day long and think of something to talk about with him. I was up there in his settlement where he came from; he would find plenty to talk about.

B: You are saying that Henry and your father were talkative.

O: Yes. They liked to talk together.

B: So, when you married, did you go down to South Carolina?

O: Yes.

B: In Dillon?

O: Yes. On the seventeenth day of June.

B: How many children did you have?

O: Let's see, how many children did we have? There were five girls and six boys. Now, one of the little boys died when he was four days old. You know Huey, he died, too. He died in Vietnam. Kind of hard to take.

B: After you got married, did you visit your family very much?

O: Yes, let me see, we stayed at Sister Mary's a few weeks and then we got out of there. He was working at a planer mill. Then we got out and found us a place, a little farm and went to work trying to put something together.

B: As your father got older, he eventually quit farming?

O: Well, when he got too old to farm. He had to quit farming because he and my mother, both, were getting old. No, he did not do too much work when he got old.

B: Did he move in with any of his children?

O: No.

B: He stayed by himself?

O: He would always stay by himself. After my mother died, he looked like he would rather stay by himself.

B: How much longer did he live than his wife?

O: I do not know exactly how long it was, but it was a pretty good while.

B: Did old people, at that time, would they move in with their children, or would they live by themselves?

O: Sometimes they would. I reckon, whenever one dies out like that, they would rather be by themselves. Do you reckon?

B: Or maybe remarry?

O: Yes, some of them can jump off and get married right away, but that is not me. Never worked for me. When Henry left me, I had three little boys, and I felt like I was in the

awfulest fix. I said, "here I am with these children to look after and raise the best I can." And I reckon that is the way it is with everybody.

B: Do you recall the first act of discrimination against you as an Indian?

O: I have never had any discrimination against me as an Indian. But I tell you what, it burns me up when I can hear from the schoolhouse that these niggers and these whites--it is hardly ever Indian folks will fool with them. They do not have too many whites with the Indian people, but the darkeys and the whites--you see, down here at Lumberton here last year, there was a darkey killed a white boy. Do you not see? That is the reason I would love to be able to just throw that mess out. This discrimination does not make any sense. We were born and raised here. Why can we not go by ourselves and stay by ourselves and be nice by everybody?

B: So, then you kind of avoided the towns, you never went into towns like Lumberton for shopping?

O: Oh, I go to Lumberton very often.

B: I meant, maybe twenty years ago.

O: I go now, once and again. And I am going down there tomorrow. I had to get some new glasses and all such as that. I had to cook them some dinner. I told J. W., I will go down early in the morning and he will run with me down there and just pick them up, fit them on me--the doctor has to fit them on you--and I will be right back.

B: But as a girl, you did not go into towns very much?

O: It is hard living in the world. He would let me go with him once and again and he would let my mother go with him, if she was wanting something particular for herself.

B: Your daddy?

O: Yes.

B: Would he let any of the kids go with him?

O: Yes, he would take the boys with him, two or three of them.

B: The girls, he would not?

O: No, he did not want to carry them way down there. It was twelve miles from where we stayed in Dillon. That was a

long journey, and I did not like to ride on an old two-horse wagon all that way.

B: Which one of your sisters did you get along with best?

O: You know, that is a "next to" question. I will tell you, I do not know, hardly; I cannot separate it to save my life. You know Margie and I came along together.

B: You were about the same age?

O: I am better than two years older than Margie is, but you see, we were the last two children. I mean the girls and I have to go see Margie pretty regular. There not but two of us now.

B: Two girls.

O: So, that is all there was; not a whole lot to look for now? Margie's health is bad.

B: What about your brothers?

O: Well, you want me to tell you something, son? When I laid up yonder in the Lawrenceburg Hospital three weeks, and there were two weeks I did not hardly know I was in the world. Brother and someone brought me up here when I came home and he has not been here since. He has not been here at all. Why is that?

B: How long ago was this?

O: Oh, it has been about five years since I was in that wreck.