

Interviewee: Arthur Weaver
Interviewer: Mandy Beck
Date: November 12, 2012

Abstract: For my project, I interviewed Mr. Arthur Weaver. He is from Cherokee, Alabama. He was born in the front room of the house that he grew up in. He was raised in Alsboro, Alabama. He attended Cherokee Vocational School. Mr. Weaver joined the Navy when he was 18, and he ended up making a career out of it for the next twenty years. While in the Navy, he met his wife. They have one daughter and one grandson. When Mr. Weaver retired from the Navy he got a job in Muscle Shoals as the manager of a game room. He also worked at a printing company in Corinth, Mississippi. Now he is officially retired and on disability because of health issues. He really enjoys graphology, the study of handwriting, and he talked about how he is looking into buying an RV so he can spend the summers up North and enjoy all the scenery.

Arthur Weaver: I assume that you have a series of questions that you are supposed to ask or have some that you have come up with, or whatever.

Mandy Beck: Well...well, we kind of talked about some. I guess because everyone's person has different stories and stuff to tell. We don't really have specific questions and I couldn't think of anything really specific. I guess just to start off, just kind of tell me a little bit about, you know, yourself, and, you know, your background. And then when our teacher had the list of all the names down, like yours said that you knew a lot about the, um, Trail of Tears. Which I thought was really interesting.

AW: I don't know how I rate compared to a lot of other people, but yeah, I was born and raised here and all that, so yeah, I know a fair amount about it. Um, ok, first off you probably need to jot down my name, and the fact that I'm sixty-two years old. I was born and raised in the west end of Colbert County.

MB: West end of Colbert County?

AW: Mmhmm, west end. A little community called Allsboro, but most people don't know where Allsboro is at because it's just a wide spot in the road. When I was eighteen I joined the Navy during the [unclear] years of Vietnam and ended up making a career spending twenty years in it. And when I retired I came, moved back to the little town down there, little community called Allsboro.

MB: How do you spell that?

AW: A-l-l-s-b-o-r-o.

MB: I actually have never heard of that before. I've grown up in North Alabama and I've never heard of it.

AW: There are a lot of people that haven't, but like I said, it's just a little wide spot in the road. As far as I know, the only advertisement for Allsboro is if you happen to be going down Highway 72, about a mile before the state line. There is a sign that used to say County Road 1,

now it says Allsboro Road. As far as I know that's the only place that there is anything up about it. So anyway, let's see. I guess that's pretty good as a history. As far as the Trail of Tears, I think, actually, the reason that I got designated that way is actually misleading, but I have a medallion here that was from my grandmother, or my great-grandmother, excuse me. And the word I that I was given on this medallion, and its kind of getting tarnished on it so I don't know if you can read it or not, but its got writing on both sides. And probably the reason I got identified with the Trail of Tears is because I do wear that all the time, and it supposedly, according to my grandfather, which this was his mother. She is a half-breed and over here it says Alice and...Alice E. and...oh wait, daughter of J.D. and Sarah Anne Cobb. Sarah Anne was full-blooded Chickasaw Indian. So when they had the Trail of Tears, so that she didn't have to leave the area, she had to wear this. So that she could prove that she was legal to stay here. So that's probably how I got identified with knowing a lot about the Trail of Tears.

MB: That's kind of cool.

AW: Now in reality, outside of that, I don't necessarily know probably a whole hell a lot more than you do. But I'm involved with the Historical Society and stuff, and they are trying to preserve the Tuscumbia Landing over there, which was one of the sites where a lot of them were put on ships and were sent out. And, of course, Waterloo was one of the other major areas up here where they were sent out. And I have heard rumors, but I've never seen anything to verify that some were actually sent out from Riverton. Just a tid bit of history, Riverton originally was Chickasaw. That was the name of Riverton, originally, on the river. And that's why Cherokee is named Cherokee and not Chickasaw because they couldn't have two towns named the same thing. So as a result of it, Chickasaw was taken so when the next town was formed they had to take the name of the next Indian group, which was Cherokee. So, little tid bit that most people are not gonna know. Like I said, you were mislead to think I know a lot about the Trail of Tears.

MB: That's ok. I'm interested to hear anything you have to tell me.

AW: Well, Tom McKnight, I don't know if you've ever met him or know who he is.

MB: I haven't met him, but I've heard about him.

AW: He's the president of our organization, of the Historical Society for the area. He told me to bring along a couple of artifacts, which I didn't have a lot of artifacts, necessarily, to bring, but I did bring two books that are over one hundred years old. And they have a few odd and end things, a little piece of a newspaper, some political jokes, various things. I find them very interesting in the fact that we learn how to do a lot of things that we have forgotten how to do. They have a lot of recipes in them. First off, this one is called The Encyclopedia...Homes...wait a minute, I'm reading it upside down. Household and Farmer's Cyclopedia. Not encyclopedia. And this one is the Global Treasure of a World of Knowledge. Now this one has all kinds of other information. Now by the way, there's, not the same grandfather, but some bank statements of one of my grandfathers. They were in this book so I leave them in this book. This has information from the 1800s about various countries, different things.
(talking about something he found in the book)

AW: It just has all kinds of different information about countries and whatever, throughout it. This first book, or one of these was published...1886 was when this one was published. The first print was in 1882. I think this one is a little bit newer than that one, but not by a whole lot. Of the two books, this is the one that I find more interesting, myself. No, actually its a little bit older, 1880. Two years older, actually six years older than the printing of this one. I actually find this one more interesting because its more like an encyclopedia. But it also talks about meat preserving in cans, how to make lard, all kinds of things that is a lost art, so to speak. Kind of like my wife, doesn't think you should eat any meat that doesn't come from grocery store. I was raised, we raised animals. She was from the city. I was raised on a farm, and we raised just about everything we ate. Not everything. So I'm used to going out, killing an animal, and butchering it, and putting it in a freezer. Actually, back then you would cure it because you didn't have freezers. Freezers were available when I was a kid, but we didn't have one until I was on up a little bit. Economy was a lot different then. I'm sure you've heard old folks talking about working all week for a dollar. Let me tell you, they did. And they could buy just as with that dollar as most people can with a week's worth of salary now. Percentage wise, they make just as much as we do now.

MB: Well, you said you were in Vietnam?

AW: I personally did not go to Vietnam, but I was in the Navy during Vietnam. I was in a training command, training pilots that went to Vietnam. I have a friend, in fact he left yesterday, he's been down here for a week visiting, that did do a tour to Vietnam. And, of course, I know a lot of other people that went to Vietnam. It's one of those situations that depends on how you look at it. I was lucky in the fact that I didn't because if I had, I might not be here, but then again looking at it from a sailor, soldier type attitude, I missed out on a lot. It's one of those situations that depends on how you look at it. My only real "claim to fame" while I was in the military is I was drunk in the bars in Athens, Greece the night they overthrew (unclear). And that's about my only "claim to fame" as far as any of that. I was close to several other incidences. I don't know if you even remember or know what the Achille Lauro incident. It was when some terrorists took over a cruise ship and ended up rolling a Marine, that was in a wheelchair, off the side of the ship as part of their retaliation.

MB: Oh my goodness!

AW: We were less than sixty miles from that, on a ship, when it occurred. But I was not on a combatant at that time, at that time I was on what they call (unclear), and we had 380 women on board. You'll find some people that will talk about when women started going on ships, on Navy ships, and most commonly they misquote the actual date. Most commonly people will quote when they started going on combatant ships, which the first combatant they went on was an aircraft carrier, but, in fact, about ten years before that I was on a ship with an 800 men crew where 350 of them were women. And when I reported to that ship there were 350 women there, so I have no idea how many years earlier that women were actually assigned to that ship, but because of the fact that we were on a non-combatant and had women on board, we didn't get involved. Coincidentally, we were on our way to the Indian Ocean at the time, and coincidentally, when we came back, the military forced the planes down that were transporting the offenders from one country to the another, and we captured them. In other words, took them away from the people that had them. They actually held that force landing up because my ship had the women

on board. It was in the Suez Canal, and it was Egypt that had the people that was transporting them, and they were afraid that if they didn't hold it up, that they would try to seize our ship while we were still in the Suez Canal. So they held up forcing the planes down until we had cleared the canal. I was close to and involved in a lot of things, so to speak, but luck being with me, or if you look at it with a soldier's mind, I never was really involved in anything in particular. That was pretty much the highlights of my military career. If you were a military person, I could probably sit here and talk all day about various other things that happened, but to someone's that not on the inside, they wouldn't make any real sense to you, you know? Matter of fact, like I said, one of my friends, he and I went to boot camp together, went to A-school together, went to our first command together, he transferred a little ahead of me and wound up going to Vietnam, and when he got back from Vietnam I got transferred to the same station that he was on, again. I mean, we've been together a lot, and we've been real good friends. He travels full-time in his RV now. Basically, what he is doing is going around visiting family and ex-Navy buddies, you know? He just bounces around all over the United States. He goes and visits people in the North during the summer and people in the South during the winter. Other than that you're going to have to ask some questions because I'm kind of at a loss.

MB: I'm trying to think of some.

AW: When she gave the assignment, so to speak, what did she tell you she wanted? I mean, I know she wanted oral history, but...

MB: Just to kind of find out...since all of the people we are interviewing grew up in this area, just trying to get the history from peoples' point of view. She has some that are teachers, so they are finding out...some of them are focusing more on the Civil Rights Movement from a teachers point of view and some of them are reverends.

AW: Civil Rights, alright, I'll tell you about Civil Rights in my childhood. First off, as a whole, and this is my image of it, as a whole, this area was nowhere near as racist as a whole lot of other areas. It was plenty racist, but nowhere near as racist. My mother was a very devout Christian and I was raised to overlook color. I had black friends that I spent the night at their house and they spent the night at my house. I had an uncle that I never knew for sure if he was KKK or not, but always suspected he was. He was visiting with my mother and daddy and got up and left when me and five of my black friends that I played with walked in the front door. A little argument ensued with him and my parents, and he said they should have come in the back door and this, that, and the other. Anyways, he got up and left as a result of the little argument, so to speak, but that was part of it. I was going to Cherokee Vocational High School, which is the same as Cherokee High School now, they dropped the Vocational part, when the first four black students enrolled in our school. You heard stories back then that the only reason they were enrolling in white schools was to raise cane. Two of them, I think that was their main intent, was just to raise hell. Two other of the four, I honestly think they came because they thought they would have a better opportunity. And the two that came for a better opportunity, ultimately, came back the next year, the other two did not. Of course, there were more blacks that did come the second year, but the two that were the hell-raisers, so to speak, never came back the second year. One of them I became very good friends with, and, of course, they did get a lot of guff from a lot of people, but like I said, I was raised to overlook color. You'll even find people today who will say, "I'm not racist," they'll say, "I'm not" meaning themselves. I personally think they are

lying to themselves when they say that. You may control your racism, you may accept things, but I guarantee somewhere, and it may not be black, with the corrupt situation it may be Hispanic, but I guarantee you there is some situation where something is mentioned, or you're in a situation with a bunch of people of another race, you feel uncomfortable or you get enraged. You may control it. You may never say anything, but if you ever experience the feeling of either, being uneasy because you're in a crowd of these people or sense that rage, you are a racist. I really don't believe there isn't anyone who hasn't experienced that. So I believe everyone is racist, it's how you control it. I am probably one of the least racist people of my age bracket that you will find, but I'm not going to say I'm the least. I'm one of them I think, and it's because of the way I was raised. I have had, as a matter of fact, on Facebook I have lots of black friends, I have lots of Spanish friends...well, I say lots, I don't have lots, a sizeable number. I even have Hindu and Muslim friends. Just a tid bit since I threw that in, personally I'm a Deist, I was raised Christian, but due to the way I was raised I started questioning and looking at other things, and now I consider myself a Deist. I have a lot of Atheist friends who say I'm just a step away from being an Atheist, but I tell them no, you got it the other way around. I was an Atheist. To me religion is one of those things, kind of like sorrow, you go through the seven stages, or five stages, depending on which one you want to subscribe to. Anger, rejection, denial. To me an Atheist has one more step to go, acceptance. I don't know if you understand what Deist is. Do you?

MB: I do, actually.

AW: To me, Atheists have that one more step they need to go. Because I went through those stages. I went through being an Atheist, and now I am a Deist. Now I have acceptance, but I don't accept...well, you said you understand Deism, so I don't have to explain that. I try to judge each individual by themselves. I'll give you the benefit of the doubt until you give me a reason to not. That's basically the way I was raised. It didn't matter what religion, what race, what anything you are. Ok, you said something about when she was asking... This happens when you get old, you start having trouble remembering, but you were talking about the things that she was having people look at, or look for. I remember when this area, both Colbert and Lauderdale County, and several other neighboring counties were all dry, and bootlegging was the biggest thing. I could get bootleg whiskey or moonshine, just about either one about four times as close to any place that I can get it now. Of course, the price didn't change a whole lot. That was one of the things I noticed. It was cheaper when I joined the Navy to buy stuff that I was used to buying, but not that much. I don't know, bootleggers didn't make much money off of it, evidently. Either that or bars were making a killing too.

MB: I'm trying to think. I'm open to anything you have to tell me. I mean, I'm up here for school, but I grew up in Danville. It's like an hour from here.

AW: Ok, I know where Danville is at. I've been through it a time or two, not a lot.

MB: And my dad, like my grandparents and my dad are from Hatton, so I've been up this way and I've been in Florence before, but since I've been up here for college, it's the first time I've actually lived in Florence. So, it feels like there is a lot of stuff I don't know.

AW: Thank goodness I never lived in Florence. I don't have anything against Florence. I was born and raised out in the country. As a matter of fact, it was about a forty mile ride to get up here. I figured, well first off, I had to come to town today anyway, but you probably never would have found my place to come out there and talk to me so I figured I might as well come up here. I live out in the country, and used to, even though we had cars, it was an all day trip to come to town. All the roads were two lane, and most of them were dirt or gravel, and if you were to come to town it would take you a couple of hours to get here. Now I can do it in about thirty or forty-five minutes, depending on traffic and so forth. I don't know, come on, think of something. Think in your head the different things she talked about to the different people. You were kind of unfortunate and mislead that I knew about the Trail of Tears.

MB: That's ok.

AW: Some of the other things that people are looking for I might know something about.

MB: I think one guy had somebody that does Civil War reenactments.

AW: Did what?

MB: Civil War reenactments.

AW: I have a nephew that did Civil War reenactments and he would have been a better one if somebody wanted to talk about that. He can tell you just about every battle and everything that took place in this particular area. There are a few...what is his name? Tim? Can't think of his name now, but has actually written a couple of books. Not my nephew, but Tim whatever his name is, I can't think of it right now. He has written a couple of books and would definitely be considered a historian. My nephew knows a lot, but not quite enough to be considered a historian, but especially certain battles. He could tell you an awful lot about them. He gets me involved a fair amount because I like maps. So if he starts reading in a book about a battle he'll get me involved with the maps and so forth, and we'll go out and figure out where these different things were. Various landmarks and things of that nature. I've gotten a little involved that way, helping him out because like I said, I like maps. As far as what happened in the battle and stuff like that, I don't know much about it, but he did. He could tell you what kind of weapons they had, where they came from. Since I went out with him and helped him on the ground, with maps and so forth, a lot of times he can tell you they came from there, they came up that hollow, they were on that hill, and stuff like that. As far as me knowing all that, I don't know. He would have been a good one for someone to talk to about that. I'm finding that there is more and more people getting involved in trying to learn about the Civil War now. I don't know why it's becoming so popular now, or maybe I'm just becoming more aware of how many people there are, but it just seems like in the last ten years or so, there has been a strong number increase of people who are interested in the Civil War. And part of it may be that this is the 150th anniversary. That could have something to do with it, peak some interest. It was fought in 1862, was the beginning of it. We're in 2012, 150 years away. When it comes to something like that, personally, because I was a sailor, I was more interested in the sea battle of 1812 and stuff like that. Everybody to their own, I guess. What's something else?

MB: Well, I just think it's interesting that you're in the Navy because I have a friend, he's in the Navy.

AW: Currently?

MB: Yes, currently.

AW: Do you know what his rank is?

MB: I think he...

AW: What kind of job he does, I mean.

MB: He is an IT, works with computers and stuff.

AW: IT? Yeah.

MB: And he is on the USS Essex in Japan, and he's been there...how long has he been there? He was first sent there in January of 2010. I think he is still currently there. I haven't really talked to him in a long time.

AW: He probably is. He probably had a three or four year tour.

MB: I think that's what it is. I remember when he left he thought it was gonna be for like two years, then it turned into three.

AW: Typically, they...and it does kind of vary according to what your job title is. Some job titles have more sea duty and others have less sea duty, and back and forth. I would think in that rate he would probably be doing three years there. Unless he gets extended. This is his first tour, I'm assuming.

MB: Yes.

AW: Then it is likely that if he doesn't re-enlist, it is likely he will stay there until he gets out.

MB: Yeah, it's been a long time since I've talked to him.

AW: You figure by the time he went through boot camp and the A-school for the job he's doing, he's already got six months or so behind him. If he is doing a three year tour, he's only got another six months.

MB: Yeah, I'm not sure if he is planning on re-enlisting or if he is just gonna be done.

AW: It depends on...well, it depends a lot on, it all boils down to the individual, and it all boils down to whether he is enjoying what he's doing.

MB: I think he really does.

AW: I loved the Navy myself. Of course, it had its downsides, but so does any other job. When I retired out of the Navy, I came out here and got another job. It's got its ups and downs just like the Navy. One of the Upsides of the Navy is that I've been to about fourteen or fifteen different countries.

MB: That's pretty cool!

AW: That's one of the neater things about the Navy. I say that many countries and in a couple of those countries I've been to more than one place in that country. Like in Italy. I've probably been to ten or fifteen different towns in Italy. Different ports and stuff. Spain, I've been to about four.

MB: That sounds cool.

AW: Well, not right now. Economic troubles, big time. It was nice while I was there, but that was quite awhile back. I've been retired now since April of '79. So that's like twenty-three years I've been retired. Things have changed a lot. In the Navy as well. I have a grandson that just went in the year before last. He wound up getting a medical discharge, but he's out already, now. Hopefully, he's gonna be a UNA student before long, but I doubt he's gonna be very interested in history. He's more into the band. He's wanting to go and get his degree to be a band director or producer, or something to do with music.

MB: That'll be cool.

AW: He didn't get out in time to get all his VA benefits and stuff lined up to go this year. He may try to go the spring semester, I don't know. I'm hoping he goes anyway. If you got the benefits, you might as well use them. There's not a whole lot to do around here if you don't do something like that.

MB: What did you do, or what kind of job did you have when you retired?

AW: When I first retired, I had a job running a game room. Kind of like Aladdin's Castle. The name of the company that I worked for, it was not one of the major companies like Aladdin's Castle, and Showbiz, and stuff like that, but there were scattered throughout the south, the southeast. It was Take Ten, was the name of it. I started out running a store over here in Muscle Shoals in the old mall over there in Muscle Shoals. Of course, they closed that store and promoted me to Area Manager. Made me the Area Manager of Alabama and Georgia. That was too much like being in the Navy. I was home a week, gone a week, home a week, gone a week, and home a week. I got tired of that real quick. I thought ok I did my time away from home, and I finally celebrated Christmas with my daughter on her fourth Christmas. The rest of the time I was gone in the Navy. I was in Georgia, I think in Maryville, it doesn't really matter, some little town in Georgia where we had a store, when my grandson was born. That's when I decided I was getting out of that job because I missed my daughter's childhood, I wasn't going to miss my grandson's. I had VA benefits, school benefits, so I enrolled in Shoals Community College, and I now have a degree in drafting. So I went to work for a company drafting, but this, that, and the other. Wound up, actually, my major job since I retired, up until I went on disability, was working in a printing company down in Corinth, Mississippi. At the time that I went to work there, before I quit, before I left there, they had lost a contract. When I first went down there they

were the sole printer of National Geographic. They printed all the National Geographics from...I can't remember the year, the late 50s up until about eight years ago, I guess it was. Another company built a new plant and underbid us and got the contract. When I was there we printed half of all Avon catalogs that were printed. The Avon catalog order was so big that one company could not print them all. Well, one plant. Our company printed them all, but one plant couldn't. The Avon catalog comes out every two weeks. We would start a month before it comes out, printing it. It would take us a month to print the whole order. On the odd week, the other plant would start and run for a whole month. Just to give you an idea, in a twelve hour period, I have printed 800,000. Well, that was the bindery. I'm not sure how fast they got printed. I worked in the printing press part some. That's where I originally went to work and then I moved up and became a binder, which is where you put it together. Like magazines, nothing as fancy as this (gesturing to the books he brought). On the bindery, I have run in a twelve hour shift, I have run 800,000, and we had four machines doing that.

MB: That's a lot of magazines.

AW: And you think of doing that twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, for thirty days.

MB: Oh my goodness.

AW: That's a lot of Avon magazines. Then my health wound up getting bad, and I ended up being let go from there. My doctor tried to get me to quit and file for disability at that time, but I wasn't ready to quit. So I went to another company running the machine in a machine shop. That lasted about a year and then I wound up filing for disability. And now I'm on disability, as well. So I'm retired from the Navy and on disability. I don't have a lot of income, but it's comfortable income. I make more on my Navy retirement than a lot of young couples start out at. In other words, I make more than minimum wage off my Navy retirement. A lot of young couples start out at minimum wage trying to raise a family. I'm not rolling in money, but I'm better off than a lot of people. Of course, one of the best benefits of being retired is the medical, my wife and I both have medical coverage. That is probably better than any...there may be some other really high dollar insurances out there that are better. Definitely better than Obamacare. I don't know how you feel about politics. I try to steer away from discussing religion and politics too much because that's two of the biggest reasons people end up losing friends.

MB: I don't know a whole lot about politics. I probably should pay a lot more attention because...

AW: You do need to pay a little more attention, probably. You don't necessarily have to get all that involved, but you need to at least be informed enough to make a wise decision. Being it's right after Veteran's Day, and I'm a veteran. We sacrifice a lot to give you the right to vote. It's not just a privilege, it's a responsibility. At least, that's the way I feel about it.

MB: I didn't get to vote...I got to vote this year, I didn't get to vote in the last election because I was only seventeen, but I got to vote in this one, and I still didn't know a whole lot, and I was freaking out looking at the ballot. I was like "I don't know, I don't know what to do!"

AW: That's the thing that I'm talking about. You need to get a little bit more involved because, especially with the internet now a days. Go and type a person's name in. You know I hate parties,

I hate parties. I don't mean I won't vote because they're in a party. These people go in there "Well, I voted straight Republican" or "I voted straight Democrat." There's no reason to, you can pick and choose who's the best and who's not. Just because they're in a party that you favor doesn't mean that they're a good person. As a matter of fact, I daresay, as the old stereotype saying goes, most politicians are crooks anyways. You just find the one that's gonna be the most honest.

MB: I knew a few things and that's what I kind of had to go on to help me make my decision.

AW: A lot of times you got to just go with gut feeling because a good politician, a good worker, is going to be able to talk you into things. You aren't going to know he's lying, if he's good, and most politicians are. I don't know if you've ever studied logical fallacies, or stuff of that nature. If you get into philosophy, you may get into some of it. That's a subject that I enjoy, philosophy. If you get into it, it will teach you logical fallacies. If you start to learn them you will start to see through a lot of things. One of the majors is hasty generalizations. Let's say you win a trip to Hawaii. It's a week long and just so happens when you get there a monsoon happens and it rains everyday. You may form an opinion that Hawaii is not as sunny as everyone talks about because of your experience, but that's how you form generalizations. It's based off your opinion of a few days out of an entire year. But that's a fallacy. If someone says you're ugly, and you turn around and say you're stupid, one has nothing to do with the other. Those are fallacies. If you learn about the fallacies, the classic fallacies and stuff, you see through a lot when politicians and other people start talking. Even if you just kind of do it on your own, that may be something that you could get some personal benefit from by perusing them sometime. Of course, they get kind of deep, so if you don't have some kind of interest in it, you won't get very far in it. I'll give you another thing that I enjoy. I'm purely amateur at it, but I enjoy graphology.

MB: Graphology?

AW: Graphology is the study of a person's personality through their handwriting. By looking at the way people write and the way they form their letters and things of this nature. This, actually, goes all the way back...I'm not actually sure what philosopher...I did at one time, but I can't now, but one of the Ancient Greek philosophers pointed out that you could tell a man's personality by his signature. Just to give you some quick examples...of course, to do it you need unlined paper, without this border because that gives you references. You take plain paper and you write this information here. Had this not been on this side I would say that you are, and you may be, but I would say that you are a very disciplined person because you see how everything started out exactly under each other. With this line, it's hard to say if this is an innate thing in you, or whether or not because the line was there. You see people who write who slope down or they slope up, or they may go up in the middle, things of that nature. These things mean certain things or indicate certain things. You cannot take it as gospel because it is like weather guessing. Even with all the fancy electronics and everything the weather guessers have got, they are still guessing. They know that these weather conditions produce this result, but they can't guarantee that those results are gonna happen. Graphology is the same way, there is no guarantee if you dip your lines that you have that trait, or you're gonna exhibit that trait. But chances are real good that you will, and things of that nature. I enjoy graphology. I do it more as a hobby than anything else. I'm not currently, but I have been a member of a couple national graphology groups. Some that are part of the United States and some that are international, as well. Right now I am friends

with one of the prominent graphologists in the United States. A lady named Sheila Lowe. She's out in California. I met her through the stuff and she's written a couple of books on it, actually, she has written several books on it. Forensic handwriting is a branch of graphology. You will very seldom find a forensic handwriting expert that is not a graphologist. But you will find a lot of graphologists that are not forensic. The Library of Congress recognizes it as a philosophy. Not philosophy, a form of psychology because you can tell so much about a person from their handwriting. But it's a dying thing because right here, you did not use script. You can still tell a lot from your handwriting without that. There are only about five states that still teaches script. It is a dying art, and the sad part of it is a history thing here, but the sad part is that it's not gonna be too many more years where if you want to read the Constitution, you're gonna have to take a special class to learn how to read script. People are just not taught cursive writing anymore. Like I said, there are only about four states that still teach it. So when the elementary students grown up and become college students, and they wanna do research on the Constitution, guess what, they are gonna have to take a special class to learn how to read it. That's sad.

MB: I always hate writing in cursive just because mine looks terrible and you can't read it.

AW: But that's part of what shows your personality, how well you can read it, how you form certain letters. If you become an expert, like I said, I'm far from it. You can tell so much from how you make an "r", for example. There are thousands of ways of making an "r." There is so little difference in the way two people make an "r," that is why it's not an exact science. It's like weather guessing. You see this trait here, and is it this one or this one. Which one really is the one that fits it. Well, you kinda go with whatever looks the best. And you might be off some, but the bulk of it's gonna be right, if you know what you're doing. One of the things that gives it a bad reputation, and I may be a culprit that promotes this, a lot of people kind of do it as a parlor trick. They learn just a little bit about how to do it and then do it as a parlor trick when they really don't know what they're doing. So it kind of does have a bad reputation, but in some countries, England for example, it has been used for job interviews. Whether or not you got an interview was based on a graphologist's analysis of your handwriting.

MB: That's interesting.

AW: There are a few countries and the United States that has done that. As a matter of fact, because I had that interest when I ran that game room...I'd been in the Navy since high school so I didn't really know anything about hiring, I always just had someone assigned to me. So when I started having to hire people, the first several people I hired didn't work out, and I went to my graphology and hired two people that stayed with me the rest of the time I was there. So there's something to it anyway.

MB: That's pretty cool.

AW: They stayed and did a good job the whole way through. As a matter of fact, one of them I haven't seen in probably eight or ten years now. I think he's left the area, I'm not sure now. One of the females that worked for me works at Wal-Mart in Muscle Shoals so I see her all the time. Still friends. Being boss and employee we never were really close friends, but still friends. And one of the other girls that worked for me for awhile...well, as a matter of fact, I hired her with graphology, but she quit working for me because she went back to school. And the other girl is

the one I hired who stayed with me the whole time. It has its points. You just can't take it as an exact is the only thing. But as an overall view it's good. It can help you a lot. I don't know. I don't know how much material you need. I know if you're like me, a lot of this won't fit in the situation. Just for conversation, you said you work. Where do you work?

MB: I work...I have two jobs. I work at Journey's at the mall in Florence, and I work at Zaxby's in Muscle Shoals.

AW: I've been to Zaxby's a few times, but I walk by Journey's and that's it.

MB: Journey's is my first priority job, and Zaxby's is the one that pays the bills.

AW: What is your major that you're going for?

MB: My major is history. This is technically my senior year, but I have to go an extra semester.

AW: To finish up?

MB: Yeah, but my major is history, and I did have a second major in Spanish, but I made it a minor this year, so I'll be done with my Spanish as long as I pass my classes this semester.

AW: So what do you hope to do when you do graduate? Are you gonna try to stay in the area?

MB: I'm gonna try to get in grad school somewhere up north, either in D.C. or somewhere in Massachusetts because I want to specialize in Colonial American History.

AW: That would definitely be a good thing to get into.

MB: But I wanna go to grad school to work in a museum. My goal is the Smithsonian, so I'm aiming high. Maybe I can get it.

AW: Aim high and be willing to accept what you can get. Who's to say you can't get that high?

MB: I'd like to get my Ph.D., but that's a good ways ahead. I still have to finish here and then I actually have to get into a grad school.

AW: Mom and dad can only afford so much. You'll end up having to pay for most of it yourself.

MB: If I can get in I'm gonna try to get an assistantship or something where they will pay for your school.

AW: I'm friends on facebook with some people from New England. I've never been there, but I'm in the process of getting an RV and becoming a snow bird. Vermont is where we're hoping to spend our summers and come back here for the winter. Who knows, I may run into you somewhere up there.

MB: I went to D.C. when I was in high school, on a trip called Close Up. It was a lot about politics and going to museums, and that's what really got me interested in wanting to go back to D.C. I know it's a city, and I don't really like the city that much, but that's where it's all at.

AW: You could do like a lot of them and live in Jersey and commute. Or Maryland and commute. Things of that nature.

MB: I also like the thought of Massachusetts because I really like the Salem Witch Trials, that's my favorite topic. I actually looked at Salem State as one of my possibilities, and my teacher actually knows the new director of the history department up there, so I thought "hmmm, connections..."

AW: Don't burn any bridges unless you have to. Maybe that will work out.

MB: I think that will be really interesting.

AW: I'm more interested in the area strictly for the scenic part of it more than anything else, but seeing as how I am a bit of a history buff, I'll get involved in history, too. Learning things and so forth.