

Interviewee: Louise Hyler

Interviewer: Hannah Goode-Garmon

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Abstract:

Louise Hyler was born in Colbert County in the town of Barton in 1925. She grew up on a farm where she helped keep the books and take count of the cotton that her family farmed. After graduating Cherokee High School in 1944 she attended Alabama State. While still attending Alabama State she took a teaching job in Colbert County and continued summer school, earning a degree in Early Childhood Education. She later married and continued her education at New York University, graduating in 1953 with a Master's Degree in Later Childhood Education. She then taught school at Trenholm High School until being transferred during integration to R.E. Thompson in 1966. She taught school there from 1966 through 1989. She still lives in Tuscumbia and is considered a local historian. She has many family stories about what it was like growing up in a changing South.

HGG: Your name Louise Hyler and how old are you? If you want to say, you don't have to say (laughter).

LH: Come the 18th of this month I'll be 87.

HGG: Well congratulations that's... And did you grow up in this area? Where did you grow up at?

LH: Colbert County, Barton, AL. Redrock whichever you want to call it.

HGG: And what did your parents do?

LH: Farm.

HGG: Farm? So I guess they were into the planter...did they plant under someone? Or did they...

LH: Yeah yeah my father was a disabled veteran.

HGG: Oh okay.

LH: and he was not able to do any work, so he at a large part of the time we didn't own any land. Later on we did, but he rented land, hired the work done, just supervised the farming that's what he did, and he drew a little compensation from the government because he was injured in WWI.

HGG: Oh okay.

LH: And that's the way we made it. We had a hired hand that lived with us from the time I can remember, and did the crops.

HGG: What did y'all plant?

LH: Oh cotton, corn, sorghum, if you know what that, is sugar cane.

HGG: Yeah sugar cane.

LH: Sweet potatoes, white potatoes, anything you grew in a garden, he did two gardens every year. For the farming it was basic cotton, and corn, and sugar cane that's about all we did for...

HGG: Did you help work in the fields? Did you have to help?

LH: Everyday, tried to dodge it a lot, and didn't get a chance to dodge very much, but during the cotton time, umm I know he started me out when I was about nine keeping the records.

HGG: Oh.

LH: Isn't that something?

HGG: So you were really inclined to work with figures and math?

LH: Most of our workers come from guess where? Tuscumbia.

HGG: Oh okay.

LH: On a truck, come down and did the field work. Picked the cotton when it was time, weigh it up, and that's what I had to do, sit at the wagon and when someone came up to weigh the cotton, I got to write it down, and write the name down, so I didn't get to pick very much cotton.

HGG: But that was nice I guess?

LH: It was, it was, and I think it was twelve hundred pounds we'd have to...it was what the amount was when he would take it to the gin, for a bale of cotton. Now during the corn time I did help a little bit with that, but with sugar cane, they had boards they make for the purpose and you go up and down the rows strip all the leaves off first, and then the people come behind you and cut it down, then they'd pile it up in piles, and they would take it to the mill where they made the syrup. And that was a lot of fun.

HGG: So was all the cotton gin and the mill and all that local? Or did you have to take it...

LH: Local, local, it was local, it wasn't far, didn't have to take it very far. Each community had their own little set up, and ours was at Barton [AL].

HG: Okay.

LH: Now the cotton gin was in Tuscumbia [AL] I don't think they had no cotton gin...bring their cotton to Tuscumbia to the gin, I don't know, I didn't realize I had quite remember, I think they had, I think they had to bring their cotton on the wagon, I believe I'm not real sure about that.

HGG: So this was before you had any like farm implements, like a tractor? Or did you do it all by horse and wagon?

LH: Horse and wagon and hand. And they turned – the horse would turn the syrup mill around, just go around and round. And it would come out in what they call a vat and they cook it.

HGG: I bet it tasted good?

LH: it was, and you had to skim the foam off as it cooked, so people started working with dippers or whatever they had and they would keep the foam off. When it was ready now I don't know how to decide when it was ready, and then they would run it out of that vat into barrels and then it went to your home and that's what you had to eat on during the winter.

HGG: Oh wow.

LH: yeah, and during this month November and December the weather wasn't like it is now is when they was a hog killing time and they would help each other. The neighbors would know well I'll take next week and when the next real cold spell come another would take it and that's what they did.

HGG: Did they do it in the wintertime because it would stay?

LH: Yeah and they have to do it while it's cold.

HGG: Stay cold.

LH: Yeah while it's cold and everybody be praying that the weather wouldn't change it was so many weeks, they were salted down you know.

HGG: Cure it so it would stay preserved?

LH: Right about six weeks and smoke it while it was in that house that's why they call it a smoke house.

HGG: How many would you kill per farm?

LH: It would depend on each family - my daddy did around four or five.

HG: And that would last the whole next year?

LH: yep it would.

HGG: So you're was a working farm I guess y'all had all kinds of animals? Did he raise cows, livestock? That kind of stuff.

LH: We had cows, but they were just for milk.

HGG: Oh okay.

LH: he usually kept two and I don't know they breed them in a way so that you would have milk most of the time and umm...

HGG: So you never really had to buy anything from the store?

LH: Yeah you did like sugar.

HGG: Like sugar and flour and that kind of thing?

LH: yeah flour he would – my daddy would come in the wagon to Tuscumbia and get that whatever pound, twenty five pound bag of flour or two of them and ...and like steaks do you not go over here and pay fifteen dollars for one them? He bought them the meat on them was

completely yellow cause they were corn fed and he would buy them whenever he would come to town he would buy steaks, he'd buy stew, and all kinds of stuff like that and he bought grocery's like that.

HGG: Okay.

LH: And we lived near the river and so anytime you wanted to change from fish he would get on his horses and ride over to the river and buy fish for... they had game fish called dram it was so good it was like ten cents a pound and the catfish was like twenty-five cent a pound and buy and whole bunch of it and hook it to the bridle of the horse and bring it on home and see we didn't have refrigerators and so my mother have to cook it all.

HGG: Have to be fresh every day I guess? Do you remember when you got a refrigerator?

LH: Ohhh got a icebox I guess I was about around ten or twelve I might have been younger but I don't really remember. I remember when we didn't have one, I remember that so probably around ten we got a ice box not a refrigerator and this ice truck would bring the blocks of ice down and you'd buy a twenty-five block and you'd put it in that icebox and that's what we used for that and some things, let's see I went through so many era's I'm trying to get them together. I don't know in nineteen – my brother was born in 1930, this must have been around 1931, probably. My father and me and my little brother out playing mudcake, if you know what that is, he dropped something on his toe and it had gotten infected and he was gonna try to debride it and the needle broke off in his finger and he had to go to Memphis [TN] set up infection, he went to Colbert County Hospital for them to treat it they put seven or eight tubs through his hand and they tried to keep it, but he ended up going to Memphis and my little brother was not – he was just a little baby he was born in '30 so it had to be like in '31 and we moved with my grandparents while he was in Memphis, and during that time they had one of those wells, a well and it was huge the thing that the pipe went down in, huge real dug out and you could keep food down in there cause it would keep cool.

HGG: Because it would stay cool.

LH: Yeah.

HGG: So how long did it take for your dad to come back from Memphis?

LH: Not too long, maybe it was some months I'm not sure what month, but he was down there awhile. They was able – they took the finger off is what they did down there got rid of the infection. I was just talking about that because of the way we – people kept some of their stuff from spoiling put it down in their well.

HGG: Yeah that's really interesting – Now during all this time when you were going up did you attend school during this time?

LH: Oh yeah.

HGG: Because I know you were a teacher.

LH: Yeah I started school after we have moved with my grandparents. That's the reason I can keep up with the years pretty good. That's where I started school from so I must have been five before we moved out of the other house when my father left going I must have been like five or near five and we moved with grandparents and began school from my grandma's house – grandparents' house. And at that time they had pre-primer and first grade. They had an A and B, I guess it was pre-primer and then before you went to a primer all that before you could go to first grade, but if you was – if you did your work well enough you could do all that in a year.

HGG: Oh okay.

LH: Yeah and I was doing pretty good before I started because my brother was stand right there and I would stand right there and everything and my mom helped him and I learned it from them anyway.

HGG: That's good.

LH: After school I remember my dad would bring these big boxes when he come up here shopping with all the stuff in it he would buy. He brought one home and bread was written on there – now that was before we moved with my grandparents and I asked my mamma what it was and she spelled it out to me bread b-r-e-a-d I thought that was the greatest day of my life, so I ate so much bread cause when we'd go to the table I was always pass the b-r-e-a-d I remember doing that. Will you pass the b-r-e-a-d bread that's the first word I learned, but anyway I started school from my grandparents' house we had to walk about a mile and half I don't think it was quite two miles, could have been two miles. And all the kids who lived in that area we would just get together and walk to school and go back.

HGG: Did they live close to where you grew up – in that area?

LH: Yeah there was a little block of people who lived there three or four families. There would be five, six, seven or eight of us walking to school. Cause it was from the first grade through the eighth grade going to the same school.

HGG: Oh okay.

LH: We had a Rosenwald school grades one through eight and we didn't have a high school in that community nowhere in that area at that time. Kids had to come to Tuscumbia and some of them boarded with people and worked their way like for a white family. They would board with them and then help them out in the house. I know one close friend of mine did that and then I had another cousin skated up here on skates to school. They had a hard time getting to school, most of them when they passed the eighth grade there was nowhere for them to go and finally in 1938 they started Cherokee High School. And our school the Rosenwald School that was at Barton went through the eighth grade caught a fire. Guess who the first person to discover the fire? I did. You know they let us out for a break and we went outside for a break and we was playing around and I looked and I said Jean there is smoke coming out and it was white – it was really white smoke and someone ran inside and told the teacher. Everybody got out but it burnt down. And at that time they started taking in everybody to – they took – we went to Cherokee. I can't remember what the elementary kids did for one through – I guess they went to – I don't remember that. But we had to go to school at Cherokee – they might had started having some in a church for the lower grades at the time, I don't know – we went to – started Cherokee High School that's where I graduated from.

HGG: And did you go to Florence Teacher's College to get your – or how did you get your teaching certificate?

LH: Oh I finished high school in 1944 in April we graduated April 28 because they – the school system because so many kids had to stay out of school to help gather the crops, they had six weeks of summer school and then regular school didn't start back until this time of year after the crops had been gathered in. And after I had started teaching we the teachers had to go to the fields where the kids were if we were going to get paid. You had to go to the fields where they were - I didn't understand that.

HGG: So you had to go to each individual farm?

LH: Well no not everyone I don't remember having to do that – I don't remember how they decided which one we were going to go to, but I remember we had to go to the fields and I thought it was so silly at the time.

HGG: So you could get paid?

LH: That didn't happen long maybe a couple of years, then we would not have anything to do while the kids – while we were out for the crops to be gathered so I just started helping and picking some to. I started because there was nothing to do.

HGG: Might as well

LH: I had had some friends who could pick 300 pounds of cotton and I couldn't get – if I got 100 pounds I was lucky and I would have had to work really hard cause I was determined that they were not going to outdo me. I was right beside them, but the reason they was helping me out and I didn't know it. They were keeping me up with them, they was picking the cotton off the same – you have two rows in the middle and you pick on this one and that one, but anyways I decided I'm going to pick 200 pounds of cotton before I die. That's what I did after I was teaching I went on while the kids were out and did that. Catch a bus and come to town go see a movie, buy a book go back home and read. At the time it didn't seem bad at all because we didn't know. When I finished school I wrote to Alabama State, well I had always said I wanted to teach it started with my first grade teacher her name was Cora Ross and you know how you fall in love with your teacher. So I wrote a letter on notebook paper in pencil to Alabama State I don't know - I guess I asked for an application that's when I started school down there. And I did work study and the first job I had was in the nursery school and I had to open up the nursery up at 8:00 o'clock and take the kids in. Then I had to go to class and then at about 11:00 o'clock I had to go to the main dining room and get two gallons of milk and take them across campus to the nursery, and then I would have to meet them in the afternoon when they got ready to go home. And I got a chance to change that job to a maintenance or janitorial – I mean cleaning, I dropped the nursery job because it was too broken up. All I had to do was get up in the morning early and mop the halls, clean the bathrooms, and mop the halls in the dormitory. There were two of us and I mopped half of the long one and clean the bathroom, then get a shower and go to breakfast and I was through.

HGG: So did that help pay for your tuition?

LH: Yeah I think I paid \$14 dollars a month. My parents had to pay for me; I did the rest I worked. And this is a long story; you should have had some questions because I can go on and on and on.

HGG: This is what we want, we want the stories that you want to share. I am kind of curious though what it was like to be a teacher for that many years? Was it always in this area? You know in the Shoals area.

LH: Right I taught five years at Cherokee in Colbert County.

HGG: Did you teach elementary?

LH: Elementary yeah. First job I had was first grade. What happened was I went to Alabama State two years and my daddy got real sick – real sick and I didn't get to go back which would have been my third year I guess, so since I didn't go back to school one of the teachers told me to go to the meeting. You know the meeting they have at the beginning of the year go to the meeting there might be a job and sure enough the superintendent said is there anybody here who needs a job they didn't worry about how you were qualified, they didn't worry about – but my had went up slow. Put your hand up, put your hand up!! I put my hand up and I got hired in Colbert County that's where I got my first job and I taught there for five years. Then during those five years – see when did I start school – I started summer school at Alabama State see I was teaching during the school time and I started going to summer school at Alabama State and I went to summer school until I finished. The first certificate you get is a D certificate and then third year you get a C and you get a little bit more money every time you got a different certificate, so finally I got married and I went back to school one whole year and I graduated in 1953. And at that time there was a lot of talk going on about integration and so I said to my husband you know what when the time comes I don't want anyone telling me I finished a substandard school so I need to go school and get my master's degree and the kind of person he was you'd think he think about it – he said okay and I wrote to NYU and I wrote to Columbia and Columbia would have required me to make six to eight credit hours before they would accept me. And NYU I didn't have to make up anything, so I went up there for a year and got a master's degree in later childhood education and came back home and I – there were a few superintendents that didn't like the fact that I went to New York to go to school, but I couldn't go to Alabama and so – I finally got a job in Tuscumbia.

HGG: You were probably more educated than most white teachers at the time?

LH: They didn't need to have much – a lot of them had gone over here I'm not putting the school down or anything, but they really didn't – some of them had never even had a course in how to teach reading because they told me so. They would come and ask me – I never had no class in how to teach reading, so it went well. The salary when I was working for Colbert County the first job I got was \$95 dollars a month and there was a teacher there that had been teaching for a while and we were talking and they was paying me more then they was paying her, but you don't ask why because they didn't have no reason why. They didn't have a standard or scale for salary for teachers at that time, so finally in 1945 they started on a scale for people who had the same training/education would get the same about of money. I had a problem with transportation getting back and forth. I had to make my own fire when I got there, catch the bus go part of the way and maybe walk the other part of the way. Get there in enough time to make the fire, sometimes the kids came to school and hadn't had any breakfast, so a rolling truck – some of them would go out there and stop that and get us something a little something to eat. I would take food a lot of times, but not breakfast. But I would fix – we had one of these little stoves like this with a fire underneath and I would just set a pot up on top of it and put weenies in it and I think I

made some slaw the night before and help them eat I sure did. I had 57 kids in a one room school and it was an old worn down torn down church that had been a school with a wall between it a folding door that was pushed down and that's where they kept the coal at the other end of that and we would do the class work in the other end. My oldest student was 17 I had two or three five year olds, now they were not supposed to go but nobody cared. The parents sent them and the only thing I could do was let the superintendent's office know and they didn't care. I talked with one of them yesterday that was in that class – so smart – and I would – the fourth, fifth, and sixth grade was a big help. But I spent my time teaching the first, second, and third grade and during play time I would teach the fourth, fifth, and sixth grade. The window was always open and they would go outside I could always seem them and they was good kids and I didn't have no trouble they would go out there and play and then I would interchange them. I had all this energy I didn't get tired; I didn't have sense enough to know I was tired. And we – they was real smart kids they was one of the most teaching assignments that I feel was the best.

HGG: Is that after you had gotten you master's or before?

LH: it was before. I had not finished Alabama State at that time. Let me see if I'm getting that right. Yeah because the first jobs I got after I got my master's degree was at Tusculumbia. I didn't have it while I was in Colbert County.

HGG: Did they – had they integrated schools at that time?

LH: No, no I went to Trenholm School I got a call to come to Florence and at Trenholm the same day and of course I thought about the ice on the bridge, and Florence paid a little more, but I only lived about three blocks from Trenholm and I taught there eight years, starting in 1958, I taught eight years there. And in '66 that's when they integrated and they had to pick somebody who – I guess I was the meanest one – I don't know. I always had really good discipline in my classrooms and I think it was because if you are really real with children they know and I treated them like they had good sense and I would talk to them like they was – you have to take responsibility for yourself and anything you do that is not nice you are reflecting on your mom and your home and I know you don't want to do that. Then I would get down to you keep acting like that I'm going to call and they are going to have to come and get you the mental institution – but anyways for whatever reason I never had any problems with discipline and I guess that is one of the reasons my principle was asked to pick somebody and he asked me if I would go and it didn't matter to me. I had never been around white's as such because some girls worked in homes, but my dad never did let us do that, but I had never thought of people being that different, it just wasn't there for me. Anyways that was in 1966 when they sent me over to R.E. Thompson School. And the principle over there at the time was Mr. Howard Chapel he was older and he was – and he told me if I had ever been that way I have learned better now, so he was a great supporter of me. Now some black teachers that went into the white schools wanted to quit, but I

wouldn't have quit anyways. Because I wouldn't have let something like that stop me from the career I wanted to do – I would have a hard time. So I didn't have a rough time at R.E. Thompson, you know the parents were afraid. And I understood that I could understand that if my parents had taught me – you know we learn what we live and that's all they had lived all those years. And I was not upset because they felt that way. It was my responsibility to change the picture you know. And some of them were really, really sad and didn't want their child to come to my room. While my first job there was special ed. teacher and I taught for one year, mostly reading under the title one program and that was good because they had those programs then and I was hired to do that. And Mr. Chapel being a wise man he didn't want those kids being – who were behind to get a complex and feel bad, first of all I'm black and then all the slow kids coming, so he made it half and half. He sent the smartest ones along with the ones who were behind. And no one could just look at them and say ha look at you. And that helped a whole lot and so those kids who were already advanced I just had to fix a different program for them. And the others – and so I was a little bit – the only thought I had was, I told my husband supposed I get there and I don't love the kids. I said you going to have a problem on your hands, supposed I get there and don't love them kids I said you going to have a problem on your hands because you going to have a responsibility you got to take care of me because I ain't going to work. And when I got there that thought never came to me, but when it hit me a little boy the first one that came I was in a room about as twice as big as this and they sent them down there one at a time I had to test them. And when he left out of the room that's when it hit me I love the kids and I won't have to quit. He left out of the room and my mind went what am I going to do to help this kid, he's behind in reading I looked at his test scores, big brown eyes, cute as he could be. I didn't have that no more to think about. I did that for a year and the next year I was in the classroom, that way they kind of ease you in and everything. Some parents were very unhappy, and most of them didn't show it. Because I think most of them thought that if I go in there and don't act right with this lady she might take it out on my kid, and they didn't know I would never do that. But how would they know? I don't know if that was a part of it or what. One lady her child came – they put the list on the door when it got time, she saw her child name on my door she went to the office, the principle came and told me about it later, but he wouldn't move any kid because if you start doing that you've got a whole big mess. And so the next year – this was a little girl, the next year she had a little boy and she went to the office and asked Mr. Chapel if he would put him in my room, he didn't put her in there and she was one of my best parents. And then I had this other lady she act real nice, but she was scared to death and by the end of the year – we had an individualized program at that time and she – on her the state test that they give them – this was a fifth grade class, the test that they take at the end of the year she topped out at twelve, you know she didn't know all the stuff in between up through twelfth grade, all algebra and all that was not in there, but according to how the test was structured and the way they grade it that's where she was, and she came to thank me and she just cried and cried. I think because she was so afraid that she child was going to go backwards, so you see that's what I had to break down.

HGG: People's ideals that they had grown up with?

LH: Yeah. Then people started saying – one lady came to me Miss Ilia I hear you don't let anyone tell you what to do I said no not really. I told her how old I am and how many years I went to school and how many years' experience I've had and the accomplishments that I had. I said if I can satisfy myself my work is not bad because I set a real high standard for myself as a teacher. I'm not going to say I'm the best in the world, but I do that. I said I'll tell you what you can do, you can tell me some things about your child that might help me work with him, but as far as telling me what to do in the classroom no ma 'me you can't do that. I was kind of mean.

HGG: Sometimes you've got to be.

LH: and what happened all this was the telephones. Everybody learned that and it just went away. So I taught there from '66 until '89 and it was a joyful. I would have one or two black kids every year, until finally later on they did the unit schools and they sent all the kids that was from a certain grade – three I think grade four maybe to R.E. Thompson and that's when I had the chance to teach some more black kids, and I didn't have no problem with that, no problem with integration. I can't think of a few little things happened, but nothing serious that wouldn't happen probably in any school, kids tell stories. There was a lady do you believe that. I said if I had a child and I thought that was happening to them and I sent them back in there the next day she thought I was making her write with a broken wrist. And I had said to the child we were doing study questions in social studies I gave her a list of questions and told them to look up the answers and write them out. If not how are you going to get them to read it? So she wanted her friend to do hers and I didn't let her friend do hers. I told her I would because while they are working I'm just there with them you know. I told her you just find the answers in the book to the questions and I'll write it down for you and she told her mom that I was making her write with a broken arm. So a lot of little silly stuff like that might have happened. But otherwise I enjoyed it and I retired after 37 years – 36 or 37. In between that time I went and worked a year at Alabama A&M and hated every minute of it. Because those kids were worse than the young kids – they were.

HGG: Oh I'm sure.

LH: they were. They didn't know fractions –

HGG: what were you teaching?

LH: and I couldn't excuse them – I couldn't look at them and say I feel sorry for you I love you. I told them you need to go back to high school.

HGG: I hear that you are a local historian too. That's what they told me, so what local history do you like?

LH: Local history

HGG: or in general do you have any local history stories you want to tell? Or anything that you've found in your research about this area?

LH: Local history –

HGG: Well you just gave me a lot of local history

LH: Well one thing about that might be of interest I always thought that Muscle Shoals from a certain place and I read not too long ago that where it really came from. We lived at one time right on the river – Tennessee River my dad well all the people in that area – in that community, I don't know how many came from farther away across the creek, Cane Creek that divided this community. They would go out and dredge for mussels and they would come back with their nets real full. They had vats with fire under them and they would boil them out and then they would take the mussels out of the shells looking for pearls. They also sold the shells so five or six families would be down there at a time, or more. We did that and it was fun too.

HGG: did you find any pearls?

LH: we did. I didn't but my dad or mom did or somebody found a few, but some people did and they would get like five or ten dollars for them. Someone did find a pink one, oh my that was a lot of money. And the boats would come up the Tennessee River and they would stop and buy the shells and the pearls.

HGG: Steamboats I guess?

LH: Steamboats yes. They would have the ladies on there you see those with the ladies with the dresses on? I guess they were on their way to Chattanooga, I don't know. But, my granddaddy cooked for them and the boats that would stay there they would stay for a couple of days and he'd go on there and cook for them.

HGG: So your family grew up in this area? Were your grandparents from this area also?

LH: Yeah.

HGG: had they been planters? Or were they –

LH: My grandfather on my mom's side his name was Giles Watkins He used to tell a story about when his mom was sold for one plantation to another that she cried so that they picked him up and just threw him up in the wagon where she was. They said if she was going to holler and cry that much then here he is. And he used to tell that story and he just did the regular farming like everyone else. He was a very nice man, a church man. Made sure my mom and all of them went to church and sent them to school as much as possible. There was a school up at Courtland that you could go up there and board and whatever little bit of money it took he paid it. And one of my aunts went up there and I think if you finished ninth grade you could teach, and she managed that. My mom went and finished the ninth grade up there. So that's the most education that they had. His father was an Indian, and if you've ever seen Tom you already know that – if you ever listen to him you know that. Well he was one of them he was on down the line. The first one I believe Fredrick Watkins he would be my granddaddy's father and my grandmother she grew up in the area. Now on my father's side I have a beautiful picture of his grandmother she was a beautiful Indian lady, and my grandfather what would be my great-grandfather he was that I've learned that he was an overseer on the plantation. The good little plantation down at Cherokee that they [inaudible] about twenty years ago. It's a good little plantation that's the plantation that they grew up on, and they claim he was one of the overseers there and when the Yankee's came through they gave him some money and told him where to go and hide it and he said go this way. I said we need to go down there I don't know if that's true or if anyone has ever found it or not. But it would have been it was kind of like – it wasn't exactly located. They tore the house down I guess ten or fifteen years ago and some of the family has been down there, but I've never been. During our family reunions they go down there. They lived like – you think people then were so poor and didn't have anything, they had as much as I would want at that time. My granddaddy wore the best of clothes and had a T Model when I was five and I was scared and they had to put me in it, but once I was riding I was fine with the rest of them, but I couldn't stand that noise they have to tie me down to get me in there. He also bred horses, beautiful horses they would learn to dance and all that stuff and he sold them. My other grandfather on the other side he was just a good farmer. And people would butcher cattle during that time and would go around selling it and you didn't have to have a stamp from the USA or nothing and that was good stuff, but he never did do that. But I remember them coming to our house and we would buy some, but he raised watermelons, anything to eat he had. Now I've never been hungry and didn't have anything to eat my mom would can so much stuff, can it and put it up under the bed. All kind of jars and I loved to do that and help her. We would go pick blackberries, I couldn't pick many.

HGG: Would you eat them all?

LH: I don't know. I wouldn't stay in one place, it looked like there was such a big bunch over there so I'm going over there, and I had a brother that never moved and he just stayed in place and picked and he would have his bucket full and I wouldn't have half. That was over there in the river bottom – in the creek bottom cane creek – we rode in the wagon. There are some things about churches that might not – the churches were just divided. It was just hard in a little community like that. Same families and this church right here – but my dad belonged to one a Primitive Baptist and my mom belonged to another one, she was a Missionary Baptist because that's the way their parents had brought them up. We went to both with them there was never any complaining we went to both, but when we got older there were more young people at my mom's church so that's where we went, but we still went to the other on occasions, but it was just kind of strange how they felt about each other being churches in the same community. And a little bit of that still going on and you know if you look at sociology things just don't change quickly. Moray's (sp.) don't change quickly and it's hard for me to understand. It just doesn't, so they still have a different feeling toward each other, they are no one down there as old as I am, one person. I have a first cousin down there she's 89, she'll be 89 in March. I have a brother who is 87.