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Mr. Reppard L. Thomas

Donna Thomas

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NAME: REPPARD L. THOMAS

AGE: 77

INTERVIEWER: DONNA THOMAS

I. When did you first come to Savannah?

A. 1924

I. Did you come to Savannah for any special reason?

A. Lookin' for work.

I. What kind of work did you do before you came to Savannah?

A. Well, I farmed and worked in a factory. The acid factory.

I. How old were you when you came to Savannah?

A. I was just 28.

I. Were you married?

A. Ah, yeh, I'd been married eight or nine year.

I. What brought you to Savannah, why did you come to Savannah?

A. Looking for work.

I. What kind of work did you fine?

A. Well, I started conducting on a streetcar.

I. What kind of experiences did you have?

A. I didn't have any experience. I trained for the job. I learned conductor for a while then I went to driving one man car. Later on, the company transferred over to the buses and I went from streetcars to the buses. I remained there and retired in '61.

I. What kind of people rode the buses?

A. Rode the buses? Well any and everybody. All nationalities people from foreign countries that you could understand. And you met some mighty nice people, some mighty rugged people. Of all sections, of all kinds, preachers down to gangsters. But you had to treat a passenger as a passenger. That were all passengers when they got on the bus or streetcar. You had to treat them all alike, but you know that was hard to do. Well, some people you could make friends with and some you couldn't. You could try to accomodate 'em and they'd cut your throat for it. They'd do everything against you, then they're is some people that are just as nice as they could treat ya. They'd go out of they're way to accomodate ya. And I've always found that they're are some very nice people in Savannah. But whenever I come to Savannan it was about 50 years behind. They're no political bunch here that run. Savannah and they'd run two of the same bunch, fact, back when mayor Hitch and Mayor Gamble was here they'd run aginst each other and they belong to the same party, and if one got elected and he wanted to take off, go somewhere, he'd just turn the business over to the other.

I. The same man that he ran against?

A. That's right. They was big cronies. But they'd knock each other to the bottom when they were running against each other. But it was all understood. They understood the game and what it was for, you know it was to keep some one from going in and Savannah was hard against "livin" wages. The bunch that was in they wanted it all. They'd rather a dollar had been spent and them got the dollar, than somebody to have made 2 dollars, them get a dollar and a half, and for 50 cents left. When they started Union Bag here they was suppose to start paying fairer wages, common labor. They had a meeting, Mayor Gamble and these little factories like the Guina factories said that that would ruin them, they couldn't pay over a dollar and a half a day. Mayor Gamble met with the officials of the Union Bag and told them to pay that kind of wages. I think they was 40 or 50 cents they was going to start paying for common labor and Mr. Gamble told them that they could get all the help they needed off the WP for 18 or 20 cents an hour.

I. Off the what?

A. W.P.A. That was kind of a government thing to give organization to get people wak to do that couldn't find it. In other words, it was relief work, you might say in order to give people something to do in order to buy food, and clothes and not have to live off of charity and a, it looks like those old political men would realize that the money that was paid out in wages would have been spent here in Savannah and been building Savannah, But they wanted it all. They didn't wanted nobody to accumulate anything, they wanted to hold it down so they could be boss, and Savannah was 50 years behind. They didn't try to build it and Savannah didn't start building until W.W.II and the shipyards started and people begin to come in from different sections of the country, waking in shipyards, and that's when Savannah started to grow. Today you can see what Savannah covers, A large area. Savannah wasn't 1/4 as large back in 1924, when I came here as what it is today, and the political bunch can not say that they're the ones that built Savannah, because that old bunch held it back.

I. Who built it then?

A. Well it started building itself, then the real estate men hoped in to make a big fortune and they did it and they are still makin a fortune, that's the reason homes are so high now. The real estate men is getting 50% but of the homes that are build today. If they don't get it one way they will get it another, they get it out of the interest, if they can't get it out of the principle, they get it out it out of the interest.

I. When you were driving the buses, what area did you go in, like what was your route?

A. Well, I was running extra to start with for about 15 months and I ran all the lines.

I. E Like a fill in?

A. Yeah, I filled in like where there was a regular man off and where they

had to put on extra runs to take care of the passengers. That's where I got my work, and little trippers, and at that time you were supposed to report 3 times a day and you didn't get anything for it unless you made time. You only got platform time, if you made 30 minutes you got 30 minutes, you didn't get no overtime and you only got what few minutes you worked and that's the way you lived back then.

I. Like, did you clock in? Did you have a clock?

A. Yeah, when we reported in, we were checked by the dispatcher. If you had a regular run and you were one minute late, an extra man got your run that day. They were very strict about that. It was very hard back then. The company was very hard on the men. The company wanted the men to be smart but they tried to make them dumb.

I. What do you mean?

A. Well, they wanted them to be smart and know how to talk with people and to answer them, but if there was any changes to be made, the drivers were the last ones to know it. The public knew it before the drivers did and the were always asking questions about it and we wasn't able to answer, so the company was trying to make us dumb instead of smart.

I. Why do you think they did that?

A. I don't know it was uhh, I can't imagine why they did such as that, but that's the way the business was run.

I. Well, where did the routes go? I mean, what part of Savannah did they cover?

A. Back then Isle of Hope was street car, Thunderbolt was a street car and a use to have a parcel car.

I. A What?

A. What they called a parcel car. People would go up town and by there groceries living out there around Vernon View and Isle of Hope and there was a lot of these little towns, stop sites, like Beaulia, Bethesda Home different places, I can't name all of them now, but at each one of those little stores you would stop and set the peoples groceries off, and that's what they called a parcel car one that picked the peoples groceries up and brought them out and delivered them to these little stations and that's the way they got there groceries home. There wasn't conveniences back then like there is today. People don't realize what they are blessed with today to what it was 50 years ago.

I. Did the people call in and tell what they wanted for their groceries?

A. No, they would go in on the street car and buy these groceries and then the parcel car would bring them out and deliver them to these little stations.

I. Oh, that's neat.

A. That's where I started driving a bus when they took Montgomery street car off, they had a run that went out here at night, and I was driving the Millhaven street car, I'd finish up on that route about 9 something. I'd bring the bus into the barn, streetcar rather into the barn.

I. The barn's where they kept tjem all?

A. Yeh, and then I'd take a bus and go to Montgomery thats the first bus that I drive, After I drive that I took a regular run on the busses, stayed there 'till I retired.

I. How much did it cost to ride a streetcar?

A. Well, when I first started, the fare was seven cents and tokens were 15 for a dollar, but we was only issued 5 packs of tokens a day to sell to the customers cause at 7 cents a fare, they didn't figure that they could cut the fare very much and when I started I started at 41 cents an hour.

I. Was that good money?

A. Ah, yeh, back then that was good money, and in 5 year we got a penney raise each year till yoy got to 55, 50 cents and that was tops. I was making tops in five year. A conductor and motor sergent 41. a operator, that's a one man car started at 45 , but then when I was making that, top 50 cents an hour, there's a lot of people walking the streets looking for work . A lot of people working for 50 cents a day, a lot of them couldn't find work for 50 cents a day, and a it was very hard that was back during the depression, and 50 cents an hour was big money. So actually when I came to Savannah, , I come, came here when the depression was getting down to the bottom. I was fortunate enough tp get a job and I didn't realize the depression like a lot of people did. But I had relatives and my wife had relatives and a though that we realized tge hardships that people had and then we had friends here in Savannah , and there's a lot of people that we helped if we could, but we couldn't help everybody. But some of them well known we would never turn them down, and we would do a little, even if it wasn't much. But you know, we couldn't do much, because we had a family of our own to raise and our own family come first.

I. How big was your family?

A. Well, when we came here, we only had two children, a daughter and a son, well, then later, we had another son arrive, and a little later on, we had a little daughter to arrive. That was four. That was 6 in th family, and I don't think since we came to Savannah that we suffered through the hardships. I don'tsay that we was rich ormany thing like that! We was poor people working for a living, but my family didn't go lacking and I think if you were to talk to any of them they'd tell you the same thing that I did, that they didn't, didn't go lacking on something to eat or something to wear. Lack of attention, when they needed medical attention and there's one thing I always tried to do was to keep my bills paid as I go. I found that that was a good policy and I'd advise anybody else not to go into the hole in debt, where they can't pay, Of course its not as bad now about taking a chance as it was back then. ow then, you can afford to take a chance because there's plenty of work. If anybody wants to work, and don't work, its because they won't work. Cause anyone can get a job now that wants it.

I. Where did you live?

A. Where did I live? Oh, I lived in several different sections. And a when- ever I come to Savannah, Let's see, the city limits come out around 41st and 42nd and then it was extended out to Victory Drive, and it only went back as far as Skidaway Road, out there to Cathedral Cemetary. Then it went out west, out there around a that old cemetary out there on Ogeechee Road.

And that was the size of Savannah. Later on they extended it from Victory drive out to a 55th street, then on down to DeRenne. You can just imagine now the size of Savannah where it was extended from what it was 50 years ago. And it, it is altogether a different city. And the people in Savannah, they's just some mighty nice people here. And some mighty nice presently. There not friendly with each other and they done consider each other like they did back during the depression. Everybody knew everybody, Everybody was friendly and there's in fact everybody was willing to lend a helping hand.

I. During The depression?

A. That's right, because they knew what it was, but now, its everybody for himself, and the Devil for all.

I. When you had the bus route, did black people have to sit in the back?

A. Yeh, at that time it was segregated, but those signs cause me a lot of trouble. I had some mighty good friends amongst the colored people and some of them would a took up for me in a minute, and I appreciate it. I didn't worry when they was on the bus. Some of the colored folks is just like the white. They was dirty and would stab ya in the back. Some of them would be a friend to you, if you let them and they'd protect you and you find some of them here today the same way. You find some them that will stab you in the back, steal or anything, and some of them will treat ya decently if you let them, and that goes for the white and colored. There's sometimes, you can spot them and sometime you can't, You've got to be very careful.

I. Did you ever have any gangsters on your bus? Were you ever held up or anything.

A. No, I was never held up. I feel like I was an act of it one night. But I took the fellow out, he had been riding with me and treating him like I did and talking with him is what cut him off. And I felt jevious of him. But he worked out on the shrimp boats, and the night he rode with me he wanted to borrow some money, and I told him I didn't have it to lend. 'Cause I had to borrow some to work with that morning, The next day I heard that he had got in trouble out there with one of the trucks out there with the man he was working with. He was working on the shrimp boat. And he stoll the man's clothes and all and they caught him over at the bus station on west Broad, before he got away, and he was the same one that had tried to borrow the money from me. But he stood up there, I was afraid to ask him to sit down. He wasn't supposed to stand up there. I wasn't suppose to let anyone stand up there with me, but he'd keep watching me. He'd keep watching my chamber, and Id keep talking to him and I feel like I talked him out of it, more than anything else. I didn't try to scare him out of it. Because he was a pretty good size man. I didn't feel like I was able to handle him. If I'm not mistaken I think they found a gun on him when they caught him. So I would have just been in dutch if I'd try to done anything. There's a lot of times that you plead with people and let them know that you want to be a friend to them, why you can get my a lot easier than if you try to push people around.

I. What kind of things did ya'll do for entertainment?

A. Well, the company used to have a building out at Thunderbolt center. They used to have dances and different entertainment music out there. Then Isle of Hope was a Mister Willabey I think the company backed him up with that. His, you'd go out there for recreation and go out there fishing. Get a little batou and go out there paddling them with the oars, fish different from what they do now. A lot of times I was with a pole. You very seldom see anybody fishing with a pole, unless it's in fresh water. They had dances out there, dinners, things like that. Then, at that time there was very few automobiles and people would come out on Sundays at night and they'd catch the streetcar and take a ride for recreation. Sometimes I'd be loaded with people just going out for a ride you know they knew about what time the working people would be home, keep from being overcrowded so they wouldn't have to stand up. Wait till later hours and on Sundays, they was going out for amusement and a lot of times, it was crowded on Sundays. Hardly have standing room. The sides would be full, be packed from the back to the front.

I. Did they go any special places?

A. Well, Thunderboldt, Isle of Hope, places likt that, and Tybee, now people would go over there right by the central of Georgia, would run a train over to Tybee. That's the way people got over there. There wasn't no highway at that time. They rode the train back and to. We used to go over there for a picnic. Picnics the company would give us. Picnics that we had to carry a lunch, but the right men would have to go on the morning, be back to work at 2 or 3 o'clock. Then the day men would go, and they'd come in when they wanted, if it were midnight, and I'd always go over there and get blistered because when I'd get over there in that salt water, I'd have clear blisters on my shoulders. I've had to grease my back to keep my shirt from sticken to it. But I'd work right on, wasn't no laying off.

I. Did you take your family?

A. Oh, yeah, That's what it was for. For the men to take their families over there for outing, things like that for recreation.

I. Did it cost you anything?

A. Well, our fare didn't cost us, and they paid everything. I believe but our lunch, we had to carry our eats, fare and bathing suits, the company paid our expenses.

I. They paid for your bathing suits?

A. They rented them, see, they didn't buy them..They just rented them.

I. Down at the beach?

A. Yeah, they used to rent bathing suits if you didn't have one. you could rent it, Company wanted the men to show their family a little pleasure, so they'd give these outings. That's what its for.

I. How often?

A. Once a year, and then in the fall a lot of times, through the benefit association, They'd have a picnic outing, or an oyster supper, shrimp supper, things like that.

I. Where did you go for those?

A. We usually have that over around the barn. That's where they keep the street-cars.

I. Where was the station located?

A. ^{Quinette} On Quinette. It was at Quinette and Paulsen, But now it's further on down toward-----.

I. If like just an average person was going to go down to the beach, how much would it cost them?

A. The best I remember, it would be less than a dollar.

I. For the whole family?

A. No, for each one. But anyone under twelve, it didn't cost anything, and there's a lot of people who's small and they rode free cause they weren't very old. But there was a lot of people who came from the country you know, and on Sundays, they run these excursions you know what they called excursions, they was put on extras. So that they could haul a lot of people and they'd run these excursions over there. But they'd have to, in order to take care of the passengers that was coming over on the train going over to the beach on Sundays you know.

I. When Did they stop having the bus? When did they do away with the train? When did they make a road?

A. Well, I don't remember just now, what year it was, but it's been, well I guess it run 10 or 15 year after I come. It must have been around '35 or '40. I couldn't say for sure. Probably about '30 or '35, maybe '40, I'd estimate around '35. I don't think that I'd miss it by far. Then after they take that off, they got that highway so you could drive back and to. Then the, their was a company I think it was greyhound put a bus on, running back and to. I don't know why the company I was with didn't take it over. They had the track down and they could run an electric streetcar, the highway had the current running on it. The streetcar was run by current, electricity. They could easy put streetcar on there, I think they'd done a good business, and probably if they had it on there'd be a lot of people riding it today.

I. Why did they do away with the streetcar at all?

A. Well they figure that it'd be cheaper, I think.

I. For the Company?

A. Yeah, and then I think they wanted to get it separated or something. They used to let the company, the electric company run, I used to work for the electric company, that's where I started when I come to Savannah. But they thought that the transportation was going down, so I think they thought they ought to get it where they could set it up, because as long as the streetcar was running, they had to have current. It was hard for them to get rid of. And they'd have to have furnished current. But now, if they hadn't taken it off and switch it would be almost impossible to run a streetcar on the line, because there's too much traffic, you've got too many automobiles and you just couldn't no way. You couldn't run no schedule with a streetcar now at all. And the streets would be too narrow as many automobiles as they're are in Savannah today. I wouldn't if I was a young man to get out and drive one in Savannah cause I don't want to kill nobody. It'd be a lot of them killed. They're were a few people killed during the time that was on there.

I. Accidents?

A. Yes, accidents, nobody wouldn't do it purpossly, it was accident, but still it was somebody killed, run out in front of it, things like that. Run out across it, so close it was impossible to stop even though they did all they could. That was enough. It would be worse today than what it was then. Cause there are so many more paople in Savannah and back then, the majority they either drove the streetcars and had to pay the fare, and the fare was very small, and a lot of people didn't have that fare and they had to walk. People weren't able to afford cars, very few pople owned cars.

I. What did your children do for entertainment?

A. Well, its kind of hard to say. They played vall and swam, went to the show, went swimming and went visiting a lot.

I. Where did they go the the theatre? Where was the show?

A. Savannah Theatre. and they went to the Lucas every now and then. Then there was some shows on Broughton. I can't remember Folly-There used to be one called the Folley, I can't remember now, but there used to be 3 or 4 on Broughton street.

I. How much did it cost for them to go?

A. Well, the fare was right then, right expensive, but at that time it was more expensive than what they are today, because people weren't able to go, I guess 10-15-20- cents, some, some shows you could go in for about 10 cents, but that dime was as hard to get as a dollar would be now.

I. Where did they go swimming?

A. Tybee.

- I. Could they go out there by themselves?
- A. No, we always went with them, we didn't let them go by themselves until after they got grown when they was coming up they didn't, it was to dangerous. I think they enjoyed themselves. They had relatives living in the country, they admired their relatives and their relatives admired them. They loved each other and that was a picnic for them to get out there.
- I. What did they do?
- A. Eat watermelons, chew cane, have pender boilings.
- I. Have What?
- A. Pender boilings, scratch peanuts.
- I. What?
- A. The difference between a pender and a peanut. They are all peanuts and they are all penders, but a peanut grows up they don't spread, has peanuts right around the roots. But penders is a flat top and it runs off when I was on the farm, I had them to run from one corner. You would plant a row of penders in between the corn on 4 feet rows. I have had the penders to run from one corn over to the other across thich would be 8ft-4 ft on each side, that would be 8 ft. from one side of that pender hill to the other. And they would be filled practically to the end and thats what they called Penders. and thats what they used to have. They didn't plant peanuts. We planted what they called flat tops they made more and they was larger. Peanuts was smaller. They have got peanuts improved now. Where the peanuts is majority of them is lots larger than what they used to be. 600 Out there they had egg-boilings, goine swimming, fresh water, they had a good time, theyed dig gophers.
- I. Dig What?
- A. Gopher, you never did see a gopher?
- I. Yea----yeah
- A. Thats what they call a tortoise you know they didn't call them tortoise. Theyed call them gophers,ha, and theyed dig a hole in the dirt you get out there and dig the gophers out the hole.
- I. Was it a race to see who could find one first?
- A. Well, them gophers holes was easy to find, some times you had to dig down about 4 feet to find one. It was kind of dangerous to, cause there was snakes that would bed in them gopher holes. lot of times, sometimes there was rattlesnakes bedded, so it was dangerous, they didn't realize the danger tho that was in it!
- I. Did you all have doctors available at any time.
- A. Yeah, we had Doctors available back when I was coming up, there was about 8 miles to the nearest doctor and you could go there and get him but he would be gone somewhere else on a call, You could leave a message and probably the Doctor would come the next day, call him one day he might get there the next sometimes, if he was there you would get him the same day you called

him, but the majority of times it would be the next day before he would get there. and there was no drug store then, the Doctor would carry a little grip and he would carry the medicine in it and he would fix your medicine when he got there.

I. Where were you borned?

A. Appling county.

I. Where is that?

A. Baxley is the county seat, uh, well, its joining Wayne county, I was born and raised just across the line. When Appling and Wayne joins on what is called the New Honey Hill, there is Old Honey Hill and New Honey Hill. My dad at one time owned Old Honey Hill and New Honey Hill. Its a lot of land while a lot of land out there was 490 something acres, and at the time my daddy bought that land, he bought for a \$1000.00. Back before I was born. Today that land would cost you \$400.00 or \$500.00 acre, if you could get it for that price.

I. Per Acre?

A. Yes, and thats the difference in how its going. That goes back to about 80 years ago, at least 80 if not in the 90's, and farm land has gone higher than what city property has. Farm land is outreaeous. A fella used to could buy a farm and pay for it, but the price it is now a fella could have an awful hard time in paying for a farm on what he made from it.

I. What kind of crops did you'll grow?

A. Back when I was coming up, when I was born until the last years, the money crop was cotton. Used to have what they called Sea Island Cotton. It was a long cotton, it had a long, staple. It sold for more. The uppline. cotton, which is your kind and thats the only kind they plant now and very little of that around here. Go back up it North Georgia, they plant a right smart of it, that short cotton tho, it only sold for about half of what the long staple did. That was the money crop if you were on sandy land it would pay you to plant that short cotton in fact you'd come out just as well anyway. Short cotton would make more to the acre than the long cotton, it was easier to pick and it would be opened up, you could have it out before the weather got so cold, the long staple people used to be picking around Christmas and after Christmas to get it out there was one year we was picking cotton in March. That was made the year before, but that was during this panic, you ever hear of the panic?

I. No.

A. Well, that was more severe than the depression. During that panic that cotton went down to 3 cents and a person couldn't afford to hire it picked, he couldn't get anything for it, and they had to pick it themselves, so we was picking in March, and they was breaking the land up behind us to plant again.

I. You had to pick it your selves?

A. Yeah, I was small, I was, i guess I must have been around 10-12- years old when that happen, but later years when this boll weevil hit they had to fall on short cotton and if they got a half crop they done well. Then the agriculture department was fortunate enough to come out with dust to spray to eliminate the bugs and insects, and they got where they could raise a right smart of it. But then they got to growing tobacco and when they almost done away with cotton, business, very few people now plant cotton. You couldn't get no body to pick it now. I would want an acre of it cause if I was to plant an acre of it, I would have to pick it myself to get it picked.

I. Did you ever pick cotton when you were small?

A. Oh, yeah, that was one of the first jobs I ever had. My daddy bought my first suit that I ever wore.

I. Your first suit?

A. Yeah, it was a little suit with big brass buttons, now I thought that was something, I can remember it just as good I was small you know.

I. How old were You?

A. O, I was somewhere about _____ I might have been 3. I wore homemade clothes. My second suit after we got our cotton out, I picked and bought my second suit myself thats before I was six year old before I ever started to school. I bought my first suit picking cotton.

I. How much did the suit cost?

A. \$ 4.50 and I wore it just as long as I could get in it.

I. Where did you go to school?

A. Whats known as Long Branch, its an old country school and when I started the schooling we got was 2 months out of the year, 40 days schooling was what we got. That was in July and August, 20 days in July and 20 days in August. That was our school and then after I got 10-12 yrs. old they built another school and got a five months term in the fall and winter. They would stay along in November and December and run on into to run out in the spring. But I never did get to go a full term.

I. Why?

A. I would have to stop and do something at home. There was work to do on the farm, and back then the ones that went to school is just reversed to what it is now. The ones that got to go to school was the ones that were to lazy to work, them that would work had to stay at home and work, them that was to lazy to work would go to school, now then if a person don't go to school, its because he's to lazy to go.

- 5
- I. What kind of subjects , what did you learn?
- A. Well, you never did hear the little poem back then.
- I. I don't think so.
- A. Reading, writing, spelling and arithmetiv taught to the tune of a hickory stick.
- I. They spank you.
- A. No, they didn't spank you, they would wear you out.
- I. Did you ever get a spanking?
- A. I got one whipping in school my brother gave me that.
- I. Your brother?
- A. Yeah, half-brother.
- I. What happened?
- A. I guess he should have whipped me, but I didn't think so. I had it in for him until I got about grown. he whipped me and one of my friends for disturbing. We were just measuring pencils to see who pencils was the longest. We was small and the bigger ones were sitting in the back whispering and having a big time. he didn't say anything to them, but wore me and my little friend out, and I hated him until I got might near grown. I intended to whip him.
- I. Was he your school teacher.
- A. Yeah
- I. Your half brother?
- A. I held it against him for a long time before I could over it, and all the schooling I ever got, Like I say, I didn't get to go to a full term without missing, some you see, we counted full terms. I can tell you my teachers. I started school in 1902. Louzella Coursey was my first teacher, Annabell Chancey was my second teacher, Wade Watson was my third and my brother that whip me was next, but he didn't teach but just a short while. They had trouble in school and broke it up. He didn't finish the term, so they got Allen Lee, That was the old school. Then when they got the five months term we had a Miss Cook Milligan, Louise Wolf, Robert Tyre. He was my first cousin and Elven Nickloson, and all the school I ever got, well I went to Oliver Williams. All the School I ever got was 30 _35 months and I was mixed up from the sixth to the eighth grade when even I quit. Well you know when even I was going to school there was a fella named Frane Tyre, he was about a year younger than I was, but he looked to be the oldest in size. Wethought more of each other than anybody else. Played together and never had no trouble but he had a cousin that was about a grown man and he had us a fighting by the time we got out of sight of the school. Fight all the way home. Tear one anothers clothes

off. It would tickle him. His name was Collen Dickson. he was a mean one. and so the next day we meet up when we would leave each other that evening. We wasn't ever going to speak and there was a cross roads where we met if got their first I would make a cross. The road with my foot so he would know I had done gone and if he got there first he would do the same. If we got the chance we'd wait for each other. Even after we had fought the day before and weren't going to speak. We make up our minds that Collen wasn't going to make us fight nare nother time. But we were going to get on him. We were going to turn on him. That afternoon he knew just how to start. He would have us fighting again and we'd forget all about what we had promised each other. You know and be fighting like dogs. There was oneright that--- one of my cousins came over and spent the night and they had been burning woods. The woods was firing and some of the logs, and I had saved up some eggs, and my cousin I believe he brought some over and we put in to have us an egg boiling and directly my daddy walked up purty close. He spoke "Say you boys alright" We said "yes Sir", Well, he said, I was just checking on you to see if you were alright, he got close enough to see what we were doing and turned around and went back to the house. I just knowed I was going to get beat half to death.

I. Did you have your own chickens? Is that how you got your eggs?

A. Yeah, we had chickens, but back then eggs didn't sell for much, they would sell what the could butt they weren't worth but about 10-15 cents a dozen.

I. There were so plentiful?

Purty plentiful, every body in the country had a bunch of chickens and they raised biddies on grits then. They raised them cheap and they had them for their own use, some had a big bunch of chickens, some didn't have so many.

I. Why did you leave the country and come to Savannah?

A. Well, it was so hard to make a living out there until I wanted to hunt something different. I didn't have no help on the farm. You might say my wife and I and two of our children our children was small, one was six year old and the other one was about three when we come. They wasn't old enough to do much which children that age did work. I started working when I was three years old. A lot of people laugh at me when I say I was three year old. You can judge for yourself like I told other people. When I was three year old, I would tote in splinters, I would tote in stove wood and i would help tote in the lighter. we had a fire place we didn't have gas or fuel oil, we had to use wood and that fire wood was to cut and tote in and burn in a fire place, simular to what you have today only it was made out of clay back then instead of brink, and done chat, Hope tote fodder in, I help pick cotton, and the used to plant cotton in hills and I would get down and thin cotton. I picked up cotton stalks, I picked up corn stalks and helped pile them. If that ain't work, then I didn't work.

I. Thats Work.

A. O.K. there is a lot of people that looks at me like a liar or fool when I tell them I went to work at 3 year old. Tell them what I done and most of them say well if you done that you worked worked, and I did. When I was 14 year old my dad and mother was in ill health. Thats one reason I didn't get to go to school. There was seven of us children. I had six brothers

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and sisters younger than me. my self made seven, my father and mother made nine head and they was both in ill health and in the mean time my dad had lost his place and I had to be the main stay for nine head of us and I only weighed about 110 or 115 pound. I had to take the place of a man. I done a mans work. I'd swing an oat crade, course you wouldn't know what that is.

I. What is it?

A. You cut oats with a cradle. 't was built were you would have to sling it with your arms. It took muscle and you had to have a good wind and you'd swing it around and that cradle would catch them. I would come out with a bundle of oats with one lick, and I cut all day that way. would be just as wet with perspiration when I would knock off for dinner and that night as what if you had poored water on me. I grubbed stumps, I cut cross ties I didn't haul them, but I helped tote them out of the swamp, where we did cut them. I hauled saw logs, cut saw logs, plowed, pulled fodder, picked cotton, practically any kind of hard work, you want to mention. I wasn't big enough to call a man, I wasn't but a boy in size, I had a big appetite. People accused me of being a big eater. I wasn't no big eater. I was a glutton. I eat enough for two or three men, but it would take that food to hold help cause I was so little, doing a mans work. I didn't mind hard work, I enjoyed it, thats what I was raied on---hard work.

I. When did you get married?

A. Oh, I was an old bacjelor. I married when I was nineteen.

I. How old was your wife.

A. She was an old maid. We didn't get married until 1915 next Friday--next Friday 58 year ago.

I. Thats a long time.

A. Well the old house that we God married in is still standing. I been thinking about renting that old house in two more year and have our 60th wedding anniversary in the old house we got married in. I think that would be fun.

I. That would be fun.

A. Would you come?

I. I sure would grandpa.

A. O.K. Good.