

Manuscript

24

Longstreet Gantt

front matter
*begin id number*W10090*(End id number)**(Begin page)**(Begin handwritten)*Beliefs & Customs - Folkstuff.*(End handwritten)*

Accession no.

10090

Date received

10/10/40

Consignment no.

1

Shipped from

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Label

Amount

6p.

WPA L. C. PROJECT Writers' UNIT

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Folklore Collection (or Type)

Title Social customs of the past. Longstreet

Gantt (white)

Place of origin *(Begin handwritten)*Winnsboro,*(End handwritten)* S. Car. Date 6-28-38

Project worker *(Begin handwritten)*W W Dixon*(End handwritten)*

Project editor

Remarks

(End front matter)
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*(Begin page)*Project #1655

W. W. Dixon,

Winnsboro, S. C. *(Begin handwritten)*3/25/35 trans*(End handwritten)* *(Begin deleted text)*390568*(End deleted text)* SOCIAL
CUSTOMS OF THE PAST LONGSTREET GANTT

(white) 82 YEARS OLD.

Mr. Gantt is a citizen of Winnsboro, Fairfield County, South Carolina. He resides with his wife and widowed daughter, Evelyn Ferguson, on West Liberty Street, which is one block west of St. John's Episcopal Church, of which he is a devoted member.

"I was born near the courthouse in the town of Barnwell, Barnwell County, S. C. July 10, 1855. My father and mother were Richard A. Gantt and Lousia Hay Gantt. My grandfather was Judge Richard Gantt. Edwin J. Scott, in his 'Random *(Begin deleted*

2A

text}Recollections's{End deleted text} {Begin inserted text}Recollections'{End inserted text}, says: 'Judge Gantt with the kindest heart in the world always leaned to mercy's side and took the part of the accused; insomuch that the prosecuting attorney, General Caldwell, used to say that he kept a tally of the prisoners tried, where he put down all acquittals on the Judge's side and all the convictions on his own.' I think he was the first public advocate of temperance in the State, in which he was followed and far outdone by Judge O'Neill. He was extremely afraid of fire, and, when holding court in Columbia, he always lodged on the ground floor. Sometimes, to avoid the apprehended danger, he stayed at the home of John Smith, a pious Methodist. One night when he was there, Mr. Smith conducted family prayer, and, when it was over, grandfather said: 'Smith you sure are a d--- swinge cat at prayer.'

"Once when a clergyman spent the night at grandfather's house, the whole household was called in for family worship, and at the minister's {Begin page no. 2}request the Judge agreed to lead the devotions. While thus engaged, a little dog in the room discovered that something unusual was going on, and commenced sniffing, barking, and jumping around the kneeling Judge, who tried by raising his voice to drown the noise made by the little dog. But it had the contrary effect, and, when his Honor could stand the annoyance no longer, he suddenly changed his tone and turned to a slave, saying, 'Damn that dog; take him out,' then resumed and concluded his prayer.

"There were no graded schools in my boyhood. Wealthy families had tutors, but there was a school in Barnwell that charged tuition that I attended. It had but one teacher, The Rev. Havaner. There was about one hundred pupils. The beginners were taught their A. B. C's; these were charged a dollar per month. The old blue-back speller was the first book. When pupils reached the column 'Baker,' they were charged one dollar and fifty cents a month. When pupils reached long division in arithmetic, they were charged thereafter two dollars a month. At recess the small boys played marbles, mumble peg, roly-poley, and I spy. The larger boys and girls played antony-over. Every pupil, on Friday, had to get up and declaim. 'Marco Bozzaris' was a favorite; 'Twinkle Twinkle Little Star' was shouted by the small boy; 'Good-bye Little Birdie' was murmured by the small girl, while the more ambitious recited Shakespeare's 'Romans Countrymen and Lovers,' 'Brutus' Speech,' and 'Regulus' Return to Rome.'

"What parties were the most popular? You mean in a social sense? Well, 'pound parties.' These were assemblies in private homes; each couple brought a package of something to eat for the table. Some Negro fiddler was on hand, and steal partners, the Virginia reel, and the cotillion were danced; but round dancing was so much preached against that our neighborhood didn't dare indulge in it. There were sewing bees among the ladies, before the war. They would take the slaves who were handy with the needle {Begin page no. 3}to a neighboring home and make clothing for the household and the slaves. Some of these 'bees' were carried on during the Civil War, making garments for the Confederate Soldiers. Oh, yes, we had candy pullings, before and after the war, when I was a boy.

"The 4th of July was generally celebrated with a barbecue and a public speaking. Christmas was the day of days to the small boy and girl, with the hanging up of stockings and socks the night before Christmas; the joyous shouts of the early morning day; the popping of crackers; and the thrilling cry of, 'See what Santa Claus brought me?' Everybody, white and black, old and young shouted around, 'Christmas give!', and expected something if caught.

"My father, Richard Gantt, lived in town but had a plantation in the country. He had slaves for the farm and special household slaves in town. My older brother, Richard Plantaganet Gantt, managed, in a great measure, the plantation and slaves. The blacksmith, the carpenter, and the stable man had special privileges. Old Uncle Ransom took care of the jackass that did service for the surrounding neighbors. Uncle Ransom was a slave preacher. I remember to this day the words on his pass permitting him to go about from place to place. They were:

'This is to let Rave Ransom pass
On his feet or on his ass,
Till sale day December next,
To preach a sermon and a text.
For ten miles through the country 'round
I hope his ass won't throw him down.'

(signed)

R. P. Gantt.

"Gen. Johnson Hagood was a cousin of mine. He was the first Confederate soldier. He accounted for it in this way. South Carolina was the first state to secede from the Union. Governor W. H. Gist called for volunteers to defend the State's action. General Hagood was authorized to {Begin page no. 4}raise a regiment and the assembly of volunteers took place near Barnwell Courthouse. Gen. Hagood had long tables of rough lumber in rows. On these tables were laid out the muster rolls for the signatures of the men. He dismounted from his horse, on the occasion, made a speech to the crowd, explaining the gravity of the enlistment, and, at the conclusion of his talk, stepped forward, took a pen, and was the first to sign the enlistment papers. Thereafter, when the Confederate States of America were formed, President Jefferson Davis called for 75,000 volunteers. The brigade as formed by Gen. Hagood was transferred as a body to the Confederacy and is known in history as 1st S.C. Brigade (Hagood), to distinguish it from 1st S.C. Brigade (Gregg) N.B. (One can see how Gen. Hagood could justly make this claim).

"No one can live on earth eighty-two years and observe the splendor and lordly lavishness of the old land and slaveholding aristocracy; the alarming strife; bloodshed and stress of the uncivil war (I call it); and feel the stings of the outrageous scalawag and carpetbag

governments and the thrills of participation in the Hampton redemption, without a profound sense of gratitude to such men as Hampton, Butler, Gary, Bratton, Hagood, Aldither, and Haskells. And George and Ben Tillman must be remembered, too, for the part they took in the Ellenton riot.

"I had just attained my majority of twenty-one years and was in the heat of the conflict to redeem the State under such Barnwell County leaders as Gen. Hagood, Col. [Rub't?] Aldrich, Col. Claude *{Begin inserted text}{Begin handwritten}{A.}{End handwritten}{End d text}* Sawyer, Duncan Bellenger, and Carroll Simms. At that time I owned a beautiful bay horse, named 'Wade Hampton', and I was a horseback courier. I carried a peculiar banner in the red-shirt parades. The banner pictured a rascal in flight carrying a carpetbag and a young boy in pursuit, kicking the carpetbagger vigorously *{Begin note}{Begin handwritten}{Robert}{End handwritten}{End note}*

{Begin page no. 5} in his posterior median anatomy. On one side of the banner was emblazoned

Boy- 'Leave here John and steal no more.'
Radical -'I'm gwine now don't kick me so.'

On the absolve side of the banner were the words:

'We will, of course, vote for F. H. Gantt, and woe to the
Rad who says we shan't; and Hampton shall be governor!'

"My brother F. H. Gantt was elected solicitor in this campaign of 1876. I am the only one living now of twelve children. This lady's gold watch is an heirloom, bought by my maternal grandfather, Frederick H. Hay, in Liverpool, England, one hundred and eighteen years ago, and was presented to my grandmother, Susan Cynthia Hay. You can see her initials faintly engraved on the case, 'S.C.H.' This timepiece descended to my mother, who lived to be eighty-one years old; next, to my brother, Richard Plantaganet Gantt, who wore it all thru the Civil War; and it came to me on my twenty-first birthday. Its mechanism must be good, as it has needed no repair nor adjustment in the past forty-seven years.

"Other great men I have known were Bishop Ellison Capers and Dr. Cerradore. I was admitted to the bar in 1888 and practiced with my brother, F. H. Gantt, until I was elected Probate Judge of Barnwell County.

I am a member of St. John's Episcopal Church, Winnsboro. I married Lavinia Skinner in Trinity Church, Columbia. Mr. Class performed the ceremony. We have four girls and one boy. Evelyn, Mrs. Ferguson, lost her husband last summer and lives with us. Joe lost his life over seas, as a soldier in the World War. Louise is the wife of State senator, J. M. Lyles. Annie died, unmarried. Julia, the youngest, is Mrs. LaBruce, and her home is in Georgetown, S. C. I often visit her and enjoy watching the waves of the harbor lapping the shores of the beautiful bay of old Georgetown.

"Well, I have rambled a good deal. I guess I have tired you, but your *{Begin page no. 6}* compensation must be that you have given me great joy by listening so patiently to an old octogenarian who seldom gets anyone to talk to of the years that are gone."

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Manuscript

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	BEST MATCH	NEXT	PREVIOUS	ITEM LIST	NEW SEARCH

The WPA Life Histories Collection

Item 18 of 1257

South Carolina: [Mrs. Glasson]

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*{Begin page}{Begin handwritten}*No. 1*{End handwritten}*

Revision code #43B *{Begin handwritten}*Revised by Author*{End handwritten}*

SOUTH CAROLINA WRITERS' PROJECT

LIFE HISTORY

TITLE: MRS. GLASSON

Date of First Writing December 15, 1938

Name of Person Interviewed Mrs. Richard Glasson (white)

Place West Springs, S. C.

Address Pauline, Route #1

Occupation Retired housewife

Name of Writer Caldwell Sims, Union, S. C.

Name of Reviser E. F. Kennedy

Date of Revision May 9, 1939

Mrs. Richard Gleason - her neighbors spoke of her always as "Old Miz Glasson" - died in April. After she became a widow she lived with her married daughter, Mrs. West. Last December a visitor found her rocking contentedly in a comfortable chair before an open fire of hickory logs, burning on substantial fire dogs made in the blacksmith shop in the backyard. This shop belonged first to William West, for whom West Springs was named, long ago. An old spool bed in the room was made by him.

Mrs. Glasson wore a plain gray housedress, with a small white apron tied around her thin waist. A gray cotton bonnet covered her head. Her stick rested on the arm of her chair and a well worn Bible lay on the table beside her. A small radio shared the table. In spite of her 80 years Mrs. Glasson's complexion was still florid and her hair a reddish gray. Her keen eyes sparkled *{Begin note}{Begin handwritten}*C10 - 1/31/41 - S.C.*{End handwritten}{End note}**{Begin page no. 2}*when she talked of Mr. Glasson.

"Yes, he often spoke of London. His name was Richard Gleason, and he was born in Caldwell, England. Jes' how close it was to London,

has done left my mind, it's been so long since I know him to go all day without saying a dozen words. When he did talk, his voice was clear and deep, but he never did call words like we do, and he never fell into our way of talking as long as he lived.

"Mother was a Miss Cannon - her first name was Polly - of Spartanburg County. She knew Mr. Glasson long before I knew him. Mr. Glasson's first wife was a Cannon, my first cousin. He had two small children by her when I married him. Their grandmother, my aunt, them when their mother died and raised them. Father and Mother, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Cannon, were born and raised near Cannon's Camp Ground. I was born there, and lived there until I married Mr. Glasson, and came to West Springs to live when he started working in the Opal gold mine here. Cannon's Camp Ground is in Spartanburg County where I always went to the camp meetings. They don't have them any more, but I reckon the settlement will always go by that name. My folks have always been Methodist, that's why I'm a Methodist. I was sprinkled as an infant at Cannon's Camp Ground, and I've been in the church ever since; but I never joined until last summer. I kept my religion all these years, but I wasn't taken into the church until Rev. N. K. Polk, received me into the Bogansville Methodist Church in the summer of 1938! I was converted when I was a very little girl though, at one of the meetings at Cannon's Camp Ground.

"Since I haven't been able to walk for over a year I don't go to church, but I listen to good sermons over my radio. It's a great blessin' to me. I don't like fancy music on Sunday. I stick to my religion, and I listen to the big pipe organ concerts and the choirs. I've heard the organs in Spartanburg, and they are heap prettier and finer than the little reed organs folks used to use in their homes and in the churches around here. The old hymns seem even prettier when they're played on those powerful organs and sung by those big choirs. God surely must have inspired the man who made the first pipe organ. So you see religion changes and improves, too. Folks have gotten away from religion. They like the kind of music that comes over the radios Sundays, or the programs wouldn't play that sort. The entertainers have to please their public to sell the radios, and the change isn't good for the folks.

"My father was a school teacher. He trained us like he did his scholars to keep regular hours and to have a certain time to do certain things. That's how I brought my children up. They are not bringing up theirs like that though. I had four brothers and two sisters. Father was fond of the preachers who came through the country. He always entertained them at our house. They did not have homes, like they do now. Lots of them were single men. Now I believe all of the preachers marry young.

"Every summer, after lay-by, Camp Meetings started at Cannon's Camp Ground. That's where the name came from - the camping ground was on the Cannon's land, where the camp meetings went on for seventy-odd years. I remember those meetings from earliest recollections. Going to camp meeting was an annual event until after the Confederate War started. We went to the camping ground on Thursday and remained through Sunday, pullin' up and going home on Monday. All the land owners sent their wagons filled with plenty of provisions and cots, blankets, chairs, beds, and fodder, corn, oats, and wheat for beast and man.

{Begin page no. 4} Families set up their own camps. Some even built comfortable cabins and stables for the horses and mules. Strangers and their turn-outs were taken in and treated as guests. Relatives and friends from a long way off were invited to come and stay for the camp meeting. Sometimes the camp meeting lasted until harvest time. Spartanburg, Union, and York people came for it. Stands for the singers were built and from time to time the camp ground was enlarged. A place was reserved for the darkies who came to wait on the big crowd of white folks. Frying-size chickens were kept in large pens. Everything imaginable was fixed to eat. Ladies exchanged new recipes with each other. People talked about news at home and all over the state, and the whole country around the camp. Pretty often a whole congregation came from some church and brought their own pastor with them. Each family group held morning and evening prayers. Everybody at these meetings was good, neighborly and kind. The Spirit of the Lord was really abroad there.

"I know of one night just before the Confederate War broke out when eighteen preachers attended the Camp Meeting. That session lasted until midnight, there were so many to 'come through' and give their personal experiences. The singing was more beautiful and solemn than usual that night. Tunes of course, were raised with a tuning fork, or by an elder or a deacon with a deep bass voice. Lordy Mercy, you never heard the like of shouting in your life as I heard there that night when those eighteen preachers were on the platform! People had to stop shouting because they got exhausted. The darkies would fall down on the ground to shout out their good tidings of redemption and conversion. The mourners' bench, for lost sinners, was full every night. But on this particular night there wasn't room on the mourners' bench for the converts! Several hundred were converted. Special prayers were raised in the family group for some *{Begin page no. 5}* friend or loved one who was about to 'come through', but not quite persuaded. Oh, but people really had religion in those days! You don't see anything like that anywhere nowadays.

"I had two second cousins, Lewis and Gabriel Cannon, brothers. Lewis married a woman who believed in rejoicing, instead of crying, when folks died. She belonged to the Bogansville Methodist Church. More than once she put her gold and diamond rings in the collection plate, when Lewis would not put in as much money as she wanted him to. After the services, Lewis always sent up and redeemed his wife's jewelry. Once this lady went from Charleston to New York on the boat to a Methodist Convention in New York. Her daughter, Bright Alice Cannon, was in New York studying voice. People who knew her thought she was a sweet singer. One night her mother was missed on the boat *{Begin inserted text}{Begin handwritten},{End handwritten}{End inserted text}* when she was returning to Bogansville. The crew never found her. She got up from her chair on deck and went to her state room. Her bed wasn't touched; the port hole was open; so the crew thought that she must have jumped into the ocean.

"Now you want/ *{Begin inserted text}* me *{End inserted text}* to tell you about Mr. Glasson, and what I'm going to tell you to start with, happened before I was born. He was a little boy way back in England when his mother, Blanche Comer, died. In a few years his father married again. Richard loved his mother so much that he ran away from his step-mother, and went to his uncle, Charlie Gleason, I 6

reckon it was. His step-mother was good to him, but he couldn't see the money. I don't know how long he stayed at Uncle Charlie's. Finally his aunt Fannie Stevens told Richard's father where he was. She'd put some money in the Falmouth Bank in England for Richard. Richard's father made him promise *{Begin page no. 6}* to come back home. His uncle Charlie wanted him to stay with him, but his father wasn't willing. His uncle Charlie told Richard's father that if he'd let Richard stay he'd give him a fine horse to ride. But Richard's father would not consent for him to live on with his uncle. When Richard got home his little heart ached as much as it ever did for his mother. His step-mother gave him money to spend so he'd be happy. But he wasn't. He wanted to come to America. He asked his aunt Fannie to get his money out of the bank so he could come. After he sailed from England, he never received any more money out of the Falmouth Bank, and his people didn't send him any. My daughters have tried to trace this money. There's unclaimed money in the Falmouth Bank in England in the name of Gleason. I can't say how my husband's name got changed to Glasson, but it must have been on the vessel that he came over on. We haven't got any written records of his voyage, or of his departure, and my children can't get that money out of the bank over there.

"My husband said the sail vessel he came to America on was tossed about on the Atlantic for eight weeks. When they were half-way across, the winds swept the ship back in sight of the English mainland! Many were the times they thought they were lost and would never see land again. The crew often had to bail water from the hull to keep the vessel from sinking. They were miserably cold, hungry, and often wet. They had to stand hardships of all kinds. I don't know the name of the ship; I didn't write down a thing he told me, as I should have done. Soon as the vessel landed, Mr. Glasson wrote his people. His letter made them happy; for they thought he had been lost at sea. He had to work so hard on that old ship coming across that he said he didn't enjoy sea life. I don't remember where they landed *{Begin inserted text}* *{Begin handwritten}*. *{End handwritten}* *{End inserted text}* *{Begin deleted text}*, somewhere in this country. *{End deleted text}*

{Begin page no. 7}"He had soft brown eyes, brown hair and beard and weighed about 170 pounds. He was over six feet tall. He died when he was 72 in 1912, and he's buried in the Bogansville graveyard, where I'll be put along-side of him.

"He did some work on the Seaboard Airline Railroad when it came across Goshen Hill to Carlisle from Whitmire. When I first took notice of him, he was a-selling maps. He got \$30 a month and his expenses for that, so I have heard him say. He came to the old William West home, where I spent a lot of my girlhood. It was falling dusk and so uncle William asked him to rest for the night, for in those days peddlers were always coming around selling their wares. Folks kept them for the night when they happened at the house after sundown. That was the best way to get the news of the countryside in those days. Roads stayed muddy from October through April; traveling was hard; so folks generally stayed home until the hot sun dried the roads enough to make traveling easy. Mud holes stayed in the roads from season to season, and peddlers were about the only folks who traveled regular. The stage was out of date and not many people lived on the new railroad tracks that had been built. Just a few people lived near the stations, but of course, they got news quickly from the trains. So country folks were glad to have travelers spend the night so they could talk to them. Everybody was honest and kind then, and nobody had much money. So teams were cared for and fed, and the mistress of the house fixed the best she had for her visitor, and there was no thought of charges. If the stranger did offer money when he left *{Begin inserted text}* *{Begin handwritten}*, *{End handwritten}* *{End inserted text}* it was taken as an insult *{Begin inserted text}* *{Begin handwritten}*, *{End handwritten}* *{End inserted text}* and that person wasn't asked to come again. When he did show manners he was asked to return and spend a spell under the roof.

{Begin page no. 8}"As usual, Richard jes' set around at my uncle's that night without much to say. Of course we were well acquainted as he had been in our family for a number of years, and he was now a widower. We went to bed early. I was disgusted. He left soon after breakfast was over. They teased me and said the reason he didn't talk none, was because he was eyein' me. I bristled and said I didn't like him a bit; everybody laughed. Two months passed before I saw him again, and he was still sellin' maps. This time I was at Aunt Sally Cannon's house on Zion Hill. He came up there to see me. Aunt Sally liked Richard, and she made me do a lot of fixin' up for him. From then on, he came to see me regular. I got to the place where I was fond of him. In less than a year we were married at Aunt Sally's house. She was mother's sister. A notary by the name of Holt that she and Richard liked married us in 1888.

"My dress was pretty, but it wasn't fine. Aunt Sally and I went to Spartanburg to buy it and we didn't get hoops with it, they cost too much. Some of the women at the wedding had muscadine vines run in pleats in their petticoats to hold out their dresses. Mr. Glasson had on a blue suit. He wore a moustache then but no beard *{Begin inserted text}* *{Begin handwritten}*, *{End handwritten}* *{End inserted text}* and his eyes sparkled the day we married. The weather was hard cold, and they used a sled to haul wood to the house for fires. Our wedding supper was a great spread. Aunt Sally had chickens and hams and everything to go with them. The table was covered with a heavy white linen cloth. After supper was over, we talked a while and then left for Grandpa James Cannon's where we stayed three days. Then we went to Clifton, where we lived a little while. We came to West Springs to the mines, for Mr. Glasson had been brought up in the mines in Dover, England, where he worked as a boy for almost nothing a day. He told of also having worked in mines *{Begin page no. 9}* in Pennsylvania and Kentucky, where he went down as far as 4,000 feet under the ground. He worked a short while in some silver mines, but I have forgotten which ones.

"We had five children - Charlie, William, Alice, Maude, and Wallace. Charlie was killed by a train in Spartanburg; William lives at Tucapau with his wife and six children; Alice grew up, but died young and is buried by her father; Maude there, married Johnny West; and Wallace is single and lives here with us. Johnny's father, Pack West, was the first owner of West Springs. Maude has a son, Ray, who lives here and works for the State Highway Department in Spartanburg.

"It was a lot easier for me to raise five then than now. The women here said that I had an easy time, and 'reckon I did. Their husbands depended on nothing but the farm for a living. Those that did work in the mines were green at it. Nobody knew how to sift ore but Mr. Glasson. He'd been doing it all his life. He knew how to grade and classify the ore, and he did for all who worked in the mines. As long

Quick ways of traveling have changed ways of living more than any other thing in my life. I never had a thing like nerves in my life.

"I can beat my grandchildren spellin', and they have diplomas. I think my school was the best, but they laugh at me for saying so. I learned readin', writin', and arithmetic. I walked to school at sunup and stayed till an hour by sun. I kept my mind on my business at school, or got the teacher's hickory. Now the children leave home at eight o'clock in the busses, hurrying and making a lot of noise. Two o'clock sees them home, grabbing a bite to eat and out again. They don't have time to let their lessons settle in their heads, so they soon forget what the teacher's told them.

"When I first came to West Springs, people from Charleston, Columbia, Newberry, and Union came in fine turnouts to drink this water. During the Confederate War people from the lower part of the state left their homes and came here hunting safety from the *{Begin deleted text}* desperadoes known as *{End deleted text}* Yankees. Our first *{Begin page no. 14}* refugees were Charlestonians. They soon filled the hotel, Old Aunt "Patty" West, who owned land all around the spring, built cabins to rent the refugees. The West Springers liked the Charleston aristocrats and treated them with every kindness they could. The city folks returned the favors in ways never to be forgot. When they went back to their homes after the war was over, people saw them go with a feeling of regret. Soon after the war the watering places began to be less popular. Aunt 'Patty' tore her cabins down and had negro houses built out of the lumber. The year after that, we moved into a house next to Aunt 'Patty', down by the spring. About this time well-digging machines came to West Springs, and people had wells in their yards, and then they did not have to make long trips to the spring for water.

"Brother Virgil Green Cannon went to Columbia in 1864 to join 'The Boys of Sixteen.' During the war he worked in a sock factory in Columbia, and when it closed he came back to his home in Spartanburg County. He stopped with us for a month's rest and to drink the spring water. Mother had two brothers in the war, Uncle Barry and Uncle Thomas Cannon, who joined the army in Spartanburg. Lift the lid of this old trunk, and I'll show you some of my husband's Confederate money; but it'll never be any account again. See these ten and fifteen-cent pieces, that they used to call 'shin plasters.'

"When this money went out-of-date and the slaves were freed, living in the South got hard for the first time in its history. Things were a little hard for me, but I didn't have as hard a time as some. Mr. Glasson gave up his peddlin' and spent all his time in the Opal and Thomson mines. He worked hard to make all he could on the gold he dug. Mr. Ruff Hopkins had come here and bought all the gold the miners got and shipped it to Washington, D. C. He bought a many a bag from Mr. Glasson. We had money right along, and Richard *{Begin page no. 15}* would still go to Spartanburg to buy the things we wanted. It was hard to get things during Reconstruction. Those old carpetbaggers and scalawags were hanging out all around Spartanburg, so they told me, but I never went there a single time to see them. Men-folks did the going, and the women stayed at home where they were safe. Mr. Glasson got things for neighbors, for he'd been used to travelin' around the country and so he kept on going more than the other men folks around here did. After things got to running regular, my husband took me on the train from Glenn Springs to Spartanburg, one day. He had been on the train a lot, but it was my first one. I wore a bonnet tied under my chin and *{Begin deleted text}* it *{End deleted text}* *{Begin inserted text}* *{Begin handwritten}* it *{End handwritten}* *{End inserted text}* had pasteboard slats to make it stand out. My dress was gray worsted.

"Mr. Glasson could be witty when the notion struck him. Mr. Tease came to be a foreman in the mines after the war. He and his wife were from Pennsylvania. One day Mrs. Tease came along driving her horse and buggy. She met Mr. Glasson walking home from the mine. She drew rein and said, 'Mr. Glasson, where are you going?' He told her, 'I'm on my way home, but I'm going by the Thomson mine.' She said, 'Well, Mr. Glasson, I wish you'd look at my horse and see if I have the harness on right.' Mrs. Tease's turnout was new and she had never hitched up one in her life before. Mr. Glasson had never hitched up a horse in his life, either. He just looked at the turnout for a long time and finally he said, 'Lady, I'm very much like you, but I do know that you have the right end of the horse in front!' *{Begin deleted text}* They both went on their way laughing. *{End deleted text}*


"I like company, you don't have to go. Is it dinner time? Well, you may as well stay and have a bite, we're having hog jowl, collards, and cracklin' bread today. T'ain't fine, but it's good eating. I like buttermilk with my cracklings, don't you? We had partridges for breakfast this morning.

{Begin page no. 16} "Come back and sit a long spell with me again, I like for folks to sit a long spell, seems like olden times *{Begin inserted text}* *{Begin handwritten}* *{End handwritten}* *{End inserted text}* Good-bye *{Begin inserted text}* *{Begin handwritten}* *{End handwritten}* *{End inserted text}* "

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Manuscript

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	BEST MATCH	NEXT	PREVIOUS	ITEM LIST	NEW SEARCH

The WPA Life Histories Collection

Item 36 of 1021

South Carolina: [Ella E. Gooding]

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W11063

Date received *{Begin handwritten}*10/10/40*{End handwritten}*

Assignment no.

Shipped from *{Begin handwritten}*Wash. Office*{End handwritten}*

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Amount *{Begin handwritten}*7 p*{End handwritten}*

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Title *{Begin handwritten}*Ella E. Gooding 80 years old. Robert E. Gooding 82 years old (white)*{End handwritten}*

Place of origin *{Begin handwritten}*Winnsboro, S. C.*{End handwritten}* Date *{Begin handwritten}*6/28/38*{End handwritten}*

Project worker *{Begin handwritten}*W. W. Dixon*{End handwritten}*

Project editor

Remarks

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W. W. Dixon

Winnsboro, S. C. *{Begin deleted text}*390576*{End deleted text}*

ELLA E. GOODING 80 YEARS OLD. (WHITE)

ROBERT C. GOODING 82 YEARS OLD. (WHITE)

Mr. & Mrs. Robert C. Gooding are husband and wife. They live in a two-story residence on the north side of Bratton Street, Winnsboro, S. C. On the south side of the same street, immediately facing their residence, is the beautiful high school building recently completed as a Public Works Administration project, of the United States Government.

Gooding: "My people are of English and Scotch descent. My grandfather was Clerk of Court in Fairfield County for sixteen years before the Civil War. My father, Henry Laurens Elliott, was a large land and slave owner and president of the Winnsboro Bank before that war. He first married Mary McMaster. There were five children by that union. On the death of his first wife, he married Tirzah Ketchin, my mother. By this marriage there were nine children. Do you wish me to name all of the children? As many as I care to? Well, the five by the McMaster wife were Mrs. J. P. Matthews, Mrs. [?] R. Rosborough, Mrs. A. F. Ruff, Mrs. Joe Cummings and a son, John Elliott, who was killed in the Civil War. By the Ketchin wife there were T. K. Elliott, Mrs. T. K. McDonald, Mrs. J. P. Caldwell, Henry L. Elliott, Mrs. Lula McAlpin, Mrs. Oliver Johnson, Helen, who died in childhood, and myself.

"I was born about two miles northeast of Winnsboro, in our plantation home on the Peay's Ferry road, February 5, 1858. I learned my A.B.C.'s, how to spell, and how to read in a school of twelve pupils, taught privately in Winnsboro by Miss Susan A. Finney. Then my two older half sisters took me in {Begin page no. 2} charge for a year. Following such preparation, I was again sent to town to Mr. Benjamin Rhett Stuart, a teacher in a private tuition school in the old Beaty house. The house is next to the Carolina Theatre building on South Congress Street. When I was fourteen years old, an Episcopal rector undertook my preparation for Woman's College, at Due West, S. C. He was a splendid teacher. He afterward attained his D. D. degree, and for many years was rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church of Charleston, S. C.

"Dr. J. I. Bonner was in charge of Woman's College when I was there in 1872 to 1876. After I was graduated, I taught in my Alma Mater one year. In 1877, I accepted a position as teacher here in Mt. Zion Insitute.

"The society girls in our set were Sallie McMaster, Hattie McMaster, Annie McMaster, Mattie Beaty, Lula Center, Bell Gooding, Kittie Rion, Anna Phinney, Mary Shaw, Lill and Marion Elliott, and my sisters.

"The boys in our set were T. K. Elliott, T. K. Ketchin, W. H. Flenniken, W. T. Crawford, J. E. McDonald, W. J. Elliott, J. M. Beaty, W. A. Beaty, J. F. McMaster, H. [?]. McMaster, and my husband, R. C. Gooding.

"We had regular monthly dances in the Thespian Hall on Washington Street. The music rendered was by an amateur string band. The Gordon Light Infantry, a fine military company, was part of our social life. They took prizes in company drills, once in Charlotte and once in New Orleans. They gave an annual picnic in Fortune Park every year. This was a great event in the social life of the town. A target practice and shooting match came off then, and speeches and prizes were given for the best drilled man in the company and for the best marksmanship. I remember W. A. Beaty was best in the manual of arms, and Mr. J. C. Boag was the poorest marksman. His attempts were always laughable and none enjoyed it more than he did.

"Now I had best let my husband tell you about some things, and I'll {Begin page no. 3} probably want to have the last word before you go."

Mr. Gooding: "I was born in the State of Kentucky, October 20, 1855, but my father, A. F. Gooding, and my mother with the family, moved to Polk County, Missouri, when I was but a child. My father joined the Confederate Army, although we were living in a state that didn't go with the seceded states.

"Yankees came often to our house in search for father, and they showed mother the tree on which they proposed to hang him if he was ever caught by them. They took off all our slaves without our leave, for which we never received any compensation. Mother decided to take the family, consisting of my two young brothers, Sterling and Charles, my sister, Bell, and myself back to the old home in Kentucky.

"After the war in 1869, father moved us to Winnsboro. Here my wife and I were married. Our children were all born here, married here, and have given us grandchildren, the joy of our old age. My son, Robert, married in Brooklyn, New York. He died early. His son, Robert, is in the freshman class at the U. S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md. My daughters, Nellie, Laura, and Christine, live here in Winnsboro.

"The military rule in Winnsboro was not oppressive; however, it was distasteful to have a Negro company of U. S. troops located here. There was no marauding, no insolence, although they were stationed here six months on Mt. Zion campus. They were transferred later and white soldiers sent in their stead. Their barracks were in the Presbyterian woods in the southern part of the town. I remember there were a good many Germans in this company who couldn't speak English to amount to much.

"The Ku Klux Klan was a necessary organization and did much to discharge {Begin handwritten}discourage?{End handwritten}

{Begin page no. 4}weak white men and ignorant Negroes from lowliness. When the Ku Klux Klan wished to get rid of an undesirable white man or Negro, they would put an empty coffin at the undesirable person's front door. It usually caused the warned one to disappear. Although not a Ku Klux, one night I witnessed a parade of white-sheeted riders and recognized my own horse in the parade. In the 2

morning my horse was in his stable, as usual.

"I have never cared for any other occupation than that of farming, nor any other method of locomotion than that of horseback riding and buggy riding. I bought an automobile once, but I soon returned to the use of my horse and buggy, which I use every day.

"What is the cause of so much soil erosion? Well, it had its origin in slavery time. The land owner had plenty of land and plenty of slave labor, but he didn't have fertilizer and a scientific knowledge of agriculture.

"In the days of Abraham, people lived in tents with their herds around them. When the grazing at that spot was exhausted, they moved to another spot. Likewise, in slavery time, when a field ceased to be profitable it was abandoned and woods were cleared off to make new ground for tillage, and no care was taken of the old lands, which rapidly washed into gullies.

"After the Civil War, our people had no money. We became a one-crop people. Cotton was ready money. Northern manufacturers and western farmers encouraged this, and we were without scientific knowledge. Speculators manipulated all the profit out of cotton by a system of exchanges, grades, and quotations. A system of credit was inaugurated by the State Lien Law. By this system the farmer paid tribute to the local Caesar, twenty-five to fifty times the price for plantation supplies.

{Begin page no. 5}"The farmer, like the fabled cat, fell year by year further behind and finally was brought to mortgage his lands outright for the year's advances and to secure the old extortionate debt. More cotton was to be planted than ever before, to keep up the interest, compounded in many instances. Foreclosure came on slowly but surely. The lands were usually bought in by the supply merchant, who cared very little about the land but a great deal about the goods on the shelves. The supply merchant usually put Negroes on the acquired lands rather than white people. He sold each one a mule and a wagon, not forgetting the usual 25% time price, and thus calculated how much merchandise he could put out for the oncoming years. He rarely, if ever, visited the land, except in the growing season to calculate the value of the cotton in prospect and the safety to himself of future advances that crop year to the particular man that land was rented to.

"The saddest picture of slavery is the aftermath. Our country is riven with gullies and the old aristocratic colonaded homes are in dilapidation and occupied by Negroes."

Mrs. Gooding: "My family were members of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church. In the early days we used metal tokens in taking communion. We have never relinquished our ideas about singing psalms on the Sabbath.

"When I arrived to the years of womanhood, the hoop skirt was passing out of style, and the bustle and tight long shirts were the vogue. The style lacked comfort, and the corsets were cruel and suffocating and actually injurious to the spirit and health of women and girls.

"The women arranged their hair with a chignon and looped it upon the top of the head. Young girls arranged their hair in 'pig tails' down the back and wore bangs over the forehead. The longer a woman's hair, the more she had to be concealed about. The ladies often bought 'switches,' hair corresponding with her {Begin page no. 6}own, in which she used the 'switch' in connection with the chignon arrangement. Is chignons synonymous with rats? I can't say positively, but I am inclined to think so.

"When I was young, every woman and girl had a sunbonnet. The women wore them about the yard and garden, and the girls wore them to school. They did this to avoid sunburn and freckles. Freckles still remain the terror of womanhood, but lotions and cosmetics have put the sunbonnet into the discard or attic.

"Every girl had a sidesaddle, a riding habit, and a crop. In front of the home was the riding block where she mounted and dismounted her pony. Some of these old blocks and hitching posts may yet be seen about the county. The elderly ladies of the family had beaded handbags. They would fill these with tea cakes when they went to church, so they could keep the small children quiet during a long sermon by giving them one occasionally.

"We had portrait painters in my youth but no photographers. The daguerreotype was used to a limited extent. Some of these were exquisite but were exposed to light, and they soon faded and were useless.

"Visiting in my girlhood among neighbors was frequent and more cordial and enjoyable than now. We would go in the morning about ten o'clock, have dinner, and remain until after tea before leaving.

"How do I account for the decline of neighborly visiting? I think, in a great measure, the decline has been due to the multiplication of church circles, social clubs, and automobile rides. Each church denomination has four or five circles that meet once a week. Literary and music clubs and card parties have their meetings, and automobile rides are taken to surrounding towns, which may be reached by good roads. Then, too, the fixed changes of a household have to be taken {Begin page no. 7}into consideration, such as electricity, automobile upkeep, and gas. All this precludes the thought of frequent lavish entertainment.

One of the regrettable changes, I observe, is the seeming lack of respect and consideration shown by young people toward their parents and old people. Boys and men do not exercise the same courtly manner toward girls and women as they formerly did. Just one incident to explain myself: Young men drive up to a young lady's home in an automobile, honk the horn, and sit until the young lady comes down to the automobile door. Men do not even observe the courtesy to get out of the car and help the girl inside. In my youth, such an

engagement would be made first by a written note. It accepted the note and accompany the young lady down the walk to the automobile, open the door, and assist her inside and see that she was comfortably seated.

"Lipstick and rouge would have scandalized a girl in my young days. The only vanity and affectation allowed was a cutglass bottle with a silver top. They called it the salts bottle, but I never heard of it containing anything other than hartshorn or spirits of ammonia."

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Manuscript

27

Padgett

ATB

Patton

 AMERICAN MEMORY	PREVIOUS	NEXT	ITEM LIST	NEW SEARCH	BEST MATCH
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American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1940

Item 25 of 48

[The Greatest of These is Charity]

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*{Begin handwritten}*S.C. Life /Histories No. 2 copies (checked but not arranged according to list.) Returned by Dr. Botkin*{End handwritten}*

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*{Begin handwritten}*Has not been checked by list Life Stories*{End handwritten}**{Begin handwritten}*[?][?]South Carolina Box 2.*{End handwritten}*

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75 B SOUTH CAROLINA WRITER' PROJECT

LIFE HISTORY

TITLE: THE GREATEST OF THESE IS CHARITY *{Begin handwritten}*(see also [A Day with the Pattons?])*{End handwritten}*

Date of First Writing January 9, 1939

Name of Person Interviewed Mr. Rob Padgett (white)

Fictitious Name Bert Patton

Street Address None

Place Lykesland, South Carolina

Occupation Rural Mail Carrier and Farmer

Name of Writer Mattie T. Jones

Name of Reviser State Office

"Well, I'll be darned! Sadie, what's this you're using for a fire poker this morning?" Marvin Patton asked, as the other guests circled about the oak burning in the brick fireplace.

"This is Father's sword he carried for three years in the Confederate War," his sister explained, while she stirred the coals with the piece of steel. "Haven't you ever seen it before? It is a funny place to have a sword. One of these days I'm going to polish it and {Begin handwritten}C10- 1/[?]/[?] - S.C.{End handwritten}

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send it to the relic room in Columbia. Father has a manuscript there, and it's an interesting paper, too. Notes on his soldier-boy experiences, written from memory when he was seventy."

"And this," Bert added, as he opened a drawer of a nearby secretary, "is the pistol Dad carried in his pocket all those years."

Listen, Son," exclaimed Marvin, "don't point that thing in this direction; turn it the other way. It's the unloaded gun that shoots, you know."

"The piano is another one of our antiques," Miss Sadie said. "It's way over a hundred years old, but still has a sweet tone. It was bought for my mother when she was just a child."

"Sadie, for goodness sake, forget about antiques for a while," Marvin urged impatiently. "Christine, Pete, and Susan ought to be here today, so as to make the family unit complete. We're either too busy or too confounded indifferent these days to ever get the whole family together, it seems. Well, Bobbee, good morning. Dinner ready? And how are you, Bert, old boy? Glad to see you both."

"Mighty glad we could come. We stay pretty close round home since the children are so scattered."

At the table, in response to various compliments on the dinner, which were addressed especially to Bobbee, she remarked a bit deprecatingly, "Preparing a meal is no new experience to me. We had seven girls at home, and I'm telling you, Mother believed in that school of experience we hear about. Had lots o' company, too. I was down home yesterday, thirty-eight people there for dinner. But it's no trouble to get up our meals

here. We raise most of our eats right here on the farm. We have plenty of corn, hams, butter, milk, chickens, and eggs. We milk three cows now, and we raised a thousand biddies right here on the

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yard last year. And we always have a good garden of vegetables, winter and summer.

"It's a good thing we have things close to hand, or in jars in the pantry. We never know when Bert's going to bring in a carload of folks to eat. Christmas day, when the table was all laid and dinner ready to serve, in come Bert with five little children whose mother had died. We just brought in extra tables and all ate at the same time. All the children around here think Bert belongs to them. And we like 'em to feel that way. Everybody who gets in trouble comes straight to Bert for help and he's never turned anybody away yet."

"We used to worry," Marvin retorted cynically, "but not any more. The President will feed you if you run out. I'm glad Congress has stopped some of this wild spending, for a while, at least. He's thrown away millions of the people's hard earned money. And he's always springing something new. Business men never knew where they're at. Dad blame it all, I'm tired of it myself."

"Look here, Marvin, you're not supposed to speak evil of dignitaries," Miss Sadie admonished. "Roosevelt's done lots o' good and made things a lot easier for poor people. I declare you've associated with that millionaire son-in-law of yours and sold so many high-priced suits to rich people that you've actually learned to think like they do."

"And Sadie," Bert commented, "wouldn't speak evil of the devil himself and won't let anybody else do it in her presence. Did we hear the President's last speech? If it were broadcast, Sadie heard it. She's never missed a program since we've had a radio. The other day she made a cake, put it in the store, and turned on the radio. Bobbee smelt something burning, and, when she opened the stove door, the cake

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was burnt to a crisp."

"Pahaw! I don't see why so commonplace a thing as a cake should interfere with a program of beautiful music like Nelson Eddy and Jeannette McDonald put on," Sadie rejoined.

The meal over, a Negro girl, black as the ace of spades, with ivory white teeth, whiter still because of the contrast, came in to clear the table of dishes. Instead of a maid's cap, she had a modern bird's nest hat perched on the left side of her head. "Miss Martha, I

wants to git a envolofe to mail a letter wid. No'm I can't read ner write. I can pick out some letters in the paper, though. How old I is? No'm I don't know 'zactly, but I's 'bout fifteen. But I knows where I was borned, down in de old field. Dick, you git outer my way. You'll mek me brake dese here dishes o' Miss Bobbee's. No'm, I ain't got no husband. Reckin I'd kill 'im ef'n I had one, ef'n he wouldn't treat me right. Yessum, I got two chillun, but dey bof dead, though."

When Annie had left the room, Miss Sadie said, "Poor little old thing. She does come in handy for bringing in wood, sweeping yards, and doing other heavy work about the place. Sometimes we pay her, and sometimes we pay her to stay away. We try to keep her and Dick in clothes and shoes. We've just given her those new shoes she has on now. She and Dick were outcasts, and we took them for their sakes rather than for ours. They both think the world of 'Cap'n Bert,' and the rest of us, too, as for that. We couldn't be true to our tradition, if we'd mistreat the Negroes on the quarters. We're told that, after the war, our grandparents sold old treasured keepsakes, one by one, in order to keep an ex-slave comfortable. Then Father and Mother had lots of the 'milk of human kindness' and were always good to the Negroes.

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"Our parents were in their early twenties when the war closed, Father's education was cut short by the war, but Mother graduated at the Columbia Female College, in these days when it was still a question whether a woman had sense enough to warrant an education or not. My mother, accustomed to slaves all her life, had a hard time making adjustments. She has told us that, as a bride, she gave out a peck of flour for biscuits the first morning.

"My father owned a plantation in **Fairfield** County and carried my mother there as a bride. The lands were fertile. Everything in plant and animal life could be raised on it. The scenery was charming and varied. But there were rocks and hills galore, and farming was expensive. Father's other brothers had homes in Richland County, and they persuaded him to move near them. Some sort of an exchange was worked out between father and the farmer in Richland. I don't think any money was exchanged.

"Six of their twelve children, however, were born in **Fairfield**, and we elder children started to school there. I can see the little old schoolhouse now down in the 25-acre pasture, so far from home that mother always sent a Negro nurse with us to protect us from the rams, bulls, and boars, should they become vicious. Other children came to the school, and the patrons paid the small salaries of the teachers, who usually lived in the community.

"After we moved to Lykesland, Father was delighted with his new place and soon became a pioneer in progressive methods of farming. He made terraces to prevent soil

erosion, rotated his crops, and secured registered breeds of stock and cattle. The task of rearing that big family must have been a staggering one to them. Mother was never very

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strong and always stayed in the background, interested in making a home rather than a living. But she was the source of inspiration and courage to the rest of us, the real power behind the throne. A prolonged illness, and she left us at the age of forty-five."

With the quick motion and easy grace that characterizes her every movement, Miss Sadie moved over to the built-in book shelves and returned with the family Bible. The covers were dog-eared and worn; the pages were ragged, misplaced, and yellow with age. "What a good time we children have had reading these Bible stories in the preface. Mother would make us wash our hands so clean they would bear inspection. Then she'd seat us in the middle of the floor, with this Bible in the midst of us. How we loved those stories with the colored illustrations. She was one woman who didn't think it was too holy for the children to enjoy." At the bottom of the page, where the important records of the family were kept, these words were scrawled in a child's handwriting: "Victor celt born August 19, 1891 written by Pete."

"You know Pete's married? Oh, yes, he's been married six years. Married the head nurse at O'teen. That's the Federal T.B. sanateriun at Asheville, you know. Jane is a lovely girl. We're all very fond of her. For the two years that Pete was a patient and she his nurse, they were in love. They wrote each other every day, and occasionally Jane, accompanied by another nurse, would drop in to visit Pete during off hours. But the marriage was a complete surprise to everybody. At first, we thought it was very unwise, but Pete argued that if Jane were going to nurse T.B. patients all her life, she just as well nurse him, and both of them could have companionship and a home. Jane makes a good salary, about \$150 and her board, and she takes excellent care of Pete.

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Is he/ *{Begin inserted text}*as*{End inserted text}* attractive as ever? Well, we think so, and there are frequent discussions among their friends as to which is the better looking, Pete or Marvin. Pete has tried raising chickens and hogs, but he has to go back to bed every time he exercises much, and he says he's writing a book now when he has to stay in bed. He's one of the many tragedies of the World War. He and Ned were such good friends.

"Who is Ned? Lawsy me, I thought I had told you about Ned," she said, as she carefully replaced the precious book in its place on the shelf. Didn't I ever tell you that Ned is sort of an adopted member of the family? You've seen our new brick parsonage? Several years ago, we were about ton lose it because of a six-hundred-dollar debt; so we women

decided to sell meals at the State Fair to make some money. We worked ourselves nearly to death, but we had lots of fun, and paid the six-hundred-dollar debt. This lad, Ned, took his meals with us, and he was such an attractive chap we all enjoyed him. A few days after the Fair closed, in walked Ned one morning. 'You told me if I ever needed a friend, I could count on you,' he said. 'I've lost my job. I want a friend; so I've come to you.'

"That was a different problem from any we had ever had before. We didn't know what in the world to do with Ned. We had no guest room at that time, and Bert drew the line on sharing his room with this questionable stranger from Canada, who had been traveling with the aquaplane. But something had to be done. Ned had no clothes, no food, no money, no home. So we put an extra bed on the back porch and made him welcome to all we had.

"When the first rain came a few days later, ye gods, the porch leaked so in the middle of the night that Ned couldn't stay out there

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at all; so Bert called him into his quarters. Bert never expresses any emotions, as you know, but we had observed with interest how Ned was growing in his favor. The whole family fell for Ned. Christine came for a visit. Christine is our eldest sister, Mrs. L. C. Carroll, at **Winnsboro**, you know. Well, she and Ned read French plays together. He followed Bert around like a shadow and helped with the work whenever he was needed. It was too funny to see him coming from the field one afternoon on the bare back of a mule, and the mule running as fast as she could. The mule ran straight to her stall, and Ned was thrown against a stump. We were petrified with fear. Ned lay lifeless; we were sure he had been killed. Finally, Bert came in from his work, and we carried Ned into the house. After several days in bed, he was out again and seemed O.K.

"After about eight months, Ned said one day, 'Well, I got to go, I've got a brother somewhere and I got to go find him.' We shared what money we had with him, and Bert gave him some extra clothes and took him nearly to Camden. We often wonder what became of Ned."

During most of the day, Martha had sat quietly. She slipped from the room, and Marvin remarked, "She's gone now to see that everything has been done just right. She's worth her weight in gold. When she was a little thing, she used to tell us, 'I'm the chicken of the blue hen.'"

"Look, Bert, there's a mocking bird right there on the back of that green rocker, and he's singing, too!" Bobbee exclaimed. "Sh-h-h let's be quiet. There were two red birds there last week. Ain't that too sweet for anything?"

"This is my swallow's nest," Bert said, as he carefully lifted a nest from the mantelpiece. "There were four babies in it when Sade found

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it on the hearth last summer. I put them in a sparrow's nest, and I be-dog if she didn't feed 'em just like they were her own babies. Let's take the folks in the back yard to see the cats and dogs and pigs, Bobbee."

"Honey, come on here," Bobbee called, and her pet pig came running. "He'll come to my window at midnight, if I call him. Bert gave him to me, because he's a runt. But the thing I'm proud of is that calf running out there. She cut her neck on a nail about six weeks ago, and we've had a time keeping out infection. It's healed good now, though. Bert, call the cats and make 'em climb the ladder. That's just fine; where's the other one? Kitty! There they go. Now you can't make 'em come down till Joe leaves."

"We named Bull for Joe Louis," Bert said. "We had three dogs once, and altogether they had thirty-six puppies. I be-dog if I didn't have to kill every darned one of 'em because one of the mothers developed rabies, and I was afraid the last one of 'em would go mad."

"But, Bert, the very sweetest and smartest dog I've ever seen was Mr. Woo. You remember he'd turn the electric light on and off. Geewhiz, he was a wonder."

"That's a pen I made for a hawk last spring," Bert said. The darn thing kept eating my red biddies, and I just had to shoot him. He fell with a broken wing. Then I got sorry, bound up his wing, and cared for him till he was well. I thought, of course, he'd be appreciative of the favor; but instead, he brought in all his friends and neighbors in the fall when they wanted delicacies, and I had to kill him after all.

"How long have I been keeping chickens? Ever since I can remember. We keep our reds here in this run and our white leghorns over yonder in

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the rear of the yard. We like eggs, and those leghorns keep us supplied. Haven't bought three dozen eggs in two years. I'd say we've sold seventy-five dollars worth of chickens and eggs, together, and we eat chicken whenever we want it."

"Bert, let's show her our prize hogs," Bobbee insisted.

"This is the hen that lays our golden eggs," Bert said. "We keep her in a separate pen from the other hogs. She's Duroc Jersey, and was an unusual buy for five dollars. In three years, I've sold \$450 worth of pigs, and the upkeep hasn't been so much.

"I'm not much of a cotton farmer. Fact is, I haven't been much interested in farming till the last few years. My job has been to carry the mail for Uncle Sam. When my mother died, our struggle began in earnest. She was ill for several years, and Father kept borrowing a little money on the home place so he could make ends meet. The oldest child, Christine, had just finished Columbia Female College. She looked after the housekeeping, cared for us children, and taught school over there at Smith's school. With her salary of \$35 a month, she helped to send Marvin to Spartenburg for a business course, hoping he could help out with our finances. But his health failed, and for a year or more he was not able to work at all. Then we all struggled with the education of the other children, each one helping with every other one. My Lord, we had a hard time."

"No such thing, Bert," said Miss Sadie. "We've always been happy. And sacrifice is a part of the joy of having a big family and sharing with one another. It was no sacrifice for me to leave home and work as matron at Columbia Female College for two years, so that my salary of \$50 a month might be applied to the education of the two younger children. And it was

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a pleasure for me to rent a house for \$15 a month and take six boarders at \$25 each, in order for Mary to get college training. Shuck's that's an interesting part of the game. I got a big thrill out of my part of the sacrifice, if that's what you want to call it."

"Well," Bert took up his story again, "I saw where things were headed; so when I had a chance at this job, of carrying mail, I took it. I was about twenty-five. At first, I had only eighteen miles, and my salary was \$51. For a few years I used two horses. The roads were terrible, and sometimes I had to get a mule to pull me out of the mud. When the roads improved and my route increased to thirty miles, I used a car. I've bought seventeen Chevrolets, and I believe my car expense has been \$400 a year. I reckon I've put \$7,000 in these cars. But I was well paid - my salary went to \$175 a month - and I should have saved money. But there have been many and unusual demands on me. I've been retired five years now, at a salary of \$96 a month. I consider Uncle Sam a pretty good fellow to work for.

"The loss of our home was a staggering blow to us all. Father died suddenly in 1915. The mortgage on the place kept growing with the years. The World War came on. Camp Jackson was being built, and labor went to six dollars a day, and we couldn't compete with that sort of price. Later, the boll weevil and the depression hit us. We had been offered \$40,000 for the place, but when the showdown came, we couldn't raise the \$15,000 we had borrowed on it, and so it had to go."

"Let's forget it," Marvin said, "I've prayed day and night that I never could think of it again. It's the worst kind of nightmare to me." "And the saddest day of my life," Sadie

added, "was when I left my home." And together they walked off in the direction of the barn.

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"We moved over to the Brooks Place," Bert continued, "and Sadie nursed an old couple to help pay the rent. After three years, we tried another farm, hoping we could do better. In the meantime, the doctor found I had diabetes and other complications, and I've been on a strict diet ever since. He ordered rest in a hospital. But somebody in the family had to carry on, and I couldn't stop. We come here three years ago. I pay \$350 rent and have 50 acres. I'm allowed to plant fifteen acres in cotton. Last year the boll weevil got all the cotton in this section. I only made six bales, and I usually make a bale to the acre. I doubt if we clear \$10 per bale anyway; so I'm depending more and more on other things to supply my salary and to pay for the privilege of planting a crop. I pay 70 cents a day for labor and own my stock and plows, and so forth.

"You have observed I haven't known anything much about the cost of things. We have never bothered with that side of it much; we've been too careless, I realize. But Bobbee is a good business woman, and together we're already working on a budget for this year. Come back a year from now, and I'll be well versed in these figures. The sunshine is not so warm now; maybe we had better go to the fire."

"What do you all know about Christine these days?" Marvin asked. "I've felt all day that they might drive up here this afternoon. I sold Mr. Connor a suit of clothes the other day, and he said neither of them is very well these days. He told me some kind of cock-and-bull story about their not coming up here any oftener. They are both crazy about those boys of J.W.'s. That's Christine's third family to raise, isn't it? After Mother's death, she was a mother and a teacher to us children. Then we got from under her wing, I guess, like

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Napoleon, she wanted another family to conquer; so she finally consented to marry Mr. Connor, and his seven children became her charge. Now, since J.W.'s death, she has these two grandchildren. Sakes alive, we could hardly live through the rearing of our four. She's done a good job, too. Out of the Connor children, she's made a distinguished Methodist preacher, a capable school superintendent, and two excellent school teachers. She entered the schoolroom for the second time and put her salary into their education. A darned good record for a stepmother, I'd say.

"Susan married a widower, too. She and Brother Saxon didn't get home for Christmas, but Susan sent me and Martha a lovely coat apiece. Susan hasn't lost her sense of humor, and it relieves many tense situations in that Methodist parsonage. Her sarcasm sometimes

hurts the sensitive parishoners, I imagine; but she's charming and handsome, and Mr. Saxon is devoted to her. She and Mary were so congenial. Somehow none of us can get over Mary's untimely death.

"Mother always had a sort of feeling that Marvin was spared for a purpose. When he was six years old, he had an awful case of typhoid fever. For days we thought he'd die. Cousin Frank was a mighty good man, and every night, after plowing all day, he'd come over home and he and my parents would go in the living room to pray for Marvin. One night, after the prayer, he said, 'Cousin Sallie, Marvin is going to get well. I feel our prayer is answered.' That very night about 12 o'clock the crisis came, and Marvin improved from then on. A few years later, he was seriously ill again. The doctor made an incision and lanced an abscess on his liver. He sharpened a stick, disinfected it, and held the incision open with it. Mighty risky we'd think this day and time.

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"When Father first came to this community, the first Sunday we were here, dressed in our best bib an' tucker, we all came to this church. I recall we came, eight strong, in a double-seated open vehicle, driving a mule and a horse, Beck and Annie, with Annie's colt running along under the shaft."

"Excuse me, Sade," Marvin interrupted, "is that the Sunday I had to wear one of the girl's aprons which you turned round and buttoned in front for a shirt? I can see those buttons now, sewed all round the waist for me to fasten my pants to. No boy was ever so sinned against. I'll resent it till my dying day."

"Well, there wasn't anything else to do, Marvin. You didn't have a clean one, and you know as well as I do that there was no excuse Father would accept for not going to church. I think you should congratulate us on our ingenuity instead of blaming us.

"Father was made Sunday School superintendent that very day, and he held the position for twenty-five years. He was superintendent in **Fairfield**, and a steward in three churches. Bert has taken his place as steward in our church now. Father gave a lot of time to temperance work too."

"Now you can see what lovely broad acres lie along this road," Marvin remarked. "Originally all these plantations were owned by Father and his brothers and my wife's father and his brothers.

"I recall one year Father made a bumper crop out here without spending a cent for commercial fertilizer. This highway will enhance the value of the property, too. These folks have been offered six hundred dollars an acre for some of this land, but they are holding it for \$1,000. Better take us home now, Bobbee. Bert can't stay away from

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home after dark."

We passed by the Negro quarters. Dick ran out to the road and said, "Cap'n Bert, whar you gwine? Lemme go wid you, Cap'n Bert. Us done fed up de mules and' de hawgs an' milked de cows. Lemme go wid you, please, sir."

"You can't go this time, Dick. Tell your daddy to look after things till I get back."

"This is the place where I beat my husband farming last year," Mrs. Patton said proudly. "He gave me an acre in here, and I made two bales on it. He didn't name but one on his best land. Right here below the Veterans' Hospital is the place I've picked out for our new home. We don't want but ten acres either, with a brick bungalow on it. Oh, yes, we're working on the house plans. Haven't done anything else since Christmas. It may be only our dream house, but I am hoping not.

"When we have our own place, we're going to do truck farming. We plan to put out strawberries, raspberries, and dewberries the first year. Then gradually we'll get our peach and apple and pecan orchards planted; oh, yes, a vineyard, too. We'll have red chickens for food and white leghorns for laying eggs. That's as far as I'm going, but Bert says he's got to raise hogs and livestock. Of course, I'm expecting him to raise the feed for everything we have. We hope the hospital will furnish a market for our produce, but if it doesn't we'll have the curb market to fall back on. I believe it will beat planting cotton all to pieces."

JJC

Information about SGML version of this document.





American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1940

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[Judge Walter L. Holley]

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Project #3613

W. W. Dixon

Winnsboro, S. C. JUDGE WALTER L. HOLLEY

(white) 76 YEARS OLD.

Walter L. Holley, amiable Probate Judge of Fairfield County *{Begin inserted text}{Begin handwritten}{End handwritten}{End inserted text}* is 5 feet 8 inches tall and weighs 140 pounds. He has winning ways with strangers and acquaintances and a glad hand to friends. And that hand is ever open to any one in time of adversity and need. He, perhaps, is the best loved man in the county.

"I have never given such thought to ancestry, believing that we are all descended from Adam and Eve. What most concerns me is right living toward our follow men. But I believe my ancestry is part Scotch, part English, and a sprinkling of Dutch blood. My ancient people came to the western portion of the present Fairfield territory before the Revolutionary War. In those old times, a spot to be desirable to settle upon and rear a family must lie near a river or stream. There was very little well digging, for lack of labor and tools. So my forefathers settled near Broad River, a boundary between Fairfield and Newberry counties today.

"The first settlers, you know, were hunters and cow herders, rather than agriculturists. They had their cowpens, fishing tackle, and long-barreled rifles. Fish and game were plentiful in streams and forests.

"Our ancient home remains in my retentive memory. It was built of logs, but my father replaced it with a frame building in his lifetime. The old home where I was born is about 6 miles from Jenkinsville, in view from State highway #215. *{Begin handwritten}*C10 -

1/31/41 - S.C. {*End handwritten*}

"My grandfather was Glazier Holley; my fathers Nathaniel S. Holley; and

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my mother, Charlotte E. Holley. I had six brothers and two sisters.

"I was born in November, 1862, on the old farm homestead between Monticello and Jenkinsville. My earliest recollections, as a tot, include a cavalcade of Yankee soldiers galloping on the highway by our home, but, as to specific acts and doings on these facts, I was too small to record them in my memory.

"A detachment of cavalry under Colonel Kirkpatrick were encamped in the neighborhood for several days. They came up on the Fairfield side of Broad River, after crossing Freshley's Ferry, and spent several nights near Jenkinsville. Colonel Kirkpatrick and his officers slept in the C. B. Douglas house. Later, they moved up to Monticello and made Doctor James Davis's large residence their headquarters. When they departed, they crossed Little River at the Old Brick Church, ripping up the church floor to construct a bridge across the stream. For days after their departure, the air was foul with the stench of dead cattle, and the heavens were beclouded with flying turkey buzzards. Before leaving, they, in groups, ransacked our home of blankets, feather beds, and pillows. They killed our hogs and drove off all our mules, horses, and cows. They took many male slaves with them to herd and drive the mules, horses, and cattle, and some of the female slaves to act as cooks, washerwomen, and body servants. It is a pity for the whole South that they did not take all the Negroes out of the country. We would have learned self-reliance and self-dependence sooner, become inured to manual toil in the fields and not be as we are described today, "The Nation's Economic Problem No. 1.

"There were no public schools in the early years following the Civil War, and the private tuition schools ran three months, commencing in December and ending in March. The first one I attended was at Jenkinsville, taught by a Mr. James Hutchinson. People had very little money, and the teachers boarded

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around among the patrons to make the tuition fall uniformly upon their pocketbooks. Money was so scarce that few books could be used. Sometimes two or more pupils bought text books in common, thus reducing expenses. Two causes contributed to the short length of the school session. One was lack of money; the other was the need of the children to scatter guano, hoe cotton, pick cotton, pull fodder and glean corn. Children at our home learned to work.

"The second teacher I went to was a Miss Julia Glass, from Cokesbury, South Carolina, a very good instructress.

"Later, I attended the Broad River Academy at Monticello, which was under the charge of Captain Hayne McMeekin. It was later under Colonel Henry C. Davis, father of R. Means Davis. He was assisted by a Mrs. Scott.

"Next I went to work on our farm. Cotton prices ran down and got as low as 5 cents a pound in 1883. Seeing little to induce me to become a farmer, I went to work for the Spartanburg, Union, and Columbia Railroad, on one of its freight trains.

"About this time, the Richmond and Danville Railway Company leased a number of lines in South Carolina, and my services became such that I could be directed on any of their lines in the State. One day, November 1, 1885, I suffered injuries at Belton, South Carolina. As a result of the injuries, my left leg had to be amputated near the ankle, and since that time, I have worn a [?] foot, or should I say leg?

"After my railroad service was ended, I went back to the old home and looked after the farm, as best I could, and was both rash and fortunate enough to fool a good woman/
{Begin inserted text}into{End inserted text} marrying me. She was Agnes T. Seybt of Cokesbury, Anderson County, South Carolina. We were married in November, 1889, forty-nine years ago. We will celebrate our golden wedding anniversary next year.

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"Thirty-eight years ago (1900) we moved to Winnsboro, and I began work as a clerk in the store of [?] Williford & Company. I next clerked for Hickling and Gladden. I left them to clerk one year in Chester, South Carolina, for Joseph Wylie & Company. I returned to Winnsboro and was with D. V. Walker & Company for a number of years; then with Ketchin Mercantile Company several years, to return to D. V. Walker & Company, with whom I ended my life as a merchandise salesman in 1908.

"In the spring of 1908, the incumbent of the Judge of Probate's office, Durham A. Broom, died, and a primary election of the Democratic Party was determined upon by His Excellency, Governor Martin F. Ansel, to fill the unexpired term. I entered the race with former Judge John J. Neil, W. W. Crosby, and Jason Hall, Sr. When the votes were counted I lacked 97 votes of being elected on the first ballot. In the second primary, I defeated Judge John J. Neil. Not since that election have I had opposition for the office. This, probably, constitutes a record in length of service (30 years) in the entire State of South Carolina. Some may have held an office longer than I have but none, so far as I know, have held a state or county office so long without opposition. Many varied, interesting, and sometimes ludicrous experiences have occurred in the administration of

the office. During the last three decades, I have joined in holy bonds of wedlock something over 3,000 couples. I have issued many marriage licenses, however, wherein some ministers of the Gospel later performed the marriage ceremony. Couples from Maine to Florida have stopped by to be joined in the peculiar South Carolina indissoluble bonds, risking the hard knot for weal or woe.

"Some of my experiences, in this line of privilege and duty, have been highly humorous, indeed. I will mention two only, but, with variations, they are typical of many cases. On one occasion, a voter declared he was going to

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scratch Holley, even though he had no opposition at the next election, because he had got him in a h--- of a marriage mess - tied up forever to a nagging, chew-the-rag kind of woman!

"On another occasion, a Negro came into the office and paid me for a marriage license, which I filled out and issued to him. He thanked me profusely, 'I'm all heeled now for a little bit of hebben, Boss! Ain't it so?' He returned the next Saturday with a virile, combative looking female and asked for the ceremony to be performed at once, that "her" was in a hurry. I asked for the license, which he produced. I proceeded. Everything went along all right until we got down to the place in the ceremony where I asked, Do you, Sallie Moore, take this man to be your --- ' Then 'her' raised her head and voice, 'Dat ain't my name. He done got anudder gal in dat license, Judge, and I ain't gonna stand for it,' deed I ain't.

"It seems as if Henry had changed his mind within the week as to the girl he wished to marry. He declared, however, that he didn't think it made any difference about the name on the paper, so long as he had paid for the license. 'Just scratch out Sallie Moore and put in Mary Ballard, Judge, and let's get it all over if you please, Judge, befo' dat other gal gits here.'

"The salary and fees of the office of Probate Judge for Fairfield County were very small when I was first sworn into office. It was about \$600.00. Under a wave of retrenchment in Ben Gillman's administration, the emoluments had been cut. I went to the State senator and the three representatives from Fairfield and complained at the meagerness of the amount allowed. The senator agreed to raise the salary to \$700.00. Two representatives objected and killed the bill in the house. In the next campaign, it became a minor issue. The senator and one representative openly advocated the increase in salary; the others were silent on the question but talked to me, in private, as if they favored it.

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The legislature came on. The bill was introduced in the senate and passed that body. Then it reached the house, two members objected, but they were ignorant of the rules of the house. You, a representative from Fairfield, then inserted the increase in the supply bill by way of an amendment and secured its passage. After the session, the two objectors came to my office to explain why they did not let the bill pass to increase my salary and said they would get it passed if reelected. I drew down the Acts and Joint Resolutions and read the item in the Supply bill of the county. They were dumfounded to discover that, not only the increase was there, but I had been given all the marriage license fees thereafter issued. I don't think either ever learned how you accomplished the effective trick amendment, but neither were returned to the house. My compensation is now about three times the amount it was when I first took office in 1908.

"If I may be allowed a voluntary remark or two, permit me to say that our unique position in regard to divorce of husband and wife makes one scratch his head, sometimes, to ponder whether all marriages are arranged in heaven or if the devil doesn't have a little to do with a fractional part of them here below. Sometimes, a very fine man or woman may have been deceived, over-reached and allured into a matrimonial alliance. Afterward, love changes into indignant disgust and repulsion on the part of/ *{Begin inserted text}*the *{End inserted text}* one deceived. This is considered by other States as a valid reason for divorce. But there is no door of escape for either party to the alliance in South Carolina. About the beginning of the present century, one of our eminent men, a certain judge became so obsessed with the idea of the perfection of our constitutional law prohibiting divorce of husband and wife, for any cause, even the scriptural reason, that he engaged in a controversy with an eminent churchman in the columns of a New York newspaper on the subject. This controversy was reprinted in the News & Courier of

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Charleston, South Carolina, and some daily papers of this and other states. The judge at the time was a widower.

"Not long after the publication, the judge was 'roped in by a dame' and tied to her hard and fast under the South Carolina law in marriage. Soon the alliance became distasteful. But alas! there was no balm in Gilead, under our laws, to give surcease to the judge's connubial sorrows and heartaches.

"Since my boyhood, many changes have taken place affecting the social relations between the husband and wife. Woman had no political rights and man was the broad winner then. The wife was little more than a slave of the husband and bearer of his children. She was his cook, housekeeper, nurse, and sometimes seamstress, gardener, and washerwoman. These duties were performed by her gratuitously - free of charge. Children were slaves in the fields and industrial plants and were cheated of their rights to an education. There were no compulsory education laws then. Neither was there a child

labor law on the statutebooks. Thousands of country girls were born to blush unseen and to waste their sweetness on the remote eroded hillsides. Other thousands of children under fourteen years of age worked twelve hours a day in industrial plants to evolve that quizzical biped, the "mill daddy", who sat around, whittled sticks in the sunshine of back alleys, drank corn whiskey, told smutty jokes, and guffawed among unsavory companions until pay day. Then he received his wife's and children's money that they had earned by hard labor. He spent the most of it for more liquor and came home in the late hours of the nights drunk, to beat the wife and children. It has been a half century worth living in, to witness this rise of woman from a domestic chattel and serf of the household to become the civic and political equal of man. There remains nothing now to debar her from becoming a leader in the social, economic, and educational affairs of the

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county, state, or nation. I cite two organizations here, the Parent-Teacher's Association and the Federation of Women's Clubs, and two individuals, Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt and Francis Perkins, Secretary of Labor. There are many more clubs I could mention, but what is the use? They come to your mind and to many more individual's. Neither clubs nor individuals hide their beneficent light under a bushel. Shining through and in it all/ *{Begin inserted text}*is*{End inserted text}* the radiant love of child welfare. A silent warfare where carnage and destruction of homes are unthought of. A silent warfare for the people's welfare!

"Excuse this digression. I will go back to our 'no divorce law,' to tell you what can happen under it to perplex the solicitor in the court of general sessions and bring the law into disrespect.

"I issue a license to James Jones to marry Janie Brown and perform the ceremony. They live together six months, then separate. James Jones goes to Chester, secures a license from Probate Judge Yarborough to marry Sallie Smith. He performs the ceremony. James brings Sallie back to Winnaboro and sets up housekeeping two doors from where Janie resides with her parents, the Browns. Everything goes along as merry as a marriage bell in a Turkish harem until Sallie makes "some disparaging remarks about the Cara Nome perfume Janie is using. Janie loses self-control, rushes to the magistrate and swears out a warrant against James and Sallie for bigamy. They are arrested, *{Begin inserted text}*but *{End inserted text}* they give bond for appearance at court. The grand jury returns a true bill on the back of the indictment. The case comes on to trial. The solicitor introduces the marriage records of Janie and Sallie. The courthouse spectators begin to cast eyes of pity upon poor pretty Sallie, wife number two. The solicitor looks with triumph at the judge and announces: "That's our case, Your Honor. The State rests.' " The judge, the Jury, and the spectators believe it an unbreakable,

"The judge, the jury, and the spectators believe it an unbreakable,

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impregnable case, technically made out for the State. 'Wonder why they didn't plead guilty and ask for mercy,' is whispered. James' lawyer rises, opens his brief case and pulls out a stamped paper issued by the Probate Court of Charleston County, South Carolina. It is a license issued to James to marry Daisy Ledbetter and a record of a marriage antedating the marriages to Janie and Sallie. The records are introduced in evidence. The judge remarks to the solicitors. These marriages to Miss Janie and Miss Sallie are null and void. The facts submitted do not sustain the allegations of the indictment. To convict the defendants you must first prove the validity of the marriage of James Jones to Janie Brown. You allege the validity of the marriage of James Jones to Janie Brown. It is disproven, because at that time he had a wife. To explain this, which might be a little mystifying to anyone other than a lawyer, we will suppose:

1. James Jones first married Daisy Ledbetter in Charleston County, South Carolina.
2. He gets a divorce in Fulton County, Georgia.
3. He then marries Janie Brown in Fairfield County and leaves her.
4. He next goes to Chester and marries Sallie Smith.

If Janie indicts him for bigamous marriage with Sallie, he can plead the marriage to Daisy, and the case is thrown out of court.

"If a prosecution gets behind him, later, for bigamy or adultery based on the Charleston marriage to Daisy, he just takes the bus with Sallie and rides to Hogansville, Georgia, or Gastonia, North Carolina.

"It's a little confusing, a bit tragic, and very curiously amusing. Again, in every county in South Carolina I venture to say there are numbers of professional and wealthy men who were first married under South Carolina laws; later obtained a divorce in some other State and came back here and married

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some good women and, according to our customs, are peacefully living in their homes. Some of these men may occupy prominent positions in society; may be elected elders or deacons in our churches, where there is a requirement that a deacon must be the husband of one wife. Again, he may be elected a circuit judge or foreman of jury, who may be called upon to take part in determining the social status of one of these ' fly by nights, ' black or white citizens. You will find lots of them talking about the sanctity of the United

States Constitution and the State constitution. But, like the old fable in the blue-backed speller about the Partial Judge, 'It depends on whose ox is gored.'"

[Information about SGML version of this document.](#)



Manuscript

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Richard E. Broome

Raymond E. Branson

 AMERICAN MEMORY	PREVIOUS	NEXT	ITEM LIST	NEW SEARCH	BEST MATCH
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American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1940

Item 19 of 48

[How Branson's Bulldog Courage Won]

{ page image }

Approximately 3,000 words

49 C {Begin handwritten}[?]{End handwritten} SOUTH CAROLINA WRITERS' PROJECT

LIFE HISTORY

TITLE: HOW BRANSON'S BULLDOG COURAGE WON

Date of First Writing February 28, 1939

Name of Person Interviewed Richard E. Broome

Fictitious Name Raymond E. Branson

Street Address 5433 Wilson Boulevard

Occupation Attorney at Law

Name of Writer Stiles M. Scruggs

Name of Reviser State Office {Begin inserted text}{Begin handwritten}"{End handwritten}{End inserted text} The boys at the Cedar Creek School nicknamed me 'B.D.', the short for bulldog, because, they said, of the way I bit into things with the determination to win or die.

"I was born on a farm in **Fairfield** County, South Carolina, on January 9, 1893. My parents were Jacob Broome and Ann (Bickley) Broome. Mother told me once that my life began about three o'clock that January morning during a violent storm of wind, rain, snow, and sleet.

"I have often thought of that day, because my career to date has been stormy and full of

obstacles. But I never have forgot a favorite hickory tree that stood on our farm. I knew it was buffeted by the same storm that

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blew down the pine, but that it stood up straight and brave to greet the sun the next day.

"Mother took more time and interest in helping me with my lessons than she did with the other children, because I was the only one of them who really was striving to win an education. After helping with the chores, I studied my lessons before the fire, while the others retired.

"I started to the public school in 1900, when I was ten years old, and things looked good to me at the beginning. But soon father got sick and stayed in bed until he died. That tragedy threw a damper on my mind. Mother was left with eleven children, and I realized then that it would take hard scratching for us to make a living on that sandy farm. When father passed on, there were three old mules, three cows, and about a dozen hogs on the farm. It took plenty of costly fertilizer to assure an adequate crop there every year.

"The Broome children, me included, began farming in 1901. The oldest boy did the plowing, and the rest of us hoed corn, chopped cotton, set out sweet potato plants, and, in fact, did all the sundry jobs which are necessary on the plantation. From that first year, there was an unusual controversy about my going to school. I was one against ten. And if it hadn't been for Mother taking my side of the argument, I might have lost out. The other children didn't care much about school, and there was always plenty of work on that farm.

"In the fall, there was harvesting of crops and fall plowing afterwards. If the ground was too wet to work, our job was to cut, split, and haul wood for winter use. And the kitchen stove had to be filled the year 'round. One time during the debate on my going to school, Mother told the objectors that I did as much work after I returned from school as most of the others did who

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stayed at home. I always put my books aside and pitched in and did my best on work programs after I came from school. I did this because I realized that Mother was striving to keep the home together, and I was in complete sympathy with the plan.

"I had made up my mind to get an education that was worth while early in my life, and I kept that idea right before me until I finished the public school curriculum in 1908. I was then fifteen years old, and I decided to try to get work at a neighborhood sawmill. I did get the job in 1908 and stayed with it until 1912. I was pretty stout for my age and

enjoyed splendid health. The mill paid me a man's wages, about \$2.50 a day, and it was a great aid to the Broome's family budget.

"In 1912, I entered a competitive examination at **Winnsboro**, the county seat, for a University of South Carolina scholarship. There were about thirty-five young men in the contest. I was the only contestant from Cedar Creek, and the sons of successful lawyers and rich farmers appeared to look on me as if I didn't count. That spirit on their part only increased my determination to do my very best. When the hour expired, I had given an answer to every question on the blackboard. We were told that the winner would be announced in a day or two. And I returned home.

"Mother called me from a chore one morning soon afterward to pat me on the shoulder and tell me she had just read in the **Winnsboro** News that I had won the scholarship. This information came to us before the scholarship was forwarded to me from **Winnsboro**. Mother was, if possible, more pleased over my victory than I was. She did her best to raise \$60 for me to carry with me to the university, but all she could raise was \$32. The scholarship admitted me to room and classes, but there were such pressing needs as board, washing, incidentals and clothes. And it didn't take long to exhaust my \$32,

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even though I cut out every luxury in the expense list.

"When I had only five dollars in my pocket, I decided to explain my predicament to the president and faculty, and they got busy. In a day or two I was paying my board by waiting on the table at the Mess Hall. And on Saturdays I made three dollars selling shoes in an uptown store. This three dollars paid my washing and incidentals. During my freshman, sophomore, and junior years, between 1912 through 1915, I got by on this plan, by selling life insurance during periods I was out of school. In the fall of 1915 and the spring of 1916, I taught a country school. I expected to return the following year, but, early in 1917, the Columbia draft board sent me to Camp Jackson, where I was to train for overseas service.

"At Camp Jackson, I peeled potatoes, swept floors, or did some kindred work daily, in addition to drilling twice a day. One day, nearly three months after I entered Camp Jackson, I was mustered with a large number of other young men to entrain for New York, where a transport would take us to France. There a keen-eyed doctor gave us a rigid examination. He discovered certain disabilities in me and cut me out. I was given an honorable discharge, after serving at Camp Jackson eighty-two days.

"I returned to **Fairfield** County and did my share of work on the farm, as it was too late for me to get a job teaching school. In 1921, I returned to the university, with the ardent hope that I could work my way through the senior year and win my A. B. and an LL.D

degrees, permitting me to practice law. My expenses that year were far higher than they had been, and I was unable to hold or get odd jobs. Clothes, books, and incidentals cost more. I soon fell behind with my board bill and other pressing obligations. I was so determined to win my degrees that I almost became ill over the vicissitudes I was facing.

"One morning, following an almost sleepless night, I went to the law office

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of Senator James H. Hammond and told him of the trouble that was tormenting me. Mr. Hammond was courteous and sympathetic, but he told me he was a poor man and hadn't any money to loan. I kept talking. Suddenly Mr Hammond wheeled around facing his desk, apparently making a notation. When he revolved his chair and faced me again, he handed me a check for a hundred and twenty-five dollars. I was pretty well overcome when I realized what had happened, but I told Mr. Hammond I would return the money in sixty days.

With money to supply all my needs till June 1922, I soon found more work than I could attend to, and my anxiety was lessened. I pressed on and won my degrees, A. B. and L.L. D., the following June, 1922. And I didn't let the grass grow under my feet after that victory was won. I opened my law office about the first of July and began practice. Clients came slowly. But older lawyers told me that had been their experience, too. I bent to the law, and also did jobs on the side. And I made sufficient money to live on and pay my office rent.

"In the meantime, my relatives had good luck and sent me a substantial sum of money. So, after the end of sixty legal days, I went around to Senator Hammond's law office and handed him \$125, as per promise. Mr. Hammond was quite amazed when I paid him. 'I thought you would pay me sometime,' he said, 'but I didn't expect you to pay me in sixty days.'

"As my law practice increased, I now began to think of my one and only romance. I had met Miss Cleo Shealy two years before. "We had decided to marry as soon as we could pull out of the financial fog, and both of us kept watch on our progress. About December 1, 1923, we decided to get married. And on December 23, that same year, we married and went to housekeeping at 5433 Wilson Boulevard. We still reside there. At first we didn't have a quit-claim deed to the house. But we had faith in ourselves and paid off

Page 6 { page image }

the mortgage a few years ago.

"I became a candidate for the House of Representatives in the General Assembly in 1925.

I won that election and the two succeeding elections and served in the House from 1926 to 1932. This service in the legislature taught me much. The candidate on the stump, seeking such honor, generally is an optimist. I was confident I could secure many benefits for the people, but, when the moment came for me to act, I found many obstacles in the road. I came away from the State House sadder, but wiser, than I was when I entered it officially.

"There has not been a single year, since 1932, that my law practice has netted me less than \$3,000 a year. I have specialized in civil practice, particularly real estate matters. It put me in a more peaceful environment, and it is also more profitable. I am a retained attorney for the Columbia Federation of Trades, and at present two other organizations are negotiating with me for similar engagements.

"Since my legislative career started, I have been called on for many addresses by civil, social, and business organizations. That is why I have compiled this typewritten book of 1,108 jokes. There is nothing so good in public speaking as a bit of humor.

Here Mr. Broome picked up a volume from his desk and began to finger it. A single joke, credited to the late President Calvin Coolidge, may serve to illustrate the handmade joke book:

"The President was seated in his office reading a newspaper. His stenographer, standing at a window, said, 'There is Senator William Borah, taking a horseback ride!' Without looking up, the President asked: 'Are the Senator and the horse going in the same direction?'

"I love association with other men. That is why I became a Master Mason,

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and was not content until I had taken the additional 29 degrees of the Scottish Rite. Then I joined the Odd Fellows, the Eagles, and the Junior Order of American Mechanics. I find good in all of these fraternal organizations. My wife is now a member of Rebekah Lodge No. 6, the woman's organization allied with the Odd Fellows order. We are also members of the Main Street Methodist Episcopal Church, which may be proof that I consider it a high privilege to bow my knee to God. But I am always ready to spurn dictators and tyrants.

"I think I have given you a complete account of my life to date. I am now in my forty-sixth year, and I hope to blaze more worth while new trails. To paraphrase the defiant reply of John Paul Jones to his adversary, 'I have just begun to fight.'"

[Information about SGML version of this document.](#)

 AMERICAN MEMORY	PREVIOUS	NEXT	ITEM LIST	NEW SEARCH	BEST MATCH
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Manuscript

30



American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1940

Item 27 of 66

[Jane Hutchinson]

{ page image }

*{Begin handwritten}*Beliefs and Customs - Life Histories*{End handwritten}*

Accession no.

W11057

Date received *{Begin handwritten}*10/10/40*{End handwritten}*

Consignment no. *{Begin handwritten}*1*{End handwritten}*

Shipped from *{Begin handwritten}*Wash. Office*{End handwritten}*

Label

Amount *{Begin handwritten}*5p.*{End handwritten}*

WPA L. C. PROJECT *{Begin handwritten}*Writer's*{End handwritten}* UNIT

Form[md]3 *{Begin handwritten}*Folklore*{End handwritten}* Collection (or Type)

Title *{Begin handwritten}*Fairfield county. Jane Hutchinson (white) 82 years old*{End handwritten}*

Place of origin *{Begin handwritten}*Winnsboro, S. C.*{End handwritten}* Date *{Begin handwritten}*6/28/88*{End handwritten}*

Project worker *{Begin handwritten}*W. W. Dixon*{End handwritten}*

Project editor

Remarks *{Begin handwritten}*South Carolina*{End handwritten}*

{ page image }

W11057

Project #1655

W. W. Dixon

Winnsboro, S. C. {Begin handwritten}6/25/[?] trans{End handwritten} {Begin deleted text}390570{End deleted text} FAIRFIELD COUNTY JANE HUTCHINSON

(white) 82 YEARS OLD.

Jane Hutchinson lives in the village of Monticello, Fairfield County, S. C. She owns her home and the three surrounding acres of land. She is much venerated by the people in the community and respected at home and abroad as an authority on unpublished local history. She is still spry for her age, and I found her, hoe in hand, attending to her garden March 11, 1938.

"Well, what has fetched you over here? Is you the Wood **Dixon** that stretches your blanket in the Fairfield [News?] and [Herald?] so often? Well, well, I'm happy to see you and set you straight on some things that I know more about than you. Why your mammy, Sallie Woodward, went to school right in this town, to old Mr. Hazel Zealy, while the war was going on.

"How old is I? Last Sunday I was eighty-two years old and spry as a cricket. Bet I can out run you to the door of my house yonder, and when we git there this half-bull pup will be sitting on the top step waiting for the door to open.

"Who are these men you got with you? Strangers ain't they? Well, glad to see you all, and the first thing I wants to know is can you all stay and take a bite of dinner with me? No? Well, I've showed my manners, anyway, by inviting you to break bread with me.

"My father, Archibald Hutchinson, came from Ireland; my mother, Anne Jane McCullough, came from County Antrim, Ireland. They came over first to New York

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and gradually made their way down to Monticello. They had only one other child, my brother, Robert, two years older than me, who is dead. My father was a tailor by trade, and, this neighborhood being thickly settled by rich land owners and slaveholders, he moved here about 1848, so he said.

"My people being plain working folks, I didn't take part in the great 'to do's,' such as cotillion dances and all kinds of parties. My father made the fashionable clothes for the men - broadcloth coats, nankeen trousers, and showy westcoats - and mother was kept busy making riding coats, polonaise dresses, and riding skirts. You know ladies rode on horseback in those times, but not straddle-wise, or straddle-legged, as they do now; they had sidesaddles. It will always be a mystery to me how the girls could sit sideways on spirited horses, race them, and stay on and not tumble off; they could though. Well, we kept in our tailor shop hoops and bustles, the style in those days for women folks. Ladies' hats have changed as much as any part of their dress. The larger the hat and the more ostrich plumes on it, the more fashionable a woman was regarded.

"I was a small child before the war. My mother, however, was always invited to the quilting parties and, in a measure, was chief superintendent of the work. Not far removed from African savagery *{Begin inserted text}{Begin handwritten}{End handwritten}{End inserted text}* the Negro slaves did not require much attention as to clothing. The older ones received some warm clothing in winter and wooden-bottom shoes in winter. You can see from here (indicating) where old Mr. Kelly had his tannery. When the Yankees came in their raids they went to the tannery and with their bayonets punched holes in every hide and side of leather Mr. Kelly had down there.

"You can see the Turkey Jim Davis house yonder (indicating), where Kilpatrick, in charge of the Yankee cavalry, made his headquarters. The house belongs

Page 3 { page image }

to Mr. Sam Robinson now. Why was it called Turkey Jim Davis house? Well, you see it was built by Dr. James Davis in slavery time. Dr. Davis' mother was Rebecca Kincaid, daughter of old Capt. Kincaid who operated the first cotton gin in the world, they say. He got the idea from the way he pulled the cockle burs out of the wool he sheared from his sheep. But let me get back to Dr. Davis. He was the largest cotton planter of his time. The Sultan of Turkey heard about him, from the United States Ambassador over there, and he offered him a high salary, for six years, to come over to Turkey and show the Turks how to plant, cultivate, and produce cotton and git it into lint. The Turks are a lazy set. He found out he couldn't get work out of them in the cotton fields over there. He cussed and reared around among them and kicked up such a fuss that the Sultan paid him the salary for the six years and let him come home. The assistant took Dr. Davis' place in supervising the cotton raising. Dr. Davis said he found a great difference in working Negro slaves and in working Turks.

"On his return, he brought with him a jackass, an *{Begin deleted text}arabian{End deleted text}* *{Begin inserted text}{Begin handwritten}Arabian{End handwritten}{End inserted text}* stallion, some mares, cashmere goats, a peculiar cow, called the bramah cow, and shanghai chickens. He was known as Dr. Turkey Jim Davis. The cows were white. The

one I remember of the increase, years after, was called "Snow Ball." The milk was sweeter than ordinary cow's milk, and children were very fond of it.

"Both my parents joined the Old Brick Church, back yonder on Little River. Rev. C. E. McDonald, in a sketch of the old church printed in a book entitled, 'The Centennial History of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church.' said: 'Mrs. Hutchinson, a member of the church, remembered hearing her mother and others tell that, after the crops were laid by, their fathers and grandfathers would go to the brickyard and tramp the mud into mortar with their bare feet, put it into mould with their hands, carry it out into the sun to dry, and then burn the kilns

Page 4 { page image }

by night and day, and that the church was completed in 1788.' It stands today as strong and as solid as at first, showing that men of ye olden times did their work well. This is the church building where the South Carolina Synod of the A. R. P. denomination met for the first time.

"The Yankees crossed at Freshley's Ferry and came on through to Monticello. The officers were courteous gentlemen, the rank-and-file ruffians, bent on plunder and every kind of mischief. A detail of soldiers were allowed to protect the boarding school. It was located about where Mrs. Nan McMeeking lives now. When the soldiers marched away and reached the Old Brick Church on the banks of Little River, they found that the Confederates had destroyed the bridge. They tore up the flooring of the church building and used it, in part, to construct a bridge, over which they marched.

"We didn't have round dances in our day and time, but, at the end of a quilting party, we danced the Virginia reel, steal partners, and the clog; and played 'thimble' and 'heavy heavy hangs over your head.' We had sewing bees often during the war, to make clothing and socks for the soldiers. Yes, I remember the candy pullings had by the young people. A boy and girl did the pulling, with melted butter on their hands to keep the sweet stuff from sticking to them.

"During and awhile after the war, coffee and sugar was scarce as hens' teeth. A substitute for coffee was parched corn, and for sugar, sorgum or molasses. Well, as I was a poor girl, I don't know much about the southern hospitality and the visiting around of the blue-bloods; and, as I never married, you'd better ask somebody that has been married and had a whole passel of children about family life in them days.

"The first public school in Monticello after the war was taught by Capt.

Page 5 { page image }

Hayne McMeekin, a graduate of the South Carolina College. Some said he was tinctured with atheism that he took from old Prof. Cooper at the college. In spite of it, though, he made a good teacher, was a good man, and late in life joined the Baptist Church. When he quit teaching, he went to farming. He was elected to the legislature and later became county treasurer. His memory is treasured here now for the good that he did, while many of the names of the blue-bloods and aristocrats are forgotten.

"By people not being among the gentry, I know very little about slave quarters or slave rations. I only know that every slave owner, being anxious to increase the number of his slaves, caused the females to bear children too early in life, but an owner had a doctor to look after the health of the slaves as faithfully as he did his own family.

"I remember old Governor John Hugh Means that introduced the Means grass in this section. Some call it Egyptian grass, and some, Johnson grass. I've heard that Gov. Johnson of Alabama got the seed from Egypt and sent some to Governor Means when he (Means) was governor in 1852. The old governor was a tall, red-faced, fiery man, hot for secession; but he did have the nobleness to go to war, and he got killed at Bull Run, while most of the other fiery-mouthed politicians stayed at home.

"You must go by and see Miss Nan (Mrs. McMeekin), and I'm sure she can give you all the book learning and old newspaper accounts of the sayings and doings in old-time Monticello."

Information about SGML version of this document.



Manuscript

31

(in body of document)
{Begin page}{Begin handwritten}96A{End handwritten}

Approximately 2400 words

SOUTH CAROLINA WRITERS' PROJECT

LIFE HISTORY

TITLE: I AM A NEGRO

Date of writing March 15, 1939

Name of Person Interviewed Walter Coachman (colored)

Fictitious Name No Name Given

Address Route #1

Place Bennetsville, S.C.

Occupation Pastor, Manning Grove,

Holiness Church.

Name of Writer F.Donald Atwell

Name of Reviser State Office. *{Begin note}{Begin handwritten}C.O [?] - S.C.{End handwritten}{End note}*

*{Begin page}*Project 1655

F.D. Atwell,

Charleston.S.C.

Approximately 2400 words I AM A NEGRO

"I am a Negro.

"A mere whimsy of fate made me black and you white.

It might easily have been the other way around. You were born

with the blessing of Providence. Hands were extended to help you the day you were born, and you may go as far as your capabilities permit. But me? The cards were stacked against me the day I came into the world. I can go just so far--no further.

"I was born the twelfth son in a family of thirteen children. My father was as black as the ace of spades, and killed himself working for old man Whitelaw on the twelve horse plantation just outside Bennetsville.

"I realized early in life that I was a Negro, and that it was the lot of our people to get the bum end of everything, all things said to the contrary. My father worked hard, made good crops, and was always in the hole at the end of the year.

My mother was a woman of most forceful character even if she was colored. She fought tooth and toe-nail to see that us children got some education. I went to a one-room negro school about three miles from where we lived. I learned to read, write and figure. I was, till am, interested in figuring! When I was twelve, I had gone through the fifth grade. I began to figure against old man Whitelaw. My other was in full accord. Pappy always said it was a sin to take advantage of people. It was against the Bible.

*{Begin page no. 2}*Pappy was a good, Christian Negro. He was too meek to suit my mother. I remember my first experience in looking out for number one. My father had me hitch up the two horse wagon and haul the corn in. Two loads to Mr, Whitelaw's barn, and one to ours. I made the mistake of occasionally hauling two loads to our barn and one to old man Whitelaw's. Honest? Of course, it was honest!

Didn't Whitelaw charge my father twelve dollars an acre for corn land? I wasn't exactly a fool even as a child.

"Later, I checked up on the cotton and found the biggest part in Mr. Whitelaw's cotton house. It was waiting there to be ginned. I slipped in there one night and made a rough estimate between the value of that cotton, and the cost of fertilizer and the value of the land, and I came out two bales to the good.

Cotton was ginned at Whaley's gin down below Bennetsville. I hauled it away in the night! Pappy came out pretty good the next year.

"When I was eighteen, I left home and went to Columbia to go to Allen University. I hadn't been there long when my father began to go in the hole again, and I had to shift around to pay my tuition. I got a job with Mrs. Reynolds, a widow lady who loved flowers and had a wondrous garden.

She didn't have much money. In fact I soon found out while working around the flowers and garden that she was really up

{Begin page no. 4}"When she died in Columbia hospital, it nearly killed me. I was about twenty-two then, and graduating from school.

I hoped so much that she would come to the graduating exercises, because I was class poet, and I meant to show off for her.

"I shall never forget that cold, blustery day in the cemetery. As they lowered her casket, something in me went down with her. I stayed there until everyone had left, and then I got down on my knees and cried. All I could say was:

'Goodbye, Miss Alice.' My eyes were so filled up I couldn't hardly see.

"If only God would put more white people like her on earth. Why, I used to sometime spend the night in the house with her. Do you think she was afraid? I never slept a wink, because I was watching over Miss Alice. Her niece stayed with her most of the time, but occasionally she would go home on the week-end. She went to school in Columbia, and stayed with Miss Alice because it was cheaper than boarding or staying at the dormitory. It was when she went home that I used to stay with Miss Alice.

"Did I ever get the idea I was as good as Miss Alice?

Certainly not. I am a Negro, and I'm not ashamed of it. I know, and I have to teach and preach that we are entitled to economic equality but never social equality. If God hadn't intended for us to always be two separate races, he'd made us alike.

{Begin page no. 5}"I remember the day the grocery man came to the house.

He shouted to me in the yard: "Hey, nigger, gimme a hand with these groceries." Miss Alice gave him a look fit to kill him and said: "There are no niggers working here, Mr. Blake. I shall appreciate your not addressing my help as nigger."

"That was Miss Alice all over. She wouldn't stand running over. Why, I'da died for Miss Alice. I used to wonder late in the night when I stayed in the house to look after her, what I would do if some danger really threatened. I was like most young fellows I guess - a little scary. But I believe I would have faced death easily to protect that good woman. I owe my education to her, and a lot more besides. She taught me how to conduct myself around decent white people, and I've never forgotten her teachings.

"Only the other day I was over in Columbia addressing the colored Bible Class of the Methodist Church South when I came down Hampton Street to find a little colored boy and a white boy fighting. A group of whites had gathered and was shouting encouragement to the white child. On the other side had grouped a bunch of Negroes, and they were pulling for the colored boy. The white boy was much larger, and the little colored boy crying pitifully and taking an awful beating.

"The Negroes saw the unfairness of it all, and the [tenseness?] between the two warring groups could be felt.

{Begin page no. 6}Now, I had learned from Miss Alice that diplomacy would always get you further than simply being pig-headed because you were right, so I quietly eased in and when the children separated, I grasped the colored child by the hand and walked on down the street with him, talking softly to soothe him. I didn't look back, and I didn't speak to anyone except the child.

"Suppose I had been outspoken? It would have been striking a match to dynamite. I try to impress on my people the necessity for diplomacy in their dealings with their white brothers. I know that we will never work out our problems in any other way. Kindness and thoughtfulness will do much towards improving the feelings between us.

"I know we are downtrodden. But you know, Miss Alice showed me that we can work things out peacefully if we only will.

The real trouble after all is lack of consideration. I can understand the feelings of the Jews. They have to fight tooth and toe-nail for everything. It is the same way with the Negro.

You know, and I know there are plenty white people in the south who think that a negro should live on nothing and go ragged.

They think that is enough for him. It hurts me deeply to see my people going about in the cold winter time with no shoes.

I hate to see them living in nasty hovels. They are human, and they are entitled to humans treatment.

{Begin page no. 7}"In the last few years, I think the Negro has forgiven a lot because he sees so many poor white people living on his
He sees the poor, scrawny little mill woman with her weazened baby trudging to the relief office to get something to eat. Only the
other day, an old colored mammy who has raised ten children of her own, told me she has been taking care of a poor girl's baby. The
mother wasn't married, and she died just after the baby was born. Her people would have nothing to do with her, and she was actually
lying in one of those mill-village shanties alone with her child. The old mammy told me that when she heard about it, it made her sick all
over. She said she told the people around the neighborhood that if they wouldn't do something for that poor girl, she would. That girl
was actually lying in a dirty bed and there wasn't a thing to eat in the house. Mammy took the child and nursed that girl until she died.
The county buried her, and the Dept. Welfare took the child.

"I tell you, I dont know what we're coming to. I try to find solace in the Bible, and also an explanation for the terrible times we are
having. But one thing is certain, we've got to get back to God and his teachings.

"There is so much greed and hatred in the lives and hearts of men. The rich people in America look like they dont care anything about
anyone but themselves.

{Begin page no. 8}"Even the colored race sticks together better than the white people. I cant understand it all. I have noticed that when a
Greek or Italian comes to this country he gets help right off. The same with a Jew. People say you never see a Jew working. They work,
but they work their heads, and they stand by one another.

"It is very seldom that the county has to bury a Negro. We have our burial societies. We tide our members over when they get in the tight.
When Negroes go to the relief, it is because there are so many to help that the fairly well-to-do Negroes have their hands full and can't
help but so many.

"But it is certainly different with the white people.. I saw a poor white boy go in a store the other day and ask for work. The manager
wasn't even kind to him, but told him to go to the WPA and get work. If that had been a Greek boy, the manager would have given him
something to do to help him until he could get on his feet.

Now I've got four children. I'm forty-one and my wife is thirty. We determined to help our children, and stick by them to the last ditch.
My oldest is a boy 17.

He goes to School in Bennetsville, and is interested in electricity. I'm going to help him in every way I can.

*{Begin page no. 9}*I have told him what its all about, and me and his mammy are sacrificing to keep him in school. Our other three
children are going to grammar school. I dont make very much now that times are so hard with my people. I have four churches scattered
throughout Marlboro County, and I preach at each one once a month. In this way, I make more than just one church.

"I am buying a little farm, if I ever get it paid for. We are living there, and my wife works the garden, and looks after the chickens. The
children do the heavy outdoor work such as cutting wood, milking, etc.

"I have very little time at home, because I have to go from church to church, and in the meantime, I'm busy on my sermons. Then too, I
put on revival meetings here and there. I save a lot of people, but I dont make much. I wont average over eight or nine dollars a Sunday.
You see that has to be stretched over the week.

"I thank God I'm doing as well as I am. I have a car or at least a piece of one, and my congregation pays my oil and gas bill. If they didn't
I couldnt get around.

I am doing everything I can to set an example for my children.

I shall continue to teach them that courtesy, kindness and consideration for the feelings of others will carry them far, and I shall impress
on them the necessity for upholding the ideals of their race.

{Begin page no. 10}"I want them to become men and women worthy of the best treatment any Negro can hope to receive, and I want
them to win the respect of white people, and do all in their power to promote better understanding between the two races.

If they do not fulfil my hopes, it wont be my fault, because I shall do everything to make them fine men and women.

{End body of document}

Carrie Johnson

NKA Jane Carrol



American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1940

Item 30 of 48

[In-Laws and T. B.'s]

{ page image }

{Begin handwritten} [No. 1.?] *{End handwritten}*

Approximately 2,600 words SOUTH CAROLINA WRITERS' PROJECT

LIFE HISTORY

TITLE: IN-LAWS AND T.B.'S

Date of First Writing March 9, 1939

Name of Person Interviewed Carrie Johnson

Fictitious Name Jane Carrol

Street Address House No. 1400 1/2 (known just as 1400 Block)

Place **Winnsboro Mills Winnsboro S. C.**

Occupation **Winnsboro Mills - Runs sides in Cardroom**

Name of Writer Lucile Clarke Ford

Name of Reviser State Office

"Good morning! Come inside! I was just sitting here on the doorsteps minding Jacqueline to keep her out of the street. She's just four years old and wants to be out of doors all the time. On rainy days, we have to keep her in. You say you just as soon sit here as to go inside? This is where I sit all the time in good weather. You can sit here on this porch in the sun all the winter in the mornings. In summer, it

Page 2 { page image }

is shady and cool in the afternoons. Here's where our neighbors sit when they come by."

Jane got up from the steps and took one of the chairs close to where I was seated. The porch, about eight feet across and five feet deep, with a substantial banister railing around it, was exactly like the one on the opposite side of the duplex house. The sage-green weatherboarded porch wall gave a pleasing background for Jane's golden blonde hair, blue eyes, and fair, naturally pink complexion. She wore a flowered cotton print, crisply starched and ironed.

"I have been here with Thelma, my sister, a week," Jane continued. "I always stay over here with her and her husband, Toney, when Bill's gone. He goes about a lot. He's not satisfied long anywhere. I know he oughter go on back to the State Park and stay till he is cured. But he don't want to stay there. He just stayed five months and left there on his own. They wanted him to stay eighteen months, or just as long as it would take to cure him. They are trying to get him back. The nurses tell me it's hard to get them back when they leave like that. They want you to sign up for eighteen months. If you are not cured in that time, you sign again for another eighteen months. No, it wasn't that he was mistreated. Bill said they waited on him and done for him same as if he was a baby. He just didn't like to stay there.

"Bill's Ma is the same way. Dr. Bryson and the health nurses sent her to State Park. They told her she'd oughter stay eighteen months anyhow. You want to know how long she was there? It was three or four weeks. I disremember which. They have all moved to a farm in Dutch Fork, Lexington County. I reckon she thought the people there didn't know nor care if she

Page 3 { page image }

had the T.B.'s or not. So she up and left that State Park. Looks like she don't care nothing at all about herself. She had all sorts of encouragements to go and then didn't stay.

"Bill's family always lived on farms. They didn't own their land, just rented. They were born and raised in Lexington County, the Dutch Fork section. It is a good farming county. They moved to **Winnsboro** Mill village about eight or nine years ago. While they lived here, they moved three times that I knew of.

"They lived on the hill once, then moved into the little house on the edge of the mill village. That house belongs to Dr. McCants. There's where they stayed three or four years. They moved over into the Mexico settlement and lived there for several years. It's hard to rent a house here when a family that has had T. B.'s has lived in it. [Frew?], the house man, gave that house to three different families before anybody lived in it. The ones that moved in fumigated it theirselves. But the outside mill hands has already cleaned it up good. A body never knows when they are moving from place to place

whose been in that house and what they have died of.

"I wish I could get rooms here on the hill where I could have a bathroom, lights, and water. We have a sanitary privy outside there in Mexico. There is a house near us that has a faucet in the back yard. I have to get my water from there. I do enjoy the bathroom here at Thelma's. The houses over in Mexico belongs to different men uptown. They ain't much houses, and nothing's around them like the grass and shrubbery the mill houses have around them. I just rent two rooms, and it costs me \$1.25 a week. They ain't big enough to cuss a cat in. Look like they ain't never

Page 4 { page image }

[been?] fixed up. I have to sleep in one room, and we cook, eat, and sit in the other. Thelma and Toney just pay fifty cents every week for each room. She has two rooms and the bathroom and this porch. Thelma can have a garden here in her back lot, but she don't have one. All of us go to the mill. Then we do all the work here together. When I stay here, I help with Jacqueline and the work in the house, too. I don't pay any board. There's plenty of room in the bedroom for Thelma and Toney and Jacqueline. It's cool in the summer.

"I have to be at the mill at four o'clock every afternoon and stay there till twelve at night. We can buy a supper at the mill. I eat somewhere between six-thirty and eight o'clock at night. Sometimes, when I go to bed at twelve, I don't get up next morning till ten-thirty. I do get up at six some mornings, because I like to eat breakfast with the rest. It tastes better, and I eat more. But I hardly ever go back to bed after I get up that early. At night, I get a glass of milk, some crackers, and maybe candy.

"I don't mind the work at night. I can't go to the picture show. The church don't like for us to go to pictures. I do hate to miss the [Mother's?] Club, though. That's such a help to the people. They have good times when they meet and sew. When a body that is down and out has a baby, they will send them clothes. I have known them to give a whole outfit for a baby, when a family was in bad. Seems like all women not working at night would go to the Mother's Club. But they don't care so much about going, and those that work at night have to give up such as that.

"There's the Community House, I guess it's more for men. If women visit the sick and do for the people that need them, it will give them

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plenty to do. Bill has always had a good job, and I've been lucky, too. But last year, when Bill was so sick and our little baby took sick and died so suddenly, the mill was laying off hands, and I couldn't get nothing to do. There was plenty that didn't have work in the

mill. I signed up and got some of the Government work.

"First thing, I got a notice to go to the NYA. Mrs. Ford was foreman. A crowd of girls, most of them younger than me, sewed every day. We worked by the Government hours. That was the easiest work ever I did. We could sew on whatever materials Mrs. Ford could get for us. Just as luck would have it, Mrs. Wright, they called her attendance officer for the schools, brought bolts and bolts of the prettiest soft cotton cloth. It was pink, blue, peach, and lavender. She wanted baby clothes made. She said that after she would get clothes enough to go around in a big family, there would generally be a new baby and no clothes and no money to spare for it.

"Did I enjoy sewing on them baby clothes? Well, I guess! Looks like after my baby had died, I couldn't have sewed on baby clothes. But I enjoyed making up all kinds of little dresses, sacks, wrappers, and everything. Trouble was, I didn't make but five dollars and twenty-five cents a week, and we couldn't work straight time. Had to work a week and lay off a week. That gave me ten dollars and fifty cents a month to live on. Then Bill left the State Park. When the nurses come to see me, I promised them we would sleep in separate rooms. They said I would catch T.B.'s from him and that maybe another baby would come and be sickly and die like our little boy did. We couldn't hardly get on with Bill not working. My people helped us some. His people couldn't do much for us. So many of them are sick about all the time. Sickliest people ever you saw. My folks, the Waters ain't

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that way.

"The Government workers helped to get me on WPA. I was put to work at the Potato House, they called it. We sewed there, making rugs and quilts. I made twenty-one dollars a month. They sent for me to come back to the mill, when they started up full time in August. I make ten dollars a week. That's more than I could make at Government work. Back when I first learned to run sides, I could make as much as fourteen dollars a week. With the new stretch-out system and letting several work on the same job, ten dollars is as much as I ever make now. Bill and me both have to get on with that. It takes it, too, when house rent is paid and groceries and medicine is bought. I don't have a cent left to buy clothes or furniture or anything for the house. I do have to by *{Begin inserted text}* Bill*{End inserted text}* clothes and a suit once in awhile. I always buy on the installment plan and pay as I can. I have learned I can get on without buying clothes. I used to get a new dress about everytime I got a check. I have been wearing my old dresses two years.

"If the rest of the people didn't buy no more than we do, Mr. Belk's and all the other dry goods stores in **Winnsboro** would close up. Mr. Propst did close in the hard times. They said he went into bankrupt. None of us here at the mills dress like we used to. You can

see women wearing a plain cotton print out around the neighborhood now, even down to wives of boss men. Before the hard times, we wouldn't go nowhere without a good silk or satin dress on, summer and winter. But I'm thankful I have my health and can work. We never have had a collection taken for us. Everybody was having it hard when our baby died. I don't know what we would have done along about then if I hadn't had that Government work. Of course, they do say there is always a way, but I sure have been thankful for that work and

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my health.

"I like to eat, and I want my three meals a day. We just about have the same kind of breakfast every day. Most of the time it's grits, eggs toast, and coffee. Sometimes we have bacon or ham, if we feel like we can afford it. Once in a while we get steak for our dinner. When I stayed in that house in Mexico and took care of Bill, I couldn't eat any breakfast. [Thelma's?] been making me stay here, and we fix up and eat all kind of good things. But you can look at her and see she gets plenty to eat. Our people, the Walters, always had a plenty to eat and didn't have much sickness.

"My folks lived here about nine years. This is where I met Bill. We were married here. Pa worked in the cardroom. He got sick just when they were laying off hands, and he was not taken back on his work after he got well. He got thirteen weeks' pay from insurance the mill gives people when they are sick. That thirteen weeks he got about seven dollars and fifty cents a week. That was a help, but not what he needed. He is not but fifty-five or fifty-six years old, but he's about done for in the mill. Now he's trying to learn something else. He's moved to a farm near Lancaster. He thinks he will like it.

"Mill work is all I know, and I don't believe I could do anything else. I like my job and try to run it the best I can. I can't stand to be without work, and, even when I don't get so much, I like my regular pay check coming. If I tried it out in the country, I know I'd die. It seems so quiet and lonely. I like to see people going and coming and to have somewhere to go myself. Here we have nice yards with green grass, shrubbery, flowers and trees, all planted by the mill company, and they keep it up. Thelma don't try to have a garden and chickens, but she does have a cow and pigs. They

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killed a pig not long ago. It's a lot of help.

"None of us have a car. There's so many accidents and so many people getting killed, I don't even want one. I couldn't never pay for a car out of what I make. Some people that have them and drive so much, I don't see how they make it on their pay. You can get on

here without one. Can get a taxi uptown for ten cents. It's twenty cents a round trip. But I don't mind walking; I never expect to own a home, either. I know we will always have to rent. But my people has always rented, and all of Bill's people too, and they always got on.

"Bill's people have so much sickness all the time, I don't visit there. I'd rather be with my own folks. His mother coughs and spits up all the time. But she goes right on about the house work, cooking and everything. Bill's father is named Charlie Johnson. He has a brother, Clyde, about forty years old. He was sent to State Park, but wouldn't stay. His wife is dead. She got right weakly and died after she had been married to him a few years. I ain't kept up with them. I don't know whether any of her children are living yet or not. There's Pat's family, he is Bill's brother living at Rockton. The health nurses tested them and say none of them have T.B.'s. He has work here in the mill. There's another brother, Harry, about sixteen years old. He is at home.

"Bill's sister, Edna, is fourteen years old. She has T.B.'s and is the only one of that family that stays at State Park. She's been there a year on March the 19. When she went there last year, she weighed eighty-five pounds. Looked just like a bar of soap after a day's washing. You just oughter see her now. Thelma and me got a chance to go to see her Sunday. She weighs one hundred and five pounds now. She didn't cough

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before she went there, but she was bad to have colds and was thin. She wouldn't eat nothing, either. Now she eats. I wish you could see the tray full of vittles she eat Sunday while we was there. She says they have good stuff like that all the time. She had chicken and ice cream. Sometimes they have ham and steak. And she drinks milk three times a day. They don't give her medicine often. But when they do have to give it to her, she says they put it in her vittles and she don't know she's taking it. She told us about having to take gas. It's put in with a big needle. I don't know what it means. You may know. It has 200 c.c. on it. She says it don't hurt. She has to take it about twice a week.

"They wear pajamas at State Park. She took hers with her. She also took a comb, a brush, a tooth brush, a house coat, and bedroom slippers. The State Park furnishes all the sheets, cover, towels, and soap. Mr. Turner, the superintendent of the school here, has been such a help to her. He had to go to a place called Oteen, in North Carolina, after he was gassed in the war. He stayed there until he was cured. He told Edna that still and yet he goes to bed and rests when he gets home every day. Edna says she is going to stay at State Park till she is cured.

"Bill didn't look thin and bad when they took him to State Park. He's tall and fine looking, about three inches taller than I am. He lied about his age. He wasn't but seventeen when we married two years ago. I was nineteen. He says he was afraid I

wouldn't have married him if I had known his age. He ain't but nineteen now.

"I can vote this year, being as I am twenty-one. I don't care nothing about it, but it might help somebody else if I vote. That's one thing my pa never talked. He voted, and I never have heard him say a time who

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he was going to vote for.

"Mr. Ellenberg preaches at the Holiness Baptist Church. And I never hear him say a thing against women voting. I like to go to church, but I don't pay much to the church. I ain't able to.

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Project #3613

W. W. Dixon

Winnsboro, S. C. OLIVER JOHNSON, D. D.

(White) 72 YEARS OLD.

Doctor Oliver Johnson, pastor of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church at Winnsboro, South Carolina, is one of the outstanding ministers of his denomination in the South and a prominent citizen of the Piedmont section of South Carolina. He is 6 feet tall and weighs 185 pounds. By his dignity and force of strong personality, he attracts attention in any assemblage of people. He is easily approached in conversation; is a good listener and a better talker. He is fond of children and possesses the confidence and affectionate regard of all classes of society in Winnsboro and Fairfield County. He and his family reside in the large manse of the A. R. P. Church on West Liberty Street, in the town of Winnsboro.

"My father was Henry McKinney Johnson. His ancestor was one of the pilgrims who came over on the Mayflower to America in 1620. He was a descendant of William Brewster. My mother, Mary Eliza Bouchillon, was descended from the Bouchillons that came with the Huguenots from France and made the settlement in Abbeville County known as Bordeaux. I was born at Bordeaux, Abbeville County, July 30, 1866. {Begin note}{Begin handwritten}{???}{End handwritten}{End note}

"My father was a farmer. He bought a home in the small college town of Due West and moved our family there in 1873. I received my primary schooling in the preparatory department of the college. Mrs. Louisa Galloway was my first primary teacher in the rudiments of how to spell, read, and write.

Doctor Wm. Moffatt Grier had been elected president of Erskine College {Begin page no. 2}in 1871. As I reflect upon that era, the task confronting us must have been a difficult one. The South was suffering from the ravages of a devastating war. The people from whom the college expected its patronage and financial support were impoverished and disheartened. Again, the burden of reconstruction was upon them. At that time, Doctor Grier was a young man twenty-eight years old. He had served in the Confederate Army, a member of the 6th Regiment, South Caroline Volunteers. He was wounded at Williamsburg and taken prisoner and exchanged in 1862. But he really seemed born and called of God to the service of Erskine College for this particular period.

"The old endowment was gone, and there were no effective plans for a new one. The question of Mordicai to Esther suggests itself here: "Who knowest whether thou art not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

"Doctor Grier soon proved himself preeminently qualified for the position. His worth became known far outside the bounds of his own denomination, and he was generally accepted as an exponent of the highest and best Christian culture in the South. Under his wise administration and guidance, the college extended its influence and attained a place of recognized prominence among the institutions of higher learning in this country. Doctor Grier was great as a teacher of mental and moral science. As president, he was tactful, resourceful, and unstinting in toil and reared a fair superstructure on the foundation laid by the great and good men who preceded him. He has been described as gentle, firm, considerate, and just. He relied on appeals to his student's sense of honor rather than the naked hand of discipline, and rarely did his students fail him.

"His Sabbath afternoon sermons, preached in the Due West pulpit, are ever to be remembered. They have left their impression upon me, while some of his words in the classroom have been forgotten. It was under such environment that {Begin page no. 3}my literary education was conducted and my mental and moral nature was developed.

"I gained three medals while at Erskine College. I won the first one for being the best all around pupil in the preparatory department; the second, for being the best declaimer in my freshman year; and the third, for being the best essayist in my senior year. I was graduated at Erskine in 1888, a few days prior to my twenty-second birthday.

"Before leaving the subject of the college, I will relate how one of the legends that used to interest the student body has since become authenticated history. The legend was that Ebenezer Erskine, for whom Erskine College is named, was born six months after his mother's funeral and interment. The explanation of this legend came about recently, when Dr. H. T. Patterson, a Columbia banker, presented the Erskine Theological Seminary with an old copy of Erskine's sermons, printed in the year 1728.

"A startling memoir penned on the flyleaf of the volume describes Mrs. Henry Erskine's death and interment and her subsequent revival

by the act of a grave robber. The cryptic thief in this instance, however, played a benevolent role, saving Mrs. Erskine to life, saved Ebenezer, her unborn son, and altered Presbyterian church history.

"Ebenezer Erskine, through this amazing incident, was literally projected from the grave to establish the Seceder Church, out of which grew the Associate Reformed Presbyterian denomination and Erskine College. Mrs. Erskine was a victim of epilepsy, according to the story, and suffered from nervous disorders, lapsing into unconsciousness at times for hours. So her seeming death at Dryburgh, Warkshire (Begin inserted text) (Begin handwritten) (End handwritten) (End inserted text) was deemed real. A short time after her interment in the family vault, the church sexton, remembering a costly ring that had been left on her finger, secured secret access to the vault. After opening the coffin and failing to loosen the ring from her swollen finger, the sexton attempted to sever the (Begin page no. 4) joint with a knife. The blood and the shock from the knife wound stirred life in the supposed dead body, and Mrs. Erskine arose from the crypt and walked the short distance home.

"As Mrs. Erskine approached the house, her husband, hearing footsteps, exclaimed: 'If I didn't know my Margaret was dead, I'd say that was her footstep on yonder walk.' Henry Erskine was quite correct, for his wife, miraculously, had returned alive. Six months afterward, she gave birth to Ebenezer Erskine. This son, on attaining manhood, disagreed with the teachings of the Scotch Church and led dissenters in forming the Seceder Church at Gairney Bridge, near Kinross, Scotland, on December 6, 1738.

"In the fall of 1888, I began teaching school at Lewisville, Chester County. It was a school supported by subscriptions from individuals in the community. The hours were from 8 a. m. until 4 p. m., with an hour's intermission for lunch and recreation. It was not a graded school. My pupils ranged in age from six to twenty-two years old. It was a pretty laborious job but not an uninteresting one nor a profitless one to me in after life.

"I taught this school for three years, until I entered the Theological Seminary at Princeton, New Jersey, in 1891. I remained at Princeton three years, taking the full course in Theology and obtaining my degree in May, 1894.

"I had been licensed to preach in 1893, by the second A. R. P. Presbytery in session at Due West, South Carolina. I spent that summer with the church in Atlanta, Georgia. The following year, I supplied the pulpit of the First Church, at Charlotte, North Carolina, during the summer, the regular pastor being absent for surgical treatment.

"At the seminary, I had learned that all sermons may be or should be predicated with regard to three subjects: God, man, and Christ, Christ being the (Begin page no. 5) mediator between God and man.

"I remember Doctor William Henry Green was the president of the faculty the time I was at Princeton. I was installed as pastor of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church at Leslie, in York County, South Carolina, October 18, 1894. I was married October 30, 1901, to Tirzah Christine Elliott of Winnsboro, South Carolina.

"In May, 1900, I bore the fraternal greetings of the A. R. P. Synod of the South to the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church in session at Chicago. I was an invited speaker at the Young People's Christian Union Convention held at Winona Lake, Indiana, in July 1901. While there, I was presented with a gavel made of wood from Gairney Bridge, Scotland. Under the words 'Gairney Bridge' on the gavel is inscribed 'December, 1733,' this being the month and year that Ebenezer Erskine and his conductors met at Gairney Bridge and organized the movement which came to be known in Scotland as the 'Secession Church' and which was the progenitor in this country of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, the members of which are still familiarly called 'Seceders.'

"I was elected a director of Erskine Theological Seminary in 1907 and a member of the Home Mission Board of the A. R. P. Church in 1901. By invitation, I have acted as chaplain in both the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States Congress.

"I have been in the ministry 44 years and served but two pastorates; the Neely Creek Church at Leslie, 14 years, and Bethel Church at Winnsboro, 30 years.

"My paternal grandparents had thirteen children, of which my father, Henry, was the fourth child. My maternal grandparents had fifteen children, of which my mother, Mary, was the ninth child.

"My wife, though her baptismal name is 'Tirzah Christine,' has always been (Begin page no. 6) called 'Tiny'. To the colored population, she is affectionately known as 'Miss Tiny.' To us have been born nine children, five girls and four boys. The 30th day of October, 1938 was the 37th anniversary of our marriage.

"Contrasting public opinion now and fifty years ago, as you request, I would say first that public opinion has been aroused on the subject of public health. Fifty years ago, the people would not have approved the large sums of money now appropriated by the legislature to the State Board of Health and county boards of health.

"Take the town of Winnsboro for example. It didn't have a board of health, a sewerage system, nor a county medical office. It was regarded as an invasion of personal rights to even require vaccination of the children in a home. Individual privies were generally constructed behind merchants' stores in town, and hog pens were within the town limit. The care and sanitation of these places were left to the judgment and will of the owner of the premises.

"Then grocery stores were unsavory places. The vendor had no regard for sanitary conditions. The vendor hummed over and lit on these commodities, but today, by a change of public opinion, rules of boards of health have been enacted, regulating the conduct of these places. The grocery store has become a 'thing of beauty' if not 'a joy forever.'

"Public opinion has been improved on the subject of paved streets and good roads. None of the streets and few of the sidewalks of the town were paved when I came to Winnsboro in 1908. In that day, transportation of heavy loads were effected by wagons and trucks. The power used was mules and horses. Frequently, teams would bog down and stall on the county roads and even on the main streets of our town. Now public opinion has advanced, since the coming of the automobile, and I believe all of our streets and sidewalks are paved or to be paved. Fifty {Begin page no. 7}years ago, we really had no State road system worthy of the name. Today, we have a State Highway Department, and the excellence of our State highway is commented upon by the traveling public in this and other states of the Union.

"Public opinion has demanded increased educational facilities. Large sums of money are raised by taxation for school buildings and teachers' salaries. The individual public school teacher's salary is one hundred percent better than it was in 1888.

"You asked me about the attitude of the public mind toward lynching? In spite of the public inflammatory speeches made by some of our politicians of a decade or more ago, the tenor of which was 'To hell with the law and constitution where a rapist is concerned,' I think people have become more sober-minded and are more inclined to let the law have its course in all violations of the law. I can't recall a lynching in Fairfield County in the past 30 years.

"Our county is situated between two rivers, the Wateree and Broad, with numerous streams. Its surface is rolling and hilly. Our farmers had become one crop producers in the main -cotton, cotton, cotton. There was no diversification and little rotation of crops {Begin inserted text}{Begin handwritten},{End handwritten}{End inserted text} and no thought was given to the conservation of the soil. Forests of pine were cut down to feed the furnaces of railroad locomotives. Hard woods were also destroyed for people's fireplaces in cities and towns. When lands ceased to be productive in cotton, more timber lands were demanded, and the waste went on from year to year, greatly increased by the timber merchants and sawmills.

"In spite of the voice of wisdom proceeding from Clemson College and the Department of Agriculture at Washington, as to rotation of crops and methods of soil conservation, it all was more or less unheeded until the present administration at Washington extended a helping hand to the farmer in consideration of {Begin page no. 8}his submitting to the plans of farming outlined by the government. Now there are marked changes in the country as you ride through on the excellent highways the National Government has helped to build. Thirty years ago, cotton was about all you saw growing along the highways. Now one sees more corn than cotton. Legumes are everywhere, also a variety of field crops, wheat, oats, rye, and alfalfa, which were little in evidence thirty years ago. One sees more cattle, more hogs and vastly improved schoolhouses.

As The State said in its editorial a few days ago: 'Good country dwellings do not precede intelligent farming, they come after it and as a result of it. South Carolina is learning how to farm. And if we are alive twenty years hence, we expect to see an impressive number of neat, snug, comfortable homes, as we travel the highways.' "About young people now and fifty years ago. Human nature will always, basically, be the same. Youth has more freedom now than then, but it is my firm belief that the boys and girls of today are just as good, maybe a little better, than they were in 1880. I would not exchange the comradeship of parent and child of today for that of the parent toward the child of a half century ago."

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[The Kellys on Williams Street]

Approximately 3,900 words

6 B SOUTH CAROLINA WRITERS' PROJECT

LIFE HISTORY

TITLE: THE KELLYS ON WILLIAMS STREET

Date of First Writing January 4, 1939

Name of Person Interviewed The Reverend Charles M. Kelly (white)

Fictitious Name None

Street Address 305 Williams Street

Place Columbia, S. C.

Occupation Preacher

Name of Writer Mattie T. Jones

Name of Reviser State Office

Reverend Charles Kelly, pastor of the Nazarene Church (Holiness), was out in his back yard feeding the chickens.

"We like to keep chickens," he said, "like to have one to eat whenever we want it. These bantams are mostly pets for the children, but they aren't such a bad investment after all.

Three of their eggs equal two of the hens' eggs in weight, and they lay practically every day of the year.

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Those guineas in the coop over there are waiting for the fence I'm planning to build 'round the yard. I'm going to turn 'em out and raise guineas, too. We eat a lot of eggs at our house."

The tall, red-haired minister put the chicken feed away and walked to the house, a four-room annex to the Nazarene Church. Both buildings are of wood, the unpainted boards of the church are vertical; those of the house, horizontal.

"Come right in," Mrs. Kelly said, "we're glad to have you. No intrusion at all. The latchkey always hangs on the outside at our house. Well, I believe it's the first parsonage I've ever seen joined on to the church like this, but we like it. Makes us have lots of company, especially on Sundays. It's so convenient for folks to slip through this door from the church. It's all a temporary arrangement, of course. We built our house in a week. Did it last summer when the mill operatives had a vacation. We hired one carpenter, as foreman, and the rest of the work was donated. Just cost us \$300, but we expect to make lots of improvements along."

The door opened and two little boys in pink and blue pajamas came running into the room.

"Mummee, look at tattoo! Daddy, tattoo, tattoo!" they shouted, showing marks of red and blue ink on their wrists.

"Always into something. Charles, please see if they turned over the ink bottles," the mother said, as she changed their sleeping clothes to overalls. We let the boys sleep as late as they want to, and they've just gotten up. We're all sort of resting from the Christmas holidays. Haven't even gotten the house straight this morning.

3

The Kellys of Olympia

"Yes, they are both well and strong. But they should be; they drink about a gallon of milk a day. We have a cow now. But, even before we got her, we sometimes bought as much as seven quarts of milk a day. We believe in giving the children plenty of wholesome food - fresh fruits and vegetables, cereals and eggs. We try to keep fresh fruit in the house all the time; they like it. And both are crazy about spinach. Popeye is responsible for that, I think. Somebody has to read the funnies to them as soon as the Record gets in the house. The oldest boy, Charles Wesley, is in the second grade now, and he can read a little to them. At least, they all enjoy looking at the pictures together."

"They get their blue eyes from my grandparents, I guess," said Mr. Kelly. "They all had blue eyes. On both sides of the house my grandparents were tenant farmers, from Lexington and Richland Counties. When my Grandfather Kelly died, my grandmother married John Paschal, the father of John Paschal who is practicing law here now. There was a big family of children - thirteen in all. My grandmother had four; Mr. Paschal had five; and together they had four. Making ends meet was a problem with them, as you might imagine, with that many hungry mouths to feed. So they decided it would be easier to make a living at the mill, and they moved here to Olympia Mill.

"That was possibly not such a bad step to take, since they didn't get much cash money from the farm in those days. None of the thirteen children had much chance at an education. My father was put to work in the mill when he was just a boy; first as a spinner, then as a weaver, and finally as a loom fixer. He worked for \$15 a week for about fifteen years. He married my mother, who also worked in the mill. They were both young. Children came to the home all along; but they managed somehow to save a little.

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Finally, my father decided to put his small savings in the grocery store business. He and Ben Davis were partners and ran two stores. Made money, too. Some weeks their sales ran between \$1,200 and \$1,500.

"The one thing my parents wanted was a home of their own. So, as soon as they saved \$3,000, they decided to invest it in a home on Hayward Street.

"Father was simply crazy about hunting. One fall he and Ben Davis were shooting doves on the State Farm. The dog sensed danger. The men rushed to the spot. A rattlesnake coiled and was ready to strike. In the excitement of killing it, my father was accidentally shot by Mr. Davis. Before a doctor could reach him, he died. Mother was left a widow with eight little children. It was an awful struggle for her to hold things together. But she managed to get along for several years. Then she married Sam Hawkins, who was working in the quarry. Finally, she lost everything she had but her home.

"I was born while they were living at the mill, but they moved to their home when I was five years old. School didn't interest me much, so when I was fifteen, and in the ninth grade, I went to work in my mother's store. She paid me \$10 a week and my board. In two years, when I was seventeen, I married Mamie Barber. She was fifteen. But she only lived three months. She had a ruptured appendix and died with peritonitis.

"There was a Home Store right across the street from ours, and the cashier was a pretty little brunette, capable as she could be. So after I had lived alone nearly two years, I persuaded her to try living with me. One Monday morning we slipped over to the Methodist parsonage, and R. C. Griffeth, the pastor, tied the knot for us."

"You mean, Carl, we thought we slipped away. We hadn't gotten on the porch good till here they came in their overalls and print dresses right 5 out of the mill. Must have been thirty or forty of 'em. And they carried us high, too. I reckon we should have had something out of the ordinary; we didn't have a wedding and didn't take a trip."

"Well, we both got off from work for a few days, anyway. To tell the truth, I didn't have enough money for a trip. I was making only fifteen dollars a week, and I couldn't make myself believe two of us could live as cheaply as one.

"After our little vacation, we went to board with Mother and paid her eleven dollars a week. We boarded a few months and then we started housekeeping. We bought our furniture on the installment plan. Then doctors' bills and hospital bills took all we had saved, and more.

"By that time I began to feel my lack of education; so I decided to try a year at Textile Industrial Institute. You know about the T.I.I., I guess. How you make your expenses as you go, working two weeks and studying two. We didn't stay there long, however, because there were no convenient apartments for married couples with children. So we came home with no money and no job. But I soon had a job in a Home Store and a raise of salary. I got \$25 this time.

"I had been a pretty rough fellow. I did about what the other boys were doing, and a few of the extras. But the first year Mr. Griffeth was sent to our church, I was converted. Then I became enthusiastic about church work. I knew less than nothing about the Bible, but I took a man's Bible class to teach. Very few men were coming to Sunday School; but it wasn't long till we had 200 men on roll. One year we had the second largest class of men in Columbia. I tell you I had to do some studying to keep ahead o' those rascals.

6

I soon felt a call to preach. Evangelistic work appealed to me. With a partner, I tried independent evangelistic work at two different times. But our tent was destroyed both times by storms, and we finally gave it up. But we made a very good living while we were doing it, about twenty-five dollars apiece a week.

"During these years, I preached for the Negroes occasionally, and I recall one experience I had. I arrived at the church about 11 o'clock, by appointment, and by 2 or 3 o'clock the crowd had assembled. The pastor announced that they would take an offering of two or three dollars, which they must have that day. He called for the members to walk right up and put their offerings on the table. Then the brethren passed the plates - frying pans, covered with colored paper and attached to the ends of broom handles. Still there wasn't

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enough. They lacked seventy-six cents. The preacher announced that the choir would sing till the amount was contributed. Whoever wanted to make an offering would kindly raise his hand, and he would go to him and receive the gift. The choir began to sing, but the response was disappointing. Finally, the pastor announced, 'Big Six is in his pocket,' and he looked in the direction where Big Six was sitting. He walked hopefully towards Big Six and received his offering. 'The choir will continue to sing; we don't lack but seventy-five cents now.'

"But back to my story: I felt I had to do something to help support my family; so about that time, I borrowed \$850 and bought a grocery store of my own. I worked in the store and pastored this church for four years. But a pastor should give his whole time to his church work, I think, and I'm doing that now. This church grew out of a Whaley Street revival. In these five years, we've grown from twenty-one members to eighty-five. And that means 7 eighty-five; for, if a member fails to attend church in six months, we drop his name. The building was at first an open shed with a sawdust floor. Gradually, we added to it until we made a right respectable house of worship, we think. We've got \$1,000 invested in it now. The land isn't ours. We just leased it for ten years, and I don't know what will happen. I do know we're planning to build us a new brick church and parsonage somewhere real soon. This parsonage is fairly comfortable. It has water on the back porch, and the fixtures are bought for sewerage and a bath. But the plumber just hasn't had time to put them in. When we have these conveniences, we'll have a lot more time to give to our work."

"Bruce, gimme that ball!" exclaimed Jimmie.

"I ain't gointer do it. It's my ball."

"Tain't no such a thing. It's mine. Daddy, make Bruce gimme that ball."

By this time the boys were engaging in a fisticuff, and the father had to settle the quarrel. As he took Bruce on his lap and dried his tears, he said, "Very often I lead Bruce's evening prayer with him, and we close with this petition, 'And don't let me jump on Jimmie any

more.' He repeats it seriously and then adds, as he looks up, 'But I will jump on him whenever he bothers me.'

"Charles Wesley doesn't have much fighting spirit in him," Mrs. Kelly added. "He likes to get out with his slingshot. When he came in yesterday, I asked him how many birds he had killed. His answer was, 'None. How you 'spect me to kill them birds? They run faster than the rock every time.'"

"That fighting spirit in Bruce must have been picked up from his German ancestors, somewhere," was Mr. Kelly's comment. "Savors of Hitlerism, doesn't it? I declare this war situation is getting tense. Looks like Uncle Sam will have to walk in over there again. I'm opposed to war myself; even opposed to spending billions of dollars in armaments, while millions of people are hungry. But I'm truly glad I don't have the responsibility of saying what we shall do."

"Well, Carl, how would you solve the problem of having so many people in the world; how would you feed and clothe 'em all?" Mrs. Kelly asked. "No birth control and no wars. Looks to me like we'll have to have one or the other. To save my life, I can't think it's right to bring little children into the world when you can't take care of them like you should. If you can't give children a decent living or an education and proper food, I think you'd better not have 'em. We see pitiful demonstrations of this sort of thing all around us every day. I don't think it's a bit of harm to prevent their coming, but I don't believe in destroying life. What you can't give you shouldn't take away."

"She's getting to be quite a modernist, isn't she?" Mr. Kelly suggested. "Well, for pity sake, Florence, be careful how you talk about birth control in these diggings. Whatever you do, don't let Sister Baker hear you say those things. We would probably be run out o' town over night. Well, that's a bit of pleasantry, of course. I try not to be too serious. I have friends who tell me I'm inclined to be a kill-joy in my religion and to take life too seriously. There's more danger of my getting an inferiority complex, I'm afraid. It's the one regret of

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my life that I stopped school, when I did. One lesson my dad taught me has helped me lots, and that is to concentrate on what I'm doing. The kids can romp and play all they want to, and Florence can talk a blue streak about the neighbor's chickens destroying 9 her flowers; but I don't hear a word of it.

"I know I can never be a successful preacher without more training, and I do want to climb. All our churches demand an educated ministry now. I've taken a correspondence course under the general board, and I'm taking a a course now at the Columbia Bible College. This fall I'm planning to drop everything and go to Nashville to study, even if I have to go in debt for our expenses. We'll rent an apartment and all go."

"I want to take a course in church methods myself," Mrs. Kelly added. "I'm particularly interested in young people. Then I need some child psychology mighty bad. Every day problems come up with our boys, and I can't meet them. I am terribly handicapped in every way."

A car came up in the yard, and a guest walked in.

"Hello, everybody! I'm sure glad to be home again," Mrs. Baker said, as she seated herself in a comfortable rocking chair. "I reckon everybody's missed gas since I've been gone. Haven't been to town in more'n a week, not since two days before Christmas. Evelyn and me went over to Georgia to spend Christmas with my sisters. We had a mighty good time, too, and the best things to eat. I came a little early today. Feel just like gossiping a little, and then I wanted to see you and Granny before I go to work. It's an awful grind, this working in the mill every day. Sometimes I'm tempted to quit and stay at home. Evelyn needs me. Reckon if it wasn't for that check coming in every month, I'd have quit long ago. Mrs. Kelly, do you know if Granny's feet are any better? Poor old Granny. She does have a time."

"Gee! it's cold outside. And here I am with this voile dress on and this one slip. If it was a steaming hot day in August, I'd have on a heavy print dress, two slips, a big canvas apron, and a sweater.

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"You all hear about Herbert Mitchum? Yes'm, the old man. They say he's got double pneumonia in both lungs, and he's too sick to be carried to the hospital. Just got sick yesterday, too.

"People don't wear enough clothes to keep 'em well these days. Did you ever see anything to beat these short dresses the little girls wear these times? Honestly, they come up to their little bumpuses. The skirt's no more then a frill below their sweater. And Evelyn's is shorter then anybody elses. No wonder they have to put powder and rouge on their faces before they're twelve years old. You can leave an old automobile a settin' out in the rain and weather and don't pay no attention to it and first thing you know it'll be all faded out and have to be painted over.

"I'm in the worst humor today. I reckon you all wish I had stayed in Georgia. Wonder what does make me so cross?

"Lord a mercy! Did you see that hat Miss Moore had on at prayer meetin' last night? That feather was two feet long and sticking straight up behind. The funniest looking thing I ever seen. I laughed right in her face when I spoke to her. I bet if I'd take that stuffed squirrel of Granny's hanging up on her wall and put it round my hat with the tail hanging down behind, every woman on this hill would put a squirrel on her hat, too. Ain't folks funny 'bout things like that?"

Without waiting for a reply to her question, she continued to talk, chewing her gum and rocking back and forth in her chair.

"What you think about Miss Smith dying and they wouldn't have no doctor? I don't believe in no craziness like some folks do. I believe in holiness, but I believe in the right kind of holiness myself. The Bible says, 'Follow peace with all men and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.'

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All this sanctification, divine healing, speaking in tongues, and such nonsense. Whew, it's bosh to me. Most people wag their tongues too much anyway.

"Did you all hear Roosevelt's speech? I didn't, and I won't hear the next one neither. I don't like Roosevelt myself. Got no patience with him. I'm working hard as I ever did and ain't getting a cent more for it. If I'm gonna starve, I'll just kick my feet up on a dry-goods box, get me a good book to read, and sit right there and starve. I don't want Roosevelt nor anybody else givin' nothing to me. No sir-ree!

"My light bill come in today, and it's too much. I declare I ain't gonna pay that much for lights and live in the country, too. I'll move to town first. But, shucks, I'm in an awful mood today. Got to try to feel better before I go to work or I'll lose my job. I must have eaten too much in Georgia, eh?

"And there's that old car. I'll be glad when it's paid for. I ain't never gonna buy another one, 'less I've got the spot cash to pay for it with the day I get it. I'll walk first. This thing of having to plank out your money for a good-for-nothin' old car every time a check comes in don't suit me a-tall.

"You say you'd like to write my life story? Well, by George, it would be one worth reading. Full of tragedy, comedy, and romance. But geewhiz, I wouldn't tell nobody my life story for a thousand dollars. I come from Georgia, and some of them fellers I went back on over there would spot me sure. No, ma'am, couldn't tell my life story.

"Don't Hugh Slater know he can't get no crowd over here today? Young people's got to work. They can't come to no meetin' Friday afternoon.

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I can't lose the time myself. He oughter know he couldn't have no young people's meetin' except on Saturday night. And delegates are comin' here from Winnsboro and Eastover and everywhere. It's a plumb shame. But lemme go before I bless somebody else out or start something else up. Yes, gimme an apple. I'll need it for lunch before twelve o'clock tonight.

"I'm glad to have seen you folks and sorry I've been so hateful today. Evelyn's coming from school by here for the meeting. And I believe I'll just leave my car here till I start to the mill. Good-by. You all come to see me. Going to see Granny now."

"Well, that's that," said Mr. Kelly, with a hearty chuckle, and he took up his story again.

"We find it a little hard to live on our salary of twenty dollars a week and keep everything going. But I do some extra preaching along, and average holding eight revivals in a year. I get about twenty-five dollars a week for that work. This helps us meet the bills. We have a new car. But the members made a down payment of eighty dollars, and they pay five dollars a week on it. So that's not costing me much. A car is a necessity with me. I have to do more visiting than I really would like to do, since I need so much time for study. But, after all, the personal contact counts a lot, I know.

"I'm due to take a patient to the Columbia Hospital at 12 o'clock," he said as he looked at his watch. "Florence can finish the story. But I have a little time yet and will tell you about an experience I had last spring. Our church is not fanatical on the subject of Sabbath observance, but so many grocery stores in Columbia were sending their trucks to back doors on Sunday morning, delivering a week's supply of groceries, that I decided I'd try to put a stop to it. I circulated a petition, and many merchants signed it, saying that they

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did not want to do this, but competition had forced them into it. Several arrests were made when men failed to comply with the order, but the juries failed to convict. I feel the effort was worth while, even though we didn't accomplish our purpose. Anyway, it was a start in the right direction, and the stores were closed for four Sundays. No other church entered the fight, but some of the brethren attended the sessions of court and used their influence to help.

"I try to do constructive preaching. Sensational preaching don't appeal to me much. But I fail so often that I feel exactly like the tramp who dropped into an Episcopal Church one day just as the rector was reading the confession from the ritual: 'We have done the things we should not have done and left undone the things we should have done.' With a sigh of relief, he said, as he took his seat, 'This is the church I belong to. I'm sure of it now.'

The boys came from the adjoining room, each eating a piece of toast, and each with a good sprinkling of soot on his clothes and hands. "I thought they had been too quiet," the father mused.

"You've been in the stove again, haven't you? Well, you're fine boys just the same, if you do look like pickaninnies. Come tell Daddy good-by."

When the boys were sent to the yard to play, Mrs. Kelly said, "I'm three years older than Charles and the practical member of the family. I've had to be practical all my life. Father died when I was thirteen years old, and there were six of us children. He was a tenant farmer. After his death, my mother bought a home in Kingstree. She slaved day and night to help pay for it and to keep us children in school. I was sixteen years old when I 14 started making my living selling Calumet Baking Powder. And I've had to do all sorts of things since then. I had a little typing and bookkeeping in high school, and that helps me, of course."

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Near the step, the one step which was needed to enter the house, a large bulldog, white and black spotted, was being pulled about, with two husky boys clinging to her neck.

"I love Pup. Pup goes wid me everywheres I go. Jimmy, you git off. Pup's my dog. Git off, I tell you. Me jump on you, Jimmy."

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American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1940

Item 43 of 66

[Dr. Samuel B. Lathan]

W11060

{ page image }

{Begin handwritten}Beliefs and Customs - Folkways.{End handwritten}

Accession no.

W11060

Date received *{Begin handwritten}10/10/40{End handwritten}*

Consignment no. *{Begin handwritten}1{End handwritten}*

Shipped from *{Begin handwritten}Wash. Office{End handwritten}*

Label

Amount *{Begin handwritten}6p.{End handwritten}*

WPA L. C. PROJECT *{Begin handwritten}Writers'{End handwritten}* UNIT

Form[md]3 *{Begin handwritten}Folklore{End handwritten}* Collection (or Type)

Title *{Begin handwritten}Dr. Samuel B. Lathan 96 years old (white){End handwritten}*

Place of origin *{Begin handwritten}Winnsboro, S. C.{End handwritten}* Date *{Begin handwritten}6/28/88{End handwritten}*

Project worker *{Begin handwritten}W. W. Dixon{End handwritten}*

Project editor

Remarks

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Project #1655

W. W. Dixon

Winnsboro, S. C. *{Begin deleted text}*390573*{End deleted text}* DR. SAMUEL B. LATHAN 96 YEARS OLD. (WHITE)

Dr. Samuel Boston Lathan is the oldest white citizen of Chester County, South Carolina. He lives with an unmarried daughter, Miss Susie Lathan, in a handsome two-story residence on Saluda Street, near the U. S. Post Office in the town of Chester, S. C. He owns the place and is one of the outstanding citizens of the community. By reason of strength, he has attained the Biblical allotment of four score years and ten and exceeded it by sixteen years; yet, from the erectness of his carriage, the texture of his skin, and the timbre of his voice, one would never think that he was a man of that age.

"Well, it will give me pleasure to talk to you of what I remember of life from 1848 to 1938. You know I can't remember when I was born, but that event was recorded by my mother as having taken place on the 2d day of May, 1842, about three miles southeast of Blackstock, S. C., in Fairfield County. My father was a farmer, Samuel M. Lathan. My mother before marriage was Martha Patterson. The result of this marriage was five boys and six girls. I suppose the most distinguished one of the family was my older brother, Robert, born in 1829. He received his education at Erskine College, became a teacher, a school commissioner of York County, and a minister of the Gospel in the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church. His son, Robert, was editor of the Charleston [News & Courier?] and, later, of the Asheville [Citizen?].

"I began my education in an old field school near our home, taught by Mr. William Douglass. I was six years old then. All small children commenced in the old blue-backed speller. Beginners paid ten dollars per scholastic year of eight

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months. When we reached the grammar grades, the tuition was fifteen dollars. In the advanced grades, including Latin and Greek, the tuition was twenty-five dollars. The school hours were from 8 a. m. until 6 p. m. There was an intermission of one hour for dinner and recreation. We carried water from a nearby spring. On a shelf in the schoolroom was a wooden bucket containing drinking water. A drinking gourd hung on a nail above the bucket. It was quite a privilege to get permission to go the spring for a bucket of fresh water during school hours. Our teacher was a Presbyterian and believed in the proverb, 'Spare the rod and spoil the child.' The people of the community had great confidence in his learning, probity, and executive ability. Usually a whipping at school

was followed by a sound thrashing at home, for good measure.

"At recess the large boys played catball, and the younger boys and girls played antony-over, marbles, and roly-hole. April the 1st was dreaded by most rural school teachers. The pupils would get inside and bar the teacher out. The teacher, who didn't act on the principle that discretion is the better part of valor, generally got the worst of it. Mr. Douglass soon learned this, and, on April Fool's Day, he would walk to the school, perceive the situation, laughingly announce there would be no school until the morrow, and leave. Our teacher required all pupils to study out loud. There was a pandemonium of spoken words going on all day in the school. Why did he require this? Well, it was to assure himself that no student was listlessly looking on his or her book and that everyone was busy. Every Friday afternoon we had a trapping spelling bee from the blue-backed speller. In this school we studied Smith's Grammar, Goff's Arithmetic, Morse's Geography, and Peter Parley's history. On the first Saturday in May, the school children went, in wagons, to Great Falls to a picnic and seined

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for shad. The Catawba River teemed with shad in those days.

"The Fourth of July was observed at Caldwell Cross Roads. The military companies of infantry would assembly here from the surrounding counties making up a brigade. A drill and inspection were had, and a dress parade followed. There was an old cannon mounted on the field. The honor of firing it was assigned to Hugh Reed, who had been in the artillery of Napoleon's army at Waterloo and afterward emigrated to South Carolina.

"A great barbecue and picnic dinner would be served; candidates for military, state, and national offices would speak; hard liquor would flow; and each section would present its 'bully of the woods' in a contest for champion in a fist and skull fight. Butting, biting, eye gouging, kicking, and blows below the belt were barred. It was primitive prize fighting. I recall that a man named McGill won the belt. He was beaten the following year by Smith Harden.

"After crops were laid by, a great deal of visiting took place among neighbors. The men inspected each other's crops and sumptuous dinners and watermelon feasts were exchanged. There was more neighborliness in the country then than now. Everybody went to church on the Sabbath, and children knew by rote the Shorter Catechism. Nearly every home in our community had family worship night and morning.

"There's something I now call to mind as strange. Funerals were never conducted inside of the churches. The ceremonial rites took place at the grave. Yes, I am a surviving Confederate soldier. I was a member of Capt. W. C. Beaty's company, in Governor John Hugh Means' regiment. I was wounded in the battle of South Mountain (Antietam). I was

carried a prisoner of war to Baltimore. That was the conclusion of so much that was important in my military career.

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"When I was a boy, my home town was Blackstock, named for its first postmaster, Edward Blackstock. The boundary line separating Chester and Fairfield Counties runs through the center of the town. Sometimes the post office is in Fairfield and sometimes in Chester. Now the line runs right through the post office, Kennedy's store. I have lived through the following wars in which my country has been engaged: The Mexican War, the War Between the States, the Spanish-American War, and the World War. I have been a constituent of the following Congressman: W. W. Boyce, W. H. Perry, A. S. Wallace, John H. Evins, J. J. Hemphill, T. F. Strait, D. E. Finley, Stanyarne Wilson, Joseph Johnson, W. H. Stevenson, Gen. John Bratton, Paul McCorkle, and the present one, J. P. Richards.

"I do not consider the military occupation and rule of South Carolina, just after the Civil War, unwise or oppressive. The country was demoralized. Disbanded soldiers, Confederates and Federals, passing through the State would have raided the homes of the residents and taken off every mule, horse, and ox, and left them without means of tilling the soil. The provost martial of this district was Capt. Livingston. I never joined the Ku Klux. Yes, there were shortages of food and clothing during the war. Molasses was a substitute for sugar; parched meal and parched ground okra seed were used for coffee; and sassafras roots were used to make tea. Flour and meal sacks were made into men's, women's and children's clothing.

"The radical, carpetbag, scalawag government was inconceivably rotten and corrupt. An executive pardon could be bought; and stealings were put through the legislature by appropriations and issuance of fraudulent bonds. Under the Constitution of 1865, judges were allowed to state and comment upon the facts and to disclose their opinion of what the verdict of a jury should be. This opinion

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could be and often was bought with money or its equivalent. A wealthy litigant had three chances, a bribed jury, a bribed circuit judge, and a bribed Supreme Court. A criminal had four chances, the ones I've just mentioned and a bribed governor, who could give him a pardon.

"One of the most interesting political characters evolved in this cess-pool of iniquitous politics was Judge T. J. Mackey. Born in Lancaster County, of poor parents, he went with them at an early age to Charleston, S. C. By native ability, he won a beneficiary

scholarship to the Citadel, the military college of South Carolina. He was a member of the Palmetto Regiment, and he fought through the Mexican War. In the War Between the States, he was an officer on the Staff of General Sterling Price at the close of the war. When the carpetbaggers and Negroes got possession of the State government, he became a scalawag. Bright, witty, forceful, and with a veneer of good breeding, he was rewarded with the position of Judge of the 6th Circuit, and he resided right here in Chester. He was a conspicuous figure on our streets for years. Solomon in all his glory was no better arrayed. He wore broadcloth, Prince Albert coats, silk vests, checked trousers, and tall, silk, top hats, and carried gold-headed canes. During court week, he would have the sheriffs attend him with cocked hat and drawn sword, preceded by the bailiffs crying stentoriously, 'Give way! Give way! The Honorable Court is approaching! He conducted the court proceedings with great pomp, magnificence, and dignity. The suspense of all this dignity was sometimes relieved by his wit and humor from the bench. In his inimitable manner he once addressed the grand jury of Fairfield County at Winnsboro in these words: 'Mr. Foreman and gentlemen of the grand inquest of the county: In addition to what I have already charged, you might extend your investigations into the hotels and boarding houses of Winnsboro and observe the martyrs at their 'steaks,' and

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also ascertain whether or not certain domestic animals, better known as bedbugs, are entitled to draw pensions from the U. S. Government on account of having drawn blood from British soldiers while they were quartered here in the war of the Revolution.'

"On one occasion Mr. Lindsay, a reputable citizen of Chester, knocked a drunken Negro politician down and was prosecuted in the court for assault and battery with intent to kill. Mr. Lindsay's attorney approached the judge with an idea of finding out what the sentence would be, provided the defendant would plead guilty. Mackey replied, 'You can safely leave the matter to me, sir.'

"When the plea was accepted by the solicitor and read by the clerk, all eyes and ears of the expectant court room were turned on the judge. He said: 'Let the defendant, Lindsay, stand up. You have been charged in this indictment with an attempt to kill your fellow man. Its not your mercy that the prosecutor is not lying somewhere today in some silent graveyard. I could impose on you the maximum sentence of fifteen years at hard labor in the State penitentiary, but, as you have saved the State some expense by your plea of guilty, the sentence of this august court is that you, William Lindsay, be confined in the State penitentiary at hard labor for a period of ten years (dramatic pause) or pay a fine of one dollar."

Information about SGML version of this document.

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 AMERICAN MEMORY	PREVIOUS	NEXT	LIST	SEARCH	MATCH
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Manuscript

36

Carrie B.R. Dunlap

AKA Caroline B. Richards



American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1940

Item 29 of 48

[Living on the Richards' Farm]

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{Begin handwritten}[No. 1?]{End handwritten}

Approximately 3,400 words

47 B {Begin handwritten}Revised by [?]{End handwritten} SOUTH CAROLINA WRITERS' PROJECT

LIFE HISTORY

TITLE: LIVING ON THE RICHARDS' FARM

Date of First Writing February 7, 1939

Name of Person Interviewed Carrie B.R. Dunlap (white)

Fictitious Name Caroline B. Richards

Street Address Four miles south of **Winnsboro**, S.C., on **Winnsboro** and Columbia Highway

Place Rockton, S.C.

Occupation Farmer

Name of Writer Lucile Clarke Ford

Name of Reviser State Office

"Last night I was reading my mother's old Bible. When I re-read the family record as Mother wrote it, I was reminded of the visits Aunt Lula made to us and how she and Mother would talk about old times," Caroline Richards began, as she stood before the mirror neatly arranging her soft gray hair.

Taking a seat beside me, in front of a cheerful, crackling fire, she continued: "Mother had three sisters and four brothers. Aunt Lula died *{Begin handwritten}*C10 - 1/31/41 - S.C. *{End handwritten}*

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young with consumption. There wasn't any cure for it then. Just as with my brother James, we called him Jim for short, he was crippled from the time he was ten. He fell off old Charlie, the horse, which he rode twice a week to town to get the mail. My! but he looked pitiful after that, standing at a window watching us play townball and baseball. We needed him in the game. It took all the girls and boys to make up a game. He did worry Ma about something to read. I can hear her now, the way she would say, 'Why you have your Bible and Pilgrim's Progress, that's plenty for you to read.' We had the News and Herald, Godey's Lady Book, and the Home and Farm paper, from Louisville, Kentucky. The Farm and Home paper had a section for men and one for women. The women's section had cooking receipts, styles, and stories in it. When the magazines would come, we got so excited Ma had to divide them out to keep us from getting into arguments and fighting over them. We got Bloom's Almanac, too. Jim read everything in that. Knew the signs and all about the weather. Our neighbors lent him books. Ma taught all of us, when it was so we couldn't go to school."

She walked across the bright rag rug to the window and gazed vacantly at the jonquils, daffodils, narcissi, and violets in the neat front yard, then resumed: "The roads were so muddy and the weather so cold, it was hard to get to school. We had school about four months in the year. The schoolhouse was an old office of Dr. Hill's. There was a long, home-made table down the middle of the room, and high benches at the sides and at each end. My feet would go to sleep. We wore home-made stockings. Ma and Aunt Lula knit the stockings and socks during the summer for all our crowd. I wore heavy leather shoes, with brass caps on the toes. Shoes

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were good "hand-me-downs" when they hadn't worn out. I had to wear Sister Lizzie's old shoes and clothes.

"That old office of Dr. Hill's had shelves up and down the walls. We used them for our books and dinner buckets. Cold dinners tasted good then in a tin bucket. We had sausage, spare-rib or backbone, corn bread or biscuit, baked sweet potatoes, and sometimes fried pies. Ma always dried peaches and apples in summer. It was about three miles from our house to the schoolhouse. The sun would rise while we were on the way. It was nearly dark when we got back. But we had a good time playing on the way home. After we got home, we had to bring in the wood, chips, and kindling. And we had to bring water up a

steep hill from the spring.

"Our family has always worked since I can remember. Ma said before the war she and her sisters had a maid to wait on them. Her brothers had a manservant, too. I only know what Ma has told us about the war. Pa was severely wounded. Two of his brothers were killed in the 'seven days around Richmond.' Uncle Abram and Uncle Jerry were fighting side by side. Uncle Abram was shot down. Uncle Jerry bent over to lift him up, and he was shot through the back. Pa was sent out foraging for rations to feed the men in the Confederate Army. He went to all the homes he could get to. Mrs. Woodruff, old Major Woodruff's mother, gave and gave, until she was about out of rations. But she gave a whole peck of dried cowpeas after everything got so scarce.

"Pa was a wheelwright, and he went to work in his shop, with Old Uncle Cab Watkins to help him. Uncle Cab was black and greasy looking, but he and Pa worked right together in the shop. And they turned out nice looking wagons, buggies, plowstocks, and every kind of farm tools. They had to

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use scrap iron and the old worn-out things. Sheep's wool and sometimes cotton or old trimmings of horse hair were used to stuff cushions for the upholstering. I have heard Ma say to Pa, 'Why the cushions in that buggy look good enough for a parlor sofa.'

"Come, I'm going to show you what Bill has just finished for me." Going through the hall into the neatly arranged sitting room, she showed me a well polished, octagon-shaped table. It was rich walnut color, with four legs rounded and grooved with small circles near the top. She said, "Bill can do anything. He worked his way through school. Went to the University of Iowa and got a degree in science and chemistry. They called him Doctor at school. He got a job with the Aluminum works of America with a big salary. He sent money home to help Maggie and Jane through college. He married up there. This is a picture of the girl. She's pretty, but she didn't live long. We were glad there wasn't any little motherless children left. The depression came, and Bill was laid off. He couldn't get work anywhere.

"He was so lonely up there, he came home and pitched in to help here on the farm, fixing fences and repairing everything. He even made a rock storeroom and smokehouse in the back yard. We had needed that a long time. I keep canned fruits and vegetables and such as that in it. After ever so long, he got some work with the C. W. A., as timekeeper. Later they had him to pay off the workers. That was particular work. He is now in charge of the Fire Department in town. He married again. Has a real pretty wife and a baby girl. His mother-in-law lives with them and takes care of the baby, and his wife works at the post office. They are buying a house in town. It ought not to take them long to pay for it.

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"You can soon pay for a house in **Winnsboro** with what you would put out in rent every month. Dan and I bought this land after we were married and raising our eight. Dan had good crops of cotton then. We didn't have to pay out much money. I wore cotton dresses, and the children could get on with little expense, as I passed their clothes down as long as they lasted."

Glancing out of the window, Caroline's eyes sparkled with pride as she continued, "We all say we would rather live here in our own house than in a brick house in town that we didn't own. There are those houses in the **Winnsboro** Mill village. Most of the families there have nice furniture and bathrooms and lights. The walls are painted and all that. The outside overseer plants grass, shrubbery, and trees in the yards. But that belongs to the mill company. We know this is our very own, such as it is. Now that Dan and I are getting old, it is a mighty good feeling to know this is ours. We can always have plenty to eat, too, with our own garden, chickens, cows, pigs, and everything. It has been a hard struggle at times to make the little we could earn here go for the many things that were needed. But Dan and I say we were happy in those days, while we were skimping to save. Not that we have much now; but I have nice enough clothes, more than I used to have. The children are always giving us something. Maggie and Bessie bought the Ford. We could get on without that. But they say they like to drive it when they are at home. And, too, they want us to have one here. If it came to the question of us owning a car or our home, we would all take the home every time. I just couldn't rest at night without a shelter over my head that belonged to us.

"My pa had plenty of land, but he couldn't tend much after the war.

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He made a better living as a wheelwright than most people were making farming. Just think, now we have electric lights and a bathroom like people in the cities. It doesn't cost much either, here on the highway near the electric line. We pay a dollar a month for what we use. I want you to see for yourself how nice the bathroom is with those pretty fixtures."

Caroline flitted out, leaving me at the bathroom door, and was back in a few minutes with a tray filled with glasses of fruit juice, milk, a plate of crisp cookies, and some caramel cake. "Since I have to live by Dr. Buckner's directions," she said, "I eat something this time of day. When I was a little girl, I recollect how Ma would send me down to Pa's shop to take corn bread and buttermilk to him and Uncle Cab. Pa said he could work better when he had extra victuals that way.

"I never finished telling you about how Dan and me got all of our children through school. Kate, my oldest, didn't go to school until she was eleven years old. I taught her all I could about reading, writing, spelling, and arithmetic. Then she went to the little country school three miles from us. She studied hard and learned all she could there in about six years, along with reading and studying at home, too. Back then, when you were old enough and could stand the State Teacher's Examination and get a certificate, you could get a school and teach. Kate took the examination and got a country school. That paid her \$40.00 a month, and the school ran about four months in the year. Then she decided she'd take a business course at Draughon's. When she got through there, she got a job in the Associated Charities in Columbia. She worked there about two years. One day she said to me, 'Ma, I don't get much satisfaction out of making

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out the reports, writing letters, and keeping office for the Associated Charities, I just believe I'll go in training and learn to be a nurse.' She'd been a good girl helping with expenses here at home. So I thought, 'Now if Kate isn't happy working in that office, and she wants to study to be a nurse, I'll do all I can to get her through.' It didn't cost us anything. She went up to Baltimore to St. Joseph's and got through there. Then she studied some more at Johns Hopkins. They got her to come back over to St. Joseph's and be superintendent of the operating room.

"When she'd done that for three years, she volunteered to be a foreign missionary to China. They sent her on as a medical missionary to a place called Nanking, to learn the Chinese language before she was sent out to work. After that, she was sent to Sutsien Hospital to work in a mission hospital. She carried on a Chinese nurses' training school. And many's the Chinese girl she's trained to 'minister to the needs of their poor people. She was then sent on to a hospital in Hchin-King in Ku Province. She is still there.

"Kate writes me that she never is worried nor afraid of the dangers. She feels like she will be taken care of. There's plenty of fighting around her. Why, she said even the grown men go to pieces in some of the fighting. Where she is, the Chinese love her so, when the fighting started there and they told her she just must get out, some Chinese men carried her in a chair covered with a raincoat. She couldn't take everything she had, just carried her account books. She had to leave her clothes. The men ran through the mob of fighting people. Her friends that saw it told her they expected to see her killed any minute. After they got through, a big cheer went up, they were so happy that they could save her. She's

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gone on back to the same place, where she is carrying on her work with the nurses.

"Our children helped each other through school. Then, when my girls went to Winthrop,

they didn't spend so much money. They wore uniforms, and tuition was given them. The other three, Maggie, Jane, and Lilly, all went to Winthrop four years. Lilly took the domestic science. She had a county as home demonstration agent. When she had worked there about two years, she got married. Her husband is a farmer. He's a lot older than she is. She teaches in the school at Hartsville, where she lives.

"Jane has taught all of twelve years; ten of them at the same place, Graham, North Carolina. She went up to New York and studied in the summers. She said she lacks just one more summer to get her M. A. degree.

"Maggie is next to Jane. She taught some, but she didn't like teaching. So she got some office work in Washington. She took a Civil Service examination and got the job. While she was in Washington, she studied at night in a school called Strayer's. When so many were without work, they cut her off. She came home and went to Columbia and finished her course in business at Draughon's. Now she has a good job in Spartanburg with the Department of Agriculture.

"Did I tell you about Joe, my boy that works with the railroad? He's been in that railroad office about ever since he's been through school. I reckon fifteen years.

"Jim and Bob just stay here on the farm and help with the work. They didn't care much about school, and, after they finished in **Winnsboro** at Mt. Zion Institute, under Mr. Peyton, they didn't want to go any further. That's a lot more education than Dan and me got when we were growing up.

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"We had saved up some money and had it in the Bank of **Winnsboro** when it closed up in 1931. We do get some of that back all along. Sixty-five percent they have paid back now, and that's a lot better than nothing.

"We don't spend much now for doctors and medicine. When the children were growing up, their tonsils had to be removed. Some of them had adenoids, too. But they took them out in clinics, and it didn't cost so much. Maggie has had the same arm broke twice, but it knit and got well. Last summer, Dr. Buckner sent her to the hospital in Columbia to have a minor operation. She's been much better since that. She doesn't suffer from that old pain in her side and back like she used to. Some of mine had whooping cough, but Lilly never did have it. I was afraid when Joe had the scarlet fever. But we did just what Dr. Buckner told us to, and none of the rest took it. Tom had the diphtheria once, too. The doctor gave a serum, and he wasn't sick long. Of course, I have to be particular now, and Dan does, too. But then we are sort of worn-out. We have to rest more and be careful how we eat. But I reckon for old people sixty and seventy-seven years old we are right lucky. We're

thankful, too, that our children are well about all the time, except for colds and the like once in awhile.

"Mine don't care about running around at night. They take after me and Dan, liking to read a lot. Then we play checkers here together. The girls and two of my boys play card games now, but they learned that since they have been grown. And I see no harm that it's doing them, when they don't slight their work to play.

"Dan never liked to go around and get into arguments about politics,

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and our boys are the same. We all vote. My girls vote just as the boys do. Each one knows why they want to vote for the one they do. We all voted against the liquor, and I know we'd be a lot better off if we didn't have it. None of our children drink. But we sell our produce to the families in the mill, and sometimes some of the women tell Dan that they haven't the money to pay, as their men drink it all up. We have been selling there long enough to know the people, and some of the best women have drinking husbands. But they generally pay sooner or later. When Dan sees that they are in need, he gives to them sometimes. We try to vote for good citizens in our town and county. Now, if all of the officers were as good as our probate judge and the clerk of court, we'd have the laws enforced. Dan and me have tried to teach our children, as they were growing up, to appreciate good and honest men and women who stood for right.

"We've been glad enough for the Government work these last years. As I told you, we lost in the Bank of **Winnsboro** when it closed up, and Bill, Lilly, and Maggie all was home without work. I've told you about Bill, having a job when they had the C. W. A. and then some of the other work, too, 'til he got on in the town as a paid fireman. Lilly went around helping the women that were on the relief rolls to can. And Maggie's job now with the Department of Agriculture is one of the new jobs in the soil conservation work. Maggie said to me the last time she was home: 'Ma, we could get along and have enough to eat and a place to live, but I am better satisfied to be working and making something. And she enjoys her work. They are all saving with money, too.'

It was getting dark in the room where Caroline and I were sitting, when I realized I must go home in order for Caroline to have her supper

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at her regular hour, six o'clock. She went with me to the gate, and, while gathering a bunch of flowers for me, she said, "Be sure to come back on Tuesday afternoon at 2:30, when the Presbyterian Auxiliary is meeting with me. They always want to know all about Kate and her work in China."

[Information about SGML version of this document.](#)



Manuscript

37



American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1940

Item 1 of 57

[Alexander W. Matheson]

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Project [#?]3613

[W. W.?] Dixon

Winnsboro, S. C. FAIRFIELD COUNTY ALEXANDER W. MATHESON (white) 83 YEARS OLD.

[A. W.?] Matheson is an aged gentleman, living alone in the Longtown section of Fairfield County, ten miles east of Ridgeway, South Carolina, on the left side of State highway [#?]34. He is 5 feet 6 inches tall and weighs 153 pounds and is almost deaf. He is intelligent, and, having been a magistrate for thirty years and an executive committeeman of the Longtown democratic clubs for the past fifty-two years, he is well informed of much of the State's political history.

"My father, Alexander Matheson, was a merchant at Camden, South Carolina, prior to the War Between the States. He married Mary Perry. She was a grand-daughter of John Perry, better known in his day and generation as 'Old Jack Perry.'

"Grandfather Perry was a large landholder near Liberty Hill in Kershaw County and owned a great number of slaves at the time of his death. He also possessed some lands in Fairfield County that bordered on the ateree River, a natural boundary between Kershaw and Fairfield Counties. The Mathesons are Scotch people in descent, and the Perrys are Irish. My grandfather, William Matheson, moved to Camden from Gainesville, Florida, and engaged in merchandising about [1835?]. I was born in Liberty Hill, not far from [Camden?], at the home of my Grandfather Perry.

I spent a great deal of my boyhood in Liberty Hill. any of the people there, the [?], Cunninghams, rowns, Dixons, Curetons and Perrys are my relatives by blood or by marriage. I attended school in Camden but usually spent the week ends in Liberty Hill, riding out every Friday on my pony. While there, I attended church on Sunday at the Presbyterian Church. Ex-Governor John G. Richards father was the officiating minister. The difference between Governor

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Richards then and now is, then he was a knee breeches boy and a great rabbit hunter; now he is a well known fox hunter.

"My father didn't have many slaves, only house slaves - a coachman, a butler, who also acted as footman, a Negro man who acted as one of general utility about the store in town and the house on the hill, the cook and her assistant, the laundry woman, two girl nurses and a dairy woman. Of course there were some slave children, but just how many I can't remember.

"I commenced school in Camden when I was six years old. It was the first year of the Civil war. I continued in school until January, 1865. We used the old blue-back speller. I think Noah Webster was the author. I never went to school after the war. My father died during that period, and mother moved with the children to Liberty Hill. I assisted about the

farms, up and down both sides of the Wateree River, for a number of years.

"I married Lyda Elizabeth Lewis in 1875 and settled down as a farmer near Longtown, Fairfield County. We have reared the following children: Dorothy, (Mrs. W. S. Mamiter) Winnsboro, South Carolina; Benjamin, who practiced law in Atlanta and died there in 1931; Mrs. (Mrs. John Croxton) Heath Springs, South Carolina; Nicholas [Peaty?] a practitioner of medicine, Waco, Texas; William A., a farmer, Longtown, South Carolina; Annie Laurie, a teacher at Winnsboro, South Carolina; and the baby, Kathleen, (Mrs. H. G. Smith) Trenton, South Carolina.

"I was old enough to remember when we had a military government in South Carolina. President Andrew Johnson *{Begin deleted text}* [Johnson?] *{End deleted text}* had before him the names of ex-Congressman W. W. Boyce of Winnsboro, Captain Samuel McAlilley of Chester, John L. Manning of Clarendon, Governor William Aiken of Charleston, and Colonel B. F. Perry of Greenville. The last named was appointed, by Presidential proclamation, provisional governor of South Carolina. President Johnson outlined in his proclamation certain steps to be pursued by the citizens in order for the State to be

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readmitted and accorded the same rights and privileges as other States in the Union. Among these were the holding of a constitutional convention. All those who had participated, aided or abetted the Confederate States in the late war had to secure a pardon signed by the President before he could vote for delegates to this convention. This pardoning business was a sore spot to many of our wealthy and best people. Hot discussion of the subject was engaged in. Some never made the application for pardon; many did. General John Bratton, Colonel James H. Rion, and Judge W. R. Robertson were recipients of pardons and were elected delegates to this state Constitutional Convention of 1865. All I remember about this convention was that Judge David Wardlaw was president and John T. Sloan of Columbia was secretary. Slavery was abolished and a peculiar court was established. It was called "The District Court." When a Negro was a party, these courts had exclusive jurisdiction.

"Another good provision was that ministers of the Gospel of any religious faith were declared ineligible to the office of governor or lieutenant governor or to a seat in the General Assembly - declaring that ministers of the Gospel should dedicate all their services to the Lord and ought not to be diverted from the task of saving souls. The Ordinance of Secession was repealed.

"The convention adjourned in September, and an election was held under its provisions in October. There were only about 15,000 votes cast for governor. James L. Orr beat General Wade Hampton about five hundred votes.

"When the first legislature met under the Constitution of 1865, the senate assembled in the library of the South Carolina College, and the house assembled in the chapel on the campus. Governor Orr was inaugurated, and W. D. Porter was installed as lieutenant governor.

"General John Bratton was our senator, and James R. Aiken, W. J. Alston, and B. E. Elkins were our representatives from Fairfield in the legislature. The

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question arose as to who was a Negro and what constituted a person of color? This was necessary to determine the jurisdiction of the district courts established. It was declared and made a law that all Negroes, mulattoes, mestizos, and all descendants through them were to be known as persons of color, except that every such descendant who might have of caucasion blood 7/8, or more should be deemed a white person. The relation of husband and wife amongst persons of color was established. In case of one man having two or more women, the man was required, before the first day of April, 1866, to select one of his women and have a marriage ceremony performed. In case a woman had a number of men, she had to select one of her men and be married to him by the first of April, 1866. The ceremony required was to be performed by a district judge, a magistrate, or any judicial officer.

"Every colored child born and to be born before April 1, 1866, was declared to be legitimate. Marriage between a white person and a person of color was declared to be illegal and void. All persons of color who should make contracts for service or labor should be known as servants and those for whom they worked should be known as masters.

"The hours of labor were declared to be, except on Sunday, from sunrise to sunset; with a reasonable intermission for

breakfast and dinner. Servants, it was stipulated, should rise at dawn in the morning, feed, water, and care for the animals on the farm, do the needful work about the premises, prepare their meals for the day, and be ready to go to work at sunrise.

"Just after the war it was lawful to sentence a convicted person to be whipped. In 1866, General Dan Sickles was assigned in charge of this military district, No. 2. Judge A. P. Aldrich sentenced a thief to be whipped. General Sickles interfered and prevented the sentence being carried out.

"Congress took up the question of a whipping post and corporal punishment and passed an act in 1868 prohibiting seceded states from inflicting such punishment for crime.

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"Conflicts were the order of the day in South Carolina, The military authorities and the Freedmen's Bureau on one side and Governor Orr and the State courts an the other. In Washington, there was conflict between President Johnson and Congress, lead on by old Thad Stevens and his Negro wife. Finally, Congress passed an act by which registration was required of all male citizens in South Carolina and an election of delegates by them to a State convention, such election to be held under the protection of the military commandant of the district, General Dan Sickles.

"This brought forth the South Carolina Constitution of 1868. When this constitution was made, it was submitted to those registered voters, mostly Negroes, and ratified by them. It was then submitted to Congress for approval.

"When the Negroes came up for registration, - it may be remarked, by the way, that they had but one name such as John, Jocky, Catoe, Solomon, Pompey, Wade, Tom and the like - some took the surnames of their former slave owners; others wanted such surnames as Pinckney, Manigault, Fernandez, Bonaparte, Washington, Guerard, Prince, Jefferson, Jackson, Lincoln, Sherman, and Grant.

"When the registration was completed, it showed a Negro majority. Then it looked like every sharp cunning rascal who could get a carpetbag and transportation from above the Mason and Dixon line put out to the State in quest of political adventure.

"These carpetbaggers and a few South Carolina white scalawags organized the Federal Union Republican Party and laid plans to control the Constitutional Convention of 1868. The accomplished their purpose.

"When this convention assembled, there were 48 white men and 76 Negroes sworn in as members. Of the whites, there were only 23 native South Carolinians; the other 25 were natives of Massachusetts, Ohio, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, Michigan, England, Ireland, Prussia, Denmark, Georgia, North Carolina,

and

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and places nobody has ever found out.

"The convention met in Charleston in 1868, composed as I said of twenty-three scalawags, twenty-five carpetbaggers, and seventy-six Negroes. One of the Negroes came all the way from Dutch Guiana. As they knew nothing about society and constitutional law, it is a wonder that they gave us a constitution as good as they did. It was modeled on the State Constitution of Ohio. We lived under its provisions till 1895. On the whole, it was an improvement over the "Constitutions of 1791 and 1865, in that it prohibited imprisonment for debt; apportioned representation in the House of Representatives according to the numbers of inhabitants in a county; provided for the public free school system; provided compulsory attendance of children in the schools between the ages of six and sixteen years; and prohibited lotteries of every kind.

"The objectionable features of the document in my opinion were: 1. Disqualifying a person who should fight a duel from

holding an office under the constitution in the State. 2. Opening all the colleges and schools supported in whole or in part by the public funds of the State to children without regard to race or color. 3. Allowing divorces from the bonds of matrimony, by the judgment of the courts, for other causes than adultery, and a conviction of a felony by one of the parties.

"Am I in favor of a dueling law? Well, before 1862, it was the best way to settle disputes among gentlemen. A gentlemen dosen't relish the idea of resorting to the courts to settle his personal injuries. Suppose some strapping halfback on a football team would call me a liar or twist my nose or make some reflection upon me or my family! Am I to run to a trial justice and swear out a warrant against him for the indignity? Suppose in a political campaign for Governor or U. S. Senator on the hustings, one candidate, in his mud slinging, accuses his opponent of dishonorable conduct or yellow dog motives. Is he just to hunt up nastier mud and throw back? Gentlemen don't like to wash dirty linen of their

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family in a courthouse trial. I remember the C. B. Cash and W. M. Shannon duel in 1880. It was a deplorable affair. But knowing Colonel Shannon, personally, and Colonel Cash, by reputation, as the father-in-law of Judge R. C. Watts, I can't see how the feud could have been settled in a session's court without the loss of that prestige so dear to men of their stamp and lineage.

"The next year the legislature passed a bill amending the oath of office so as to require all state officials, upon taking the oath, to swear that they have not fought a duel nor acted as a second in a duel nor aided and abetted in a duel since the year 1861. I have taken this oath of office sixteen times. Our newly elected governor, Burnet R. Maybank, though not born in 1881, will have to take this old bewhiskered oath, word for word, before he can be duly qualified and inaugurated as Governor of South Carolina.

"The Code duelo will ever remain the highest test of physical, mental, and moral courage known to men, as it puts a bantam weight man of 120 pounds on an equality with a heavy weight slugger of 200 pounds of bone, sinew, and muscles.

"It would stop much of the bribery in popular elections and in lobbyings around our legislature and Congressional halls, and prevent many divorce suits and marital troubles in our land.

"I still have my old red shirt, first worn by me in the Red Shirt movement of 1876, when I was twenty-five years old.

"Some day I may loosen up and tell you something about the Hampton campaign, the Greenback days when Hendrix McLean ran for governor, the Tillman movement, the Farmer's Alliance, the old barroom days, and South Carolina under prohibition, but my bus leaves for Ridgeway pretty soon, and, as old Esquire Gilbert used to say, 'I want to wet my whistle' before I leave town. Won't you join me? I don't drink beer. I can never think of a Southern gentleman guzzling beer! It is not a refined way of getting a high-toned exhilaration!"

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SOUTH CAROLINA WRITERS' PROJECT

Life History

TITLE: " BESSIE REED "

Date of first writing January 9, 1939.

Name of Person Interviewed Bessie Reed (Negro)

Place and Address Carlisle, South Carolina

Occupation Practical Nurse and Cook.

Name of Writer Caldwell Sims, Union, S.C.

Name of Reviser

Bessie has downy feather beds, white sheets, embroidered shams for her pillows and embroided spreads on the two beds in her room. Her walls are pasted with newspaper pictures cut from "The Miami Tribune" Retogravue section, of screen celebrities. Bessie wears dresses of blue denim and large white aprons with a bow knotted in the back of her plump waist. Usually a white kerchief covers her entire head and ears. A single earring dangles from one ear.

"I ain't never see'd no 'oman 'dat wuz' no miller, but me, and I ain't never hee'rd of no 'Oman runnin' a water mill. Who sed' anything at wimmens' in Kerlile(Carlisle) runnin' dem'? When de' notion strikes 'em, white folks do git' de' moss' curious ideas in dey' heads. 'ese' I is hee'rd way back yonder de' Law'd only does know when, dat' all de' mills wuz' down on de' rivers. As fer' me I ain't never fooled around {Begin note}{Begin handwritten}C10- 1/31/41 - S.C.{End handwritten}{End note}

{Begin page no. 2}no rivers in my life, kaise' I ain't got no time fer' no water. Who ever hee'rd of wimmens paddlin' 'round runnin' water mills, I sho ain't.

When I wuz' born it wuz' down on Mr. Liphus [?] Stokes' place. Ev'ybody call dat' "Tucker Town" now. Mr. Aughtry Stokes stays in de' big house. He draps in 'round Kerlile ev'y week or so. I sees him myself. Ma and Pa had a house en dis' side of "Tucker Town". Ma and Pa allus' said "Marse' 'Liphus". But dey' won't no slaves. Slaves had done passed. I is 'round fifty now, somethin' mo' or less. Jes' here recent is niggers gittin' p'articler 'bout dey' ages. Den' dat's white folks dats' 'ergettin' dem' on to dat'.

F'it wuz' fo' of us chilluns' to play aroun' de' yard. 'Member dat' I had three little brothers. I cannot near 'member all dat' we done, it done been so long and I has been drug about so much, 'till my mem'ry done got throwed away, or sum'tin'. Us lived good tho'; I see a hard time now. Don't see how chilluns' does these days, dey' even has a hard livin' now. I ain't got no chilluns'. When me and my three little brothers wuz' chilluns' we had a fat easy time. All good white folks took care of the'y hands way back thar'. Mr. 'Liphus sho' took care of Pa and Ma and us too. I ain't so old, but it makes me feel old and feeble to dra'p my mind way back dat' fur'.

Ma said dat' Pa had it tight and rugged when he farmed for Mr. 'Liphus, but {Begin deleted text}{?}{End deleted text} {Begin inserted text}{Begin handwritten}she{End handwritten}{End inserted text} stayed at the big house a heap and when she was not up dar', she wuz' in our cabin wid' us. Pa died when I was re'al small and I never had o educatin', but if he had lived I would'n'er got non nohow, kaise' niggers did'n crave no learnin' den'. Ma allus' 'lowed dat' all gals {Begin page no. 3}had to learn was how to follow house work. All de' niggers struggles now to git their chilluns' in school. As fer' me, Ah' ain't never worried 'bout dat', and I gits' along jes' as well as dese' Kerlile niggers dat' went to school so rotten much. Ah sho' can beat 'em all a-cookin' and a nursin' de' way de' white folks likes. White folks calls me a reg'lar nigger, and dat' makes me feel ra'al proud of myself.

I lives clean like Ma did and I keeps my house jes' as clean as I dose any white 'oman's. Dat keeps my practice up. I washes and starches my clothes ev'y week. Ev'y [?] Wednesday I puts' my pillows and feather beds out to air. 'Bout three of fo' times ev'y year I takes the tickers off'n my feather beds and my mattresses and I washes them. T'aint nar'y bed bug in my house, ain't gwine' to be none dar' either. I sets over dar' in dat' chair by dat' winder' and makes my quilts, puts frills on my curtains and 'broiders (embroiders) my bed spreads. I likes clean beds, wid' pretty quilts and covers on them. Ev'y Sad'day sees me scourin' my floor boards and white washin' my hearth wid' white mud from the Kerlile spring.

my furs' husband's. Dat' jes' make dem' gold jewels shine (Begin page no. 12) out on her. She is wigger than the rest of them. Dat' she so big and strong. Anybody dat' sassed her, who would hit 'em wid' her big heavy walkin' stick. When Mr. Smith died, Miss Ida give Aunt Sarah dat' stick.

1937 come along and Miss Ida had done tu'ck down wid' a stroke. Dem' banks up in Union had done all busted. Ev'body 'lowed dat' Miss Ida never had no mo' money. Folks drapped off from comin' to de' hotel, 'cep'n on dem' two nights trains when deY' had to stay dar' doors one. Aunt Sarah told me dat' Miss Ida gwine to close the hotel dining room and let Ike and Cornelia go. Andrew had already gone; kaise nObody never got off'n dem' trains wid' no valises fer' him to tote no mo'. I got to whar' I never washed sheets but twice a week. My mill settin' up doin' nothin' but rustin'. One day the junk man come along and I sold the whole thing to him fer' three dollars cash. Dat' evenin' Aunt Sarah come by wid' some sheets. She set down heavy in her chair at the same time holdin' tight to her stick, and when she got her bref' she 'low, "Law'd Jesus, Have Mercy on Me." I ax' her what ail her; kaise I see'd misery in her face. She say, "Bessie, whar you gits dem' sheets washed, fetch dem' on up to the hotel and give dem' to Miss Ida. My back got sech' a misery in it dat' I can't climb dat' hill wid' a passel o' hotel sheets". I wondered who gwine to wait on Miss Ida when Aunt Sarah' back give out sho' nuf. I knowed dat' all de' Kerlile folks wuz' livin' hard; but the ones dat' had done busted dem' two banks dar' and the mail rider; dey' peered' to be livin' sweller'. Dese' Kerlile folks had had things swell in times pas', mo' so than anybody else in dis' County. Us lived to (Begin page no. 13)ourselves and let others be.

All dat' done lef' dese' parts now, 'cept we still lives to ourselves. Wid' dese' two banks here bustin' and dem' banks in Union; it jes' lef' our white folks flat; when dey' is flat why we niggers is in de' very same fix. Sum'tin' else takes money away 'sides folks don't ride on trains no mo' and banks bustin' is all dese' paved roads runnin' 'round Kerlile. Cars don't make no stop gwine north on dis' side of Spartanburg; and dey' rolls right into Columbia gwine' south. Dat' leaves our hotel behind and it sho' don't leave a thing fer' Kerlile folks to git no money from. 'Course us still eats; us allus' has done dat'; kaise we raises plenty on dem' flat fields'. Us don't raise no money dar' no mo'; kaise you can't plant enuf' cotton to count at dese' low prices now[?] While I lives a little harder now; yet it ain't rugged like it was when I had a black man.

One day Aunt Sarah tuc'k down wid' de' awfules' misery in her stomach. She woke her daughter Net up, one mornin' 'bout three o'clock, hollerin'. They n'used on her all dey' knowed to do, but Aunt Sarah fell in a trance. Net sent fer' me to go over to the hotel dat' mornin' and fix Miss Ida her breakfast. She never 'et, jes' set and shake her head and sip a little coffee. She raised her head and say, "Bessie, go see 'bout Sarah fer' me". I come back at fo' o'clock and told Miss Ida dat' Aunt Sarah had'n never come out'n dat' trance and dat' she wuz' seein' angels. Miss Ida say, "Well Sarah is dyin'". Aunt Sarah died at fo' o'clock nex' mornin' afo' day broke. Dey' buried her at Jeter's Chapel the third day. Mi' ni' all de' white folks went. Net, laid her Ma away in one of Miss Ida's wool dresses, and tuc'k her earrings (Begin page no. 14)and her gold ring off. Dey' fetched the earrings over to Miss Ida. When Miss Ida see'd dem' she broke down and 'd so hard dat' me and Net broke over too. Miss Ida told Net to keep dem'. Net give one earring to her daughter, Matt; t'other one she ve to me. See it here in my lef' ear. It done cured my neuralgy. Matt got her'n on and she got one fer' her other ear, but it done turn't mass. Net, wear her Ma's ring on her middle finger so it will drive rheumatiz away.

Miss Ida son't to Union and got a bunch of flowers from dat' sto' up dar' where you gits' flowers in de' winter. De' sto' is on Main Street whar' ev'body can see when dey' passes along. They laid dem' on Aunt Sarah's coffin, till dey' let it down in de' grave. Den' dey' tuc'k 'em off and laid 'em on top her grave when it wuz' done 'kivvered wid' red dirt. Next mornin' de' frost had done turn't 'em black. Aunt Sarah's grand chilluns seed' dem' so dey' 'cided to put some flowers on dey' grand Ma's grave de'self. Dey' tuc'k red mantle paper (crepe paper out of the mantle board) and made a little bunch of flowers. DE' African Aid Ladies made a circle of pine needles and put dem' on aunt Sarah's grave along wid' dem' paper flowers. The pine needles lasted de' longest.

I stayed wid' Miss Ida, while de' preacher preached Aunt Sarah's funeral dat' lasted longer dan' anybody's funeral had ever lasted in Fish Dam Township. After he had done preached in dat' church fer' two hours and a half, three other preachers kept 'em two hours at her graveside. I sho' hated to miss it, but me and Miss Ida could'n keep our eyes from gettin' wet all day long. Fer' de' nex' two years I cooked and nursed Miss Ida.

(Begin page no. 15)Den' Miss Johnnie Willie Cousar Jeter, one of Mr. Smith's cousins, come and 'suated Miss Ida to let her come and live wid' her. Miss "Johnnie's" las' husband had done loss his plantation home, and Miss "Johnnie" sed' she never had no place to go. So Miss Ida tuc'k Miss "Johnnie" and Mr. Jeter in and she had let dem' sta' on her ever since. Dey' don't pay her no rent and no board; but jes' feeds her.

Miss Ida give me three dollars ev'y week I nursed her. I stayed all day and when she wuz' sick I would stay at night. She give me my house rent right on and what I ate. I always wo' blue cotton dresses and big white aprons at Miss Ida's.

One year I nursed on the WPA in Union. The lady wanted me to nurse white folks up dar' dat' never had no quality, so I quit and come back to Kerlile. Arthur English helped me to clean out this mill house and partition it off into dese' two rooms. I opened the fire place and scoured it and moved in. I have lived here ever since. It belongs to me and I am gwine' to keep it. I is cookin' fer' Miss Eva Jeter now. In the spring she is goin' back on her plantation. Its jes' two miles and a half from here. I gwine to leave here ev'y mornin' at five o'clock and walk down dar' and git Mr. Jeter's breakfast fer' him and Miss Eva by six-thirty. They pays me two dollars and a half and feeds me and I ain't worryin' 'bout makin' my way, kaise it'll be a way."

(End body of document)

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in page{Begin id number}W11047{End id number} {Begin deleted text}390557{End deleted text}

Project 1885-1

Folklore

Spartanburg Dist. 4

May 13, 1938

Edited by:

Elmer Turnage

REMINISCENCES: KU KLUX

Mrs. Sallie Matthews who died at the age of 82 was a heroine of the Ku Klux days in Union County. Her home was in Pacolet during her latter days. Mrs. Matthews was a native of Fairfield County, but came to Union to live with her sister, Mrs. F.H. Counts, and attended the old Union Female Academy or Seminary. She was 14 years old at this time. Her parents, Mr. and Mrs. George S. Hinnant *{Begin inserted text}{Begin handwritten}, {End handwritten}{End inserted text}* lived near *{Begin deleted text}Winnoborough{End deleted text}{Begin inserted text}Winnsboro{End inserted text}*, and when Sherman started on his march from the mountains to the sea, he passed by their home. His handsomely uniformed cavalry carried away all of the Hinnants, *{Begin deleted text}Provisions{End deleted text}* *{Begin inserted text}{Begin handwritten}{?}{End handwritten}{End inserted text}*, stock and cattle, and left them only one horse and some parched corn. Mrs. Matthews' father and two brothers were away serving in the Confederate army.

The old Counts home (then on South Street and now torn away) robes and masks for the Ku Klux Klan were made and stored away in a garret. Mrs. Matthews was familiar with much of the activities of the robed organization, but she was bound by oath not to reveal any of the secrets of the Klan, and these she kept inviolate until a year or so ago when she related the story to her nephew, Mr. Charles B. Counts, of Union. She said shortly before her death that the only reason she told this was to let it be preserved for posterity.

"I was in an old out-house with aunt 'Em' who was ironing when I overheard the following conversation. My sister's woodshed joined the laundry. Old 'Rackin' George, as we called him, was in there cutting wood. Another negro, whose name I did not know, came in there and told 'Rackin' George about plans that the Union soldiers and the negroes were making to set a torch to Union that night at twelve o'clock. I went to the door of the ironing house and listened to their plans, for 'Rackin' George was one of the band who was to *{Begin page no. 2}*aid the Union men. Then I ran into the house and told my sister what I had heard. She told me that Mr. D.C. Gist who lived 14 miles below Union was the Ku Klux courier, and that he should be notified of these plans.

"Just about dark I went to the stables of Mr. William A. Nicholson and saddled his pony which I had often ridden and started out for Mr. Gist's home. I went through the dense Gage wood where the Gage mineral spring was, and by the Harris saw mill which was to the rear of the Episcopal church, to keep from meeting people. (All this wood is gone, the mill is gone and the land out up into streets which are thickly housed now.) By this secluded route I reached the country road without meeting anyone. I left the village far behind and I realized that in my haste and excitement I was riding bareback. But I went on as fast as the pony could carry me. Mr. Gist, known to us as Mr. Dave, lived not far from the old mansion of Gov. William H. Gist. When I reached his home I alighted from my pony and called: 'Mr. Dave! Mr. Dave!' He came out horrified to hear the voice of a girl in the early night. When he found out who I was, he carried me into the house and said, 'Sallie Hinnant, whatever possessed you to run away from Mrs. Counts' at this late hour?' I told him of the plans being formed by the Union soldiers and the disloyal negroes to burn Union at midnight by setting torch lights to all the buildings along Main Street.

"Mr. Dave C. Gist immediately dispatched messages to all the Ku Klux in the county and they were assembled along Main Street before twelve o'clock that night. They were armed to the teeth and robed in the white regalia of their organization; and they could also be seen not only on Main Street, but on every side street.

*"Begin page no. 3}"*Midnight came, with everything quiet throughout the entire village. One o'clock came and everything was still quiet throughout the sleeping village. The plan to set fire to the village of Union had been nipped in the bud!"

Mrs. Sallie Hinnant Matthews is buried in the Pacolet Mills graveyard.

Source: Private scrapbook of Miss Mary Emma Foster, E. Main Street, Union, S.C. Interviewer: Caldwell Sims, Union, S.C. *{Begin*

Accession no.

W11047

Date received *(Begin handwritten)* 10/10/40 *(End handwritten)*

Consignment no. *(Begin handwritten)* 1 *(End handwritten)*

Shipped from *(Begin handwritten)* Wash. Office *(End handwritten)*

Label

Amount *(Begin handwritten)* 3p. *(End handwritten)*

WPA L. C. PROJECT *(Begin handwritten)* Writers' *(End handwritten)* UNIT

Form[md;]3 *(Begin handwritten)* Folklore *(End handwritten)* Collection (or Type)

Title *(Begin handwritten)* Reminiscences - Ku Klux *(End handwritten)*

Place of origin *(Begin handwritten)* Spartanburg S.C. *(End handwritten)* Date *(Begin handwritten)* 5/13/38 *(End handwritten)*

Project worker

Project editor *(Begin handwritten)* Elmer Turnage *(End handwritten)*

Remarks

(End body of document)

Manuscript

40

["Small Town Doctor"]

{Begin body of document}
{Begin page}{Begin handwritten}[No. 1?]{End handwritten} {Begin handwritten}[101?]{End handwritten}

Approximately 2800 Words.

SOUTH CAROLINA FEDERAL WRITERS' PROJECT
CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA. LIFE HISTORY.

TITLE: SMALL TOWN DOCTOR"

Date of First Writing February 18, 1939

Name of Person Interviewed L. M. Mitchell, M. D.

Place Batesburg, S. C.

Occupation Medical Doctor, Surgeon

Fictitious Name Dr. Cameron

Name of Writer F. Donald Atwell

Name of Reviser State Office.

{Begin page}Project #-1655

Donald Atwell

Charleston, S. C.

February 18, 1939 LIFE HISTORY. "SMALL TOWN DOCTOR".

He maintains a musty, ethery little office right next to Williams Livery Stable on a back street at home. Two ratty chairs and an ancient golden oak table are the only furnishings of the reception room - a bare walled cavern with a damp cement floor. An unbleached muslin curtain, fly-specked and gummy with age, serves as a partition between the reception room and the inner sanctum. The latter, a mere cubby-hole with swaying shelves holding dust covered bottles. A human skull on a sagging shelf in the rear grins at you as you enter.

Behind a scarred desk of ancient vintage, piled high with books, medicinal samples, and huge jars of alcohol containing everything from a two-months foetus to an enlarged appendix, sits a dried up specimen more gruesome looking than anything preserved in alcohol. His face is pinched and haggard, and his nappy clothes reek of pills, ether, and stale tobacco.

He rises unsteadily as I approach. His entire bearing is that of an old man who has lain in a dust covered casket for years.

"You will pardon Doctor a moment?" his voice rasps, "Must call on Charlie and get a half-pint. Don't have fifty cents on you by chance. have you minter?"

He doesn't even recognize me. Yet, it has been a long time. I extend the coin, and his bony, claw-like hand closes over it greedily. "Just make yourself comfortable, Doctor will be back presently."

{Begin page no. 2}He shuffles out, blinking at the sunlight in the front office like a rat coming out of its dark hide-out. He is all that is left of what was once Batesburg's leading Physician and surgeon.

His life story starts twenty years ago in Batesburg, S. C. It is a small town of some twenty-five hundred population, with neat homes, a conventional Main Street, and a "mill hill" - the latter, a village in its own right.

A small boy rushes into Johnson's Drug Store on the corner of Main for an ice-cream, only to find himself in the midst of a heated argument between a dressed up individual and the druggist.

... .. fill that prescription for old man Hartley I

can't believe it!"

Dr. Johnson, the druggist, a wizened little man with the beady eyes of a snake, snarls back, "Listen here, Cameron, I'm in the drug business to make money. If I fill prescriptions for every sorry no count Tom, Dick, and Harry in this town, why, I'd go busted, just like you're going doctoring everybody for nothing!"

A nice looking man with the anger in his eyes, snatches his little black bag and whirls about to leave the store. "Fill that prescription!" plunks a bill on the fountain counter and leaves.

That was my first encounter with the new doctor from "up North" who had chosen to cast his lot with us small-town folks. And did *{Begin page no. 3}*the town hum with gossip about Dr. Cameron! Forty-five, they said, an eligible bachelor, and handsome in the bargain.

I saw the new doctor again for the second time at the graduation exercises in the Grammar School auditorium. He was a grand looking man with a high forehead, coal black hair, and eyes that stared everyone out of countenance. With him that night was Miss Alice Beery, my fifth grade teacher. Miss Beery had long ago become a legend in our town. She was thirty or better, but she was still sweet and winsome and pretty. She didn't look like an old maid to me. Half the boys in school dreamed of growing up, becoming president, and making Miss Alice first lady of the land.

"Doc" must have had a similar idea, because he chose her out of all the women in town. I watched closely when she laid her head on his shoulder, not minding the people around her, and I knew that after all these years Miss Beery's knight had come. Even if he didn't arrive on a dashing white charger, at least he came riding, his Model T. Ford was a familiar sight in town. The auditorium buzzed when Miss Alice rested her head on her man's shoulder, while he stared the gossip-mongers down.

It soon became apparent that people didn't die if "Doc" Cameron attended them. A saying sprung up around town that when Doc stepped in, Death stepped out!

It became his slogan.

*{Begin page no. 4}*One morning in the seventh grade arithmetic room, I was taken ill. My heart began to pump heavily, and my face started burning up. I got weak as a kitten. Miss Beery looked at me sharply, and said, "Donald, you may go home now, if you like."

When I reached home I was one sick boy. My mother rushed to the telephone to call Dr. Thomas, better known to us boys as "Old Awbones." He was a tall, lanky, sour-faced man who always reminded me of how I thought an undertaker should look! He certainly had the funeral manner.

"Naw you don't Ma!" I hollered at her, "I want that new doctor!"

"But Donald, we've had Dr. Thomas ever since."

"I don't care! I want Doc Cameron, I'm sick, and I might die, and then you'd be sorry you didn't get the doctor I wanted."

It worked. I heard my mother fairly scream over the phone to the operator.

"Mabel!" Mabel was 'Central' in those days, and knew everyone in town. "Mabel, ring Dr. Cameron's office - hurry! Donald came home a moment ago from school deathly ill. Oh, please hurry, please!"

It was only a matter of minutes before the familiar rattle of Doc's Model T. sounded out front. It choked down, coughed, there came the sound of a door being slammed. Doc rushed into the room and up to my bed.

{Begin page no. 5}"By God! I thought somebody was dying here, judging from the way Mabel carried on over the phone." He stuck his hand out and grinned, "Hiya son, I'm Doc Cameron. We're going to be friends.... the very best of friends, aren't we, my boy?" I took his hand, and he added, "here, open your trap." I became, at that moment, Doc's friend for life. While he was taking my temperature he turned to my mother.

"Got any whiskey in the house, Madam?"

"But surely, Doctor, you're not going to give the child whiskey?"

Hells Bells No, Madam! The whiskey's for me!" I knew Mother regretted calling Doc Cameron. But it wasn't but a few minutes before he had her smiling back at him. Doc was that way. I learned later that he took Mother aside and informed her in no uncertain terms that she had a serious case of typhoid fever on her hands, and that careful treatment was the only thing that would pull me through. Even today, I have faint recollections of his kindly face bending over me in the night.

... and on these nights straight with me. He wouldn't go home. They told as he had said: "I'm not losing this

boy. I'll pull him through some way till midnight, and his fever will break. It's the only way to save him.

My mother, worried to death, had tried to get him to lie down *(Begin page no. 6)* and rest, but he wouldn't leave my bedside even for a moment. "Must watch every small development" he had said.

He cancelled all calls except emergency ones. And, he didn't have any of those kind while he was attending me in the most serious illness I known. One call was persistent, but he had "cussed out" the party doing the callings and lost a patient. "Pampered Mrs. Jones, 'ys imagining there's something wrong with herself!" Doc had snorted. "Ought to give her a dose of strychnine for calling like this."

"Doc" never called, and then sat down to be waited on. If he wanted anything in the kitchen or bathroom, he went in for it himself, and if he couldn't find it, he asked somebody to get it for him. If he happened in at meal time, and he would often drop in to see how we were, he'd sit down, start eating and talk up a storm.

"That damned Thomas, nearly killed a woman today. Nearly dead when they called me. I found her swelled up bigger'n a balloon. Thomas gave her a hypo to ease her. Can you imagine! If I'd been ten minutes longer, why she'd been dead. Thomas oughta be a horse doctor. No, he'd kill the poor horse!"

Soon the news spread around town that he had married Miss Beery.

We boys had a grand time serenading the couple when they *(Begin page no. 7)* returned from a two-weeks honeymoon. We got hold of some old mill saws, and beat on them with axes. You could have heard them ten miles. It sort of compensated for the loss of Miss Alice.

I shall never forget how "Doc" looked when he stuck his head out of an upstairs window. A lot of cars had backed in the ditch in front of the house, and turned their headlights on.

He laughed and waved. His pretty bride joined him at the window, and her eyes sparkled in the glare of the headlights.

After that "Doc" just became more popular than ever. He was elected mayor, chairman of the Medical Society, a member of every major delegation.

With the suddenness of lightning, the storm broke around "Doc's" head. It seemed that some poor devil had come in the night begging dope. He was really an ill man, and was trying to get to a hospital in Columbia. "Doc" gave him a shot, a little to ease him on the way, and his railroad fare.

Every doctor in town - and there were three - set up a wail. Doctor Cameron was asked to resign from the county medical association. Then the American Medical Association fired him for giving that man dope to carry with him. But "Doc" didn't seem to mind. He laughed at them all, and his patients seemed to increase. He still had a fine office up over the First National Bank. His wife *(Begin page no. 8)* stuck by him.

But people he had helped turned against him. There were sinister whisperings about unethical practices of all kinds. Ridiculous charges that were accepted greedily by those he had helped most. My mother took up for him. She told them gossip mongers that they had better shut up about the finest doctor that had ever come to our town. Mother scored old lady Jones at the Missionary meeting one afternoon. She told her to pay "Doc" what she owed him, and then "run him down".

Doc and Miss Beery kept right on like they always had. Miss Beery continued to sing in the Methodist Church Choir. "Doc" would just sit in the front of the congregation and grin up at her. He always slept through the sermons. Old Mr. Mahaffey would always slam the Bible shut loud enough to wake up the dead, much less Doc. It was the signal that the sermon was coming to a close.

The women of the church were going on some kind of trip as delegates to a convention and Doc's wife went along. She drove her own car. But she never drove it back. A drunk hit her head on just outside of Allendale. The women riding with her were seriously injured but she was the only one, strangely enough, who succumbed to her injuries.

(Begin page no. 9) It was the last straw. I remember how hushed everything was in town the night they brought her back. I had started to the Broadway Movie Palace up-town, but changed my mind and crossed over to Johnson's Drug Store. "Doc" was sitting at one of the tables with his head in his hands. He didn't look up when I entered. Dr. Johnson came over to him and placed his arm about Doc's shoulders. For the first time in my life, I saw a gentle expression on the druggist's face.

"Cameron," he said, in a husky tone, "I've never particularly liked you - you know that. But tonight there's not a man in this town who feels your misfortune more than I do at this moment. If there is anything I can do, please feel free to call on me."

Doc collapsed at the graveside. Two friends lifted and carried him to a waiting automobile. It was at this time that we moved to Columbia.

I heard from "Doc" through friends from time to time. It seemed that after his wife died, he lacked the support and strength necessary to live. He became dour in his appearance. He snarled back at those who accused him unjustly. He drank heavily. Later, came

Morphine.

His downfall was swift and final after his wife's death. "Doc" was becoming an old man, an old man unable to fight back.

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Manuscript

41

Tally Smith



American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1940

Item 27 of 48

[An Evening in the Smith Home]

{ page image }

Approximately 3,600 Words SOUTH CAROLINA WRITERS' PROJECT

LIFE HISTORY

TITLE: AN EVENING IN THE SMITH HOME

Date of First Writing February 14, 1939

Name of Persons Interviewed Mr. & Mr. Tally Smith

Fictitious Name None used

Street Address 1100 Block, House No. 1101 1/2 **Winnsboro** Mills, Columbia Rd.

Place **Winnsboro** Mill Village, **Winnsboro**, South Carolina

Occupation Mill Operative -Mr. Smith runs sides in twister room.

Name of Writer Lucile Clarke Ford

Name of Reviser State Office

Essie Mae, neatly dressed in a soft green crepe, with crisp white collar and cuffs, opened the front door to let me in. A glowing bed of embers gave added cheer, as well as warmth, to the comfortable living room.

"Ma's looking for you to sit with us a while tonight," Essie Mae

Page 2 { page image }

said. "She'll be here in about half an hour."

Seeing notebooks, pencil, and paper, I said: "Perhaps you are too busy to be interrupted. Are you studying for something?"

"No, I'm not studying. I just write off these scales and music notes for some of my friends who like music."

"You have a music class?"

"No, it isn't a class, I just help some of my friends. I can't play so much myself, but I learned how to write out music in my music lessons at Mt. Zion Institute and at the Everette School here in the **Winnsboro** Mill village. And what I do know I am glad to show others. So many of my friends love music and want to play. Some have learned to read their notes and can play hymns and songs. We don't have much time to practice and study, except at night. Nearly all of my friends work in the mill or in some store uptown. I clerk in the ten cent store, Rose's. It's a nice place to work, and I enjoy working there. I don't make so much, but it gives me plenty to buy my clothes and have my own spending money. I help some here at home, too. I bought the furniture in my room, but I don't pay board.

"I have a savings account at the Merchants and Planters Bank in **Winnsboro**. I keep a Christmas savings account, too. And I give one tenth of my pay check to the church, besides helping out when we have calls for sick and needy cases among our neighbors. The mill has a little hospital and nurse. And old Dr. Lindsay goes to the people that need a doctor. Of course, the people don't have it so easy as they used to, and in some families there are not enough working to

Page 3 { page image }

keep up a family. There's Jimmy, our neighbor next door. He's crippled with some kind of [bone?] trouble and can't walk. I try to bring him something from uptown to keep him from getting so tired of just sitting there. Ma, she goes over there once every day, and I go at night when I get home. If we just drop in and right out again, he says it keeps him from being lonesome. We do such as that among the people because we enjoy it. But the **Winnsboro** Mills don't let anybody suffer. If they work and try at all they can get along fairly well. Do you remember last fall when Donald Dawkins got drowned in Wateree River? Well, there wasn't anything the mill didn't do to help out.

"Them that has big families of little children do have it hard. But plenty of times, in case of extra sickness and trouble, we get together and pound a family. New people, we always pound. Our churches and church societies do such as that, too."

Laughter was heard from the back, and in a few minutes Mr. and Mrs. Smith came in. Mattie began talking as soon as she entered the room.

"We had supper soon after four o'clock, and, when Essie Mae returned from her work uptown with the car, Tally and me went to the farm to feed and water our livestock and to milk the cows. Then we came back by the mill company's pasture to milk a cow we have there. The clock has struck seven-thirty. Sorry you had to wait here for us.

"It's like this all the time here with us," Mattie continued. "We go to the mill at eight in the morning and work eight hours. They give us time out to eat our lunch, which we take to the mill with us. We come home at four o'clock, and from then to six, we do what we

Page 4 { page image }

want to here about the place. When Essie Mae gets home from the ten cent store with the car, Tally and me gets in it and drives out here about two miles in the country, where we've got a little farm rented. There we have cows, chickens, pigs, and a garden. We have a Negro family to work and keep the place, but we go every day to see about things."

"Do you object to this busy life, and get tired from the daily duties?" I asked.

"No," replied Tally, grinning, "I dodge all the work at the mill, let the other fellow do it. And its the same here at home, where Mattie and Dan and Essie Mae have is do what's to be done."

"I had a lot rather be busy working," Mattie rejoined, "than to be doing nothing. There are people that spend all their time at the Community House and uptown at picture shows and never do any work at home. I don't know when I've been to a picture show. I can have a better time with the kind of duties it takes to feed up, milk, and take care of animals. We've used to work. I've done it all my life. My mother died when I was two years and seven months old, and Clyde, my baby brother, was nine months old. I was eighteen and my brother sixteen, when Pa married the second time."

With a chuckle, she continued. "Then he married a widow who already had six children. Now they have nine of their own. There's one dead. It died when a baby. He would have been ten years old now. That makes my pa have eleven children. And the widow with her nine by him and the six she already had gives her fifteen, don't it?"

"I married when I was eighteen, about the time Pa married the second

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time. They never worked in the **Winnsboro** Mills. They raised a plenty to eat and lots of cotton, "til the boll weevil got so bad."

Tally, who had listened to us very attentively, spoke up: "There were seven boys in our

family. One brother died four years ago at the age of fifty-one. There were three girls, and all died young. But there's my grandpa, he lived to be ninety-five years old. His wife was five years younger. When she died, she hadn't been in bed but two days. She was busy all her life. They had ten children. Six of us are still living. Half of us live in mills, and the other three are living in the country. One of my brothers lives here in **Winnsboro** Mill village. John lives at a mill in Union. Norman is at a mill in Santuck, with Albert. Norman, he's all drawn with rheumatism. Can't work any more. He has to be taken care of and waited on like a baby. We all together give what we can for his support. Doctor's medicine don't help him atall. [?] just gets worse.

"Then there's Pa, he's been helpless five years, paralyzed. But I pay twenty cents every week out my check to the old age pension. It can't go to Pa in his old age. I don't understand a thing in the world about that old age pension money, and nobody else does. Pa has a little land that he would mortgage if he could get in on that old age pension.

"My stepmother and the children take care of him. He's done well, though, to raise, help feed, and take care of sixteen children. We all know how to work. On the farm I knocked cottonstalks, cut cornstalks, sprouted many a new ground, to get ready for the next year's planting,

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and helped get up the wood to burn for a family of twelve.

"We lived on rented land most of our lives. Pa was a sharecropper, moving from one farm to another. Like Mattie told you, we rent the little place we have our cows and other stock on a few miles out here in the country. I never owned a foot of land, but I mean to before I die. That's why the old lady and me's willing to work so steady now. I want to have a shelter over our heads and not be dependent on the other fellow. I don't know, though, we don't save a great deal, but we all work hard all the time. We never would have left the farm if old Mr. Boll Weevil hadn't come along when he did. Why, he just eat us out of everything. We held on a few years. We've been here in the **Winnsboro** Mill seventeen years. Ten years in this same house. I liked the farm fine when we were making money, but, as things were, we couldn't get along atall. I like it here in the **Winnsboro** Mills. I do get blue sometimes shut in here. Then I get out on the little place we rent and forget myself and the blues. It's a great thing to have something to do on the side like that. Besides, we can have a lot of things that we couldn't have without our farm work. Mattie, show her what we have here in the house."

Mattie led the way through the hall and into the bathroom. There we saw a long pole fastened across the bathroom from wall to wall, on which was hanging large, hams, shoulders, and sides of meat. Mattie said, "I reckon you will think we are eating too much hog meat. But it takes it when we work, and it keeps us from having big grocery bills. We

don't buy so much. This meat is from three big hogs. The company lets us have our chickens and a vegetable garden here in the back yard.

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We've told you about the cows and pigs down in the company pastures and the things we have eat on the farm. We like milk, butter, eggs, chickens, vegetables, hog meat, and our own lard. There is little left to buy.

"There's Essie Mae, she make her money, but she buys what she wants and saves her money. We don't stint her nor take her money for board. Why, Tally gives her money to go to the show or buy any little things she wants uptown. She is not wasteful with it. She gives her tenth in the church, as we do. We all give ten cents of every dollar we make to the church, besides what we give here in the neighborhood in sickness and deaths.

"We send flowers to funerals when there's a death. Of course, maybe we oughtn't do that, but we work hard and enjoy giving in those ways. I think about when we are old or in trouble it would be nice to know our neighbor friends thought that much of us. I'd hate to have a collection taken up for any of us, but then a body can't help getting down and out sometimes.

"Mr. Dean, Tally's overseer, does dearly love to make up a purse to help any one that's sick and in need. Then the churches all help, and the mill company will do for people in case of their needing it. The Bible teaches us to help them that's in need, don't it?"

"There's Essie Mae working in the ten cent store, and she gives a dime out of every dollar she makes to our Baptist Church. But then she enjoys giving. Every day she brings home fruit, candy, or something that gives that cripple boy living next door to us some pleasure. She feels that sorry for him sitting there day in day out. And she's so

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thankful she is able to work, she says she oughter do all she can for such people. Just today, she took her hour off at dinner time to come home with the car and take her cousin, whose husband was killed on the railroad track by the six o'clock train Sunday, to the cemetery to make kodak pictures of her husband's grave and the flowers.

"It was Mr. Sides' wife. She is my cousin," Mattie said. With a forlorn expression on her usual smiling countenance, she continued, "Why, his wife had just got out of the car to go home. They live over there on the mill hill near the railroad track. Her husband, Olin, was going on uptown. There's a sort of a hill to drive up on at the track, and when he got up it the car went dead. After the train stopped, they examined him and found his leather

jacket sleeve hung tight to the handle of the car door. Anna, his wife, said she couldn't make out why he didn't jump to save himself.

"Poor thing, she's grieving herself to death. Why, they had the funeral two days after he was killed. Exactly forty-eight hours after that six o'clock train struck him, the casket was being lowered in the grave and our preacher was saying 'ashes to ashes and dust to dust.' Then I thought poor Anna was going crazy. We just had to hold her when that train blew for that same crossing at six o'clock. That was the most mournful sound ever I heard in my life.

"I have never seen so many pretty designs of flowers, and the artificial are just as pretty as they were the day they were put there. They stand the rain and bad weather and will be pretty for weeks yet."

Dan, ten years old, was sitting on a rug in front of the fire playing with marbles, when a loud crash was heard on the front porch.

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I expected the front door to fly open. Tally laughed heartily and looked at Dan, he said: "There they are, Dan! Go open the door. Don't be scared. You know they'll keep up that noise 'til you go out."

"Hey! What you doing? Come on in!" All were laughing as they went to the porch. Mattie explained: "Why, this is Valentine's night. They do this once a year, around to the homes of friends and them they know well. They keep on rocking the house 'til the one it's being done for comes out." There were sticks, rocks, and some pieces of timber piled on the doorsteps.

"They don't mean no harm," Mattie said, "that's just fun they're having. I have known of them throwing buckets of cold water at the doors, but that's been a long time back. That was just carrying it too far. We could report it to the police force and have it all stopped if they was doing any harm. Order is kept here all the time, and children are not allowed to take this village. I have heard of people having trouble about things on the outside at other mills. This mill company don't stand for nothing being destroyed and bothered. Our chickens and gardens are as safe here as when we lived in the country.

"There are drawbacks to everything, but we get along with our neighbors and always have. We would miss them, too, out on a farm, but Tally and me say we are going back to the farm before we die, as we have told you before. We want to save up money enough to have a home in the country with all conveniences. There are a lot of things about the mill village we would miss. But wouldn't it be a good feeling when we are old to think we lived in our own house? We just couldn't get on without the car. It gives us a way to go

out to that farm and Essie Mae a way to get

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uptown to her work, besides going other places for pleasure. Looks like a body needs some enjoyment when they've worked hard.

"Tally's always done a good part by his family. He votes a straight democratic ticket. He don't care about taking part in politics, but he supports the party. Of course, we don't 'prove of this liquor bill. So many down here don't have what they would, if the men didn't take their pay checks and spend it for liquor instead of groceries and clothes. That's what makes some of our people look so poor and hard-up. Money is just being used the wrong way.

"We couldn't waste and throw away money and do what we want to for these younguns of ours. It's like I tell you, Tally's been a good husband and a good man in his home, but he don't know nothing in book learning."

"No," Tally interrupted, "we had nothing but a little country school when I grew up. One teacher had all the grades and a crowd of children. I walked four miles to the school. Went early and stayed late. Most of the time that school was going on, I had to be busy there on the farm, doing all the jobs I've already told you we did there."

"With me it was different, Mattie rejoined. "I didn't do so much work in winter. I loved my books and went through seven grades. We have worked and tried to keep Essie Mae and Dan in school. Essie Mae liked school, and, when she finished the seventh grade down here in Everette School, she went on uptown to Mt. Zion Institute. She graduated there in four years. That's like a college, I tell her. I hope we can just get Dan through there, too. He don't try like Essie Mae. He plays and don't get near the good grades she used to get."

"Boys just don't seem to care so much about books, Tally said.

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"But we are going to see him through Mt. Zion, if he will go on and do as well as he's doing down here. There is no use of boys and girls growing up without an education now. Why, they teach them everything. They have cooking and sewing down here in our school and in the Mt. Zion school, too. They have a shop for boys to learn carpentry and a regular little mill down at Everette. Teach them all kinds of mill work there."

"Besides being a good citizen in the community and a hard working man," Mattie spoke

in behalf of her husband, "Tally is a deacon in the Stephen Green Memorial Baptist Church, and a member of the Men's Bible Class. He's been president of it several times. Yes, we all think a lot of Mr. Padgett, our pastor. I don't know what we'd do if it wasn't for him here in our midst, always doing good wherever he goes. I was baptized when I was about twelve years old. Tally didn't join the church until he was twenty-one. We had been married a year, when he just up and said to me one day, 'Mattie, I am going to join the church Sunday and be baptized.' I said, 'You might as well, Tally, you live a Christian life anyway. And you could do a lot of good, if you would join the church.' All of our children just naturally grew up in the church, going with us every Sunday."

We heard footsteps. Soon the front door opened and Essie Mae and the young man she had gone out with came in. I learned that the young man, Mr. Arrington, was instructor in the shop or manual arts room at the mill school, Everette. He had a violin case in his hand.

Essie Mae said, "He helps with our church music, and we have just been practicing for Sunday's services." As the clock struck ten-thirty,

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Mr. Arrington said goodbye to all of us. I could not refrain from saying, "He looks like a nice young man, Essie Mae." She blushingly said, "He is nice, but we're just good friends."

"I must be going," I said. "The time has passed so fast and pleasantly, I had no idea it was so late."

"Oh, that's all right," said Tally and Mattie in the same breath.

"Come back again as soon as you can, and you'll always find our latchstring hangs on the outside of the door."

"Then I think I will be back for breakfast, to have some of that good ham you showed me. I have certainly enjoyed the evening and expect to see you again soon."

Information about SGML version of this document.



Manuscript

42



American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1940

Item 1 of 34

[Joseph Stewart]

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Accession no.

11053

Date received *{Begin handwritten} 10/10/40{End handwritten}*

Consignment no. *{Begin handwritten} 1{End handwritten}*

Shipped from *{Begin handwritten} Wash. Office{End handwritten}*

Label

Amount *{Begin handwritten} 5p.{End handwritten}*

WPA L. C. PROJECT *{Begin handwritten} Writers'{End handwritten}* UNIT *{Begin handwritten}*
Folklore*{End handwritten}* Collection (or Type)

Title *{Begin handwritten} Joseph [?] (white){End handwritten} {Begin handwritten} 81 years old.{End handwritten}*

Place of origin *{Begin handwritten} Winnsboro, S. C.{End handwritten}* Date *{Begin handwritten}*
6/28/38{End handwritten}

Project worker *{Begin handwritten} W. W. Dixon{End handwritten}*

Project editor

Remarks

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W11053

Project #1655

W. W. Dixon

Winnsboro, S. C. {Begin handwritten}6/25/38 trans{End handwritten} {Begin deleted text}390565{End deleted text} {Begin handwritten}(cotton mills, distilleries and tanyards){End handwritten} JOSEPH STEWART

(white) 81 YEARS OLD.

Joseph **Stewart** is an old bachelor living alone in a four-room frame house on the south side of highway #34, seven miles east of the town of Ridgeway, S. C. He is five feet ten inches tall and weighs two hundred pounds.

"I was born near Mitford, not far from Great Falls, January 17, 1857. I was a boy seven years old when the great War Between the States ended in the triumph of the Union army, the abolition of slavery, and the raiding of our section of the county by Sherman's soldiers.

"My father was Thomas **Stewart**; my mother, Sallie **Stewart**. I had two brothers and two sisters. Jane, who never married, is dead. Tom was a bachelor all his life; he was drowned at the age of seventy. Brother William married and had a large family, but died several years ago. Mattie Lavinia married John Haynes. She is still living at Ridgeway, S. C., with her daughter, Mary, who married Bob Ameen, a prosperous merchant and land owner of Ridgeway and Winnsboro, S. C. She is seventy-seven years old. She lost her only son, Harry, last April.

"My father and mother were not rich people before the abolition of slavery; they owned only a few slaves and a small tract of land near Mitford. The destruction of the small cotton mill, the distilleries, and tanyards meant more to my family than the abolition of the slaves.

"My two brothers, William and Tom, and I were not ashamed to work at whatever we could get to do around the cotton mill and gristmill, distilleries and

Page 2 { page image }

tanyards. Our labor was intelligent and skilled and was preferred to Negro labor after freedom. So the result of the war bore not so hard on our family.

"Sherman's troops burned the schoolhouse near us. It was a private school of the neighborhood. I had gone to it one year and had gotten to the "baker" column in the old blue-back speller, and had learned to read and write. That is about all the schooling I ever got. What I know has come from the school of experience and in reading the newspapers.

"The Yankees burned Mt. Dearborn Cotton Mill, which was owned by Captain Sam McAlilley at the time of the invasion by the Federal army. They also burned and destroyed Gayden's, Montgomery's, Lewis's, and Gaither's tanneries. These were never reestablished, but the two distilleries in the community that were likewise destroyed were afterward restored, and every store sold whiskey. A gallon jug could be bought for a silver dollar, and a barrel, thirty-one and one-half gallons, sold for a ten dollar bill. Now the same quality and amount of liquor would cost six dollars a gallon and not less than fifty dollars a barrel.

"What was the pastime and amusement of men in those days? Well, society had a distinct cleavage. There was a religious crowd who took things seriously and went to church every time the church had anything going on. They got up and established a temperance society, and attended revivals in the summertime. They, led on by the preachers, believed in hell fire and brimstone, and talked against card playing, dancing, gambling, and many innocent amusements that is considered all right nowadays.

"Then there was the other crowd; they raised game chickens and race horses; kept fox hounds; and played cards in barrooms and hotels at Winnsboro and Chester.

"The race course ran parallel with the Rocky Mount road. Colonel Whittaker, Major Berry of York, the Hamptons of Richland, the McCarleys of Winnsboro, the

Page 3 { [page image](#) }

Thompsons of Union and the Harrisons of Longtown raced thoroughbred race horses on this track, or course, and much money was won and lost at these races. The chicken fights were sometimes fought in Chester and sometimes in Winnsboro. I have known as much as \$500 to be bet on the "Main." That is to say, the side winning the most fights would get the \$500. But I have seen \$300 bet on an individual cock fight that didn't last a minute; a blue-breasted, red, game cock of Mr. Pagan's ran his gaff clean through both eyes of an Allan Round Head, game rooster. Who did the Allan Round Head belong to? I'm not sure about that, but the money was put up by three Chester people.

"As to gambling at cards, most of that took place in a back room adjoining the barroom. In the daytime, the game was seven up and turn trump. If you turned a jack, that counted "one". The points to be made were "high", "low", "jack", and the "game". No great sums of money were lost or won on this game.

"At night in the fall and winter the card game was "draw poker" in the town hotels. Generally a bar with liquors was fixed up in the hotel. One day a fine old gentleman stopped his wagon, which was loaded with four bales of cotton, in front of the Nickolson Hotel, in Chester. He came in just to get a drink, he said. Looking around, he saw a card game going on; he joined it, played a while, and had the game changed to draw poker. He soon lost what money he had, and then bale by bale the cotton was lost. In the midst of a conversation about putting up a mule, his son came in and led him out of the hotel. The grandson of that old gentleman is a lawyer at Barnwell, S. C. You know him well, as he has been president of the State Bar Association.

"Dr. Ira S. Scott, a graduate of the Charleston Medical College, was the physician of the surrounding country. His practice extended from old Beckhamsville to Kershaw. In typhoid fever cases, people believed him more able to cure it than any other doctor. They say he never was known to lose a typhoid case, if called into consultation the first week. He died in 1888. He had

Page 4 { [page image](#) }

been a cripple since childhood, and, because of this misfortune, he always rode horseback on a lady's sidesaddle. You must remember that, until the year 1900, it was regarded as immodest and shameful for ladies to ride astride as men do.

"The first Saturday in May found everybody in wagons and buggies on their way to the picnic at Catawba Falls, as it was commonly called in those old days. Now the place is a large town, a

manufacturing centre, and is called Great Falls. I have heard old people say that this picnic began as an annual social gathering in 1784.

"Some of the Confederate soldiers who went out from our section were J. F. Arledge, Robert Ford, E. T. Gayden, Sam Kilgo, R. M. Ford, H. J. Gavden, Mansel Hollis, James G. Johnstone, J. F. Nichols, Dr. William Dye, John Cartledge, and L. M. Ford.

"Dr. William Hall was the richest man in the neighborhood. He built, at his own expense, Bethesda Church and gave it to the Methodist Episcopal denomination. Some of the preachers who went out from Bethesda were John R. Pickett, Phillip Pickett, and James Kilgo. Mr. Kilgo had three sons to enter the Methodist ministry. John Kilgo, one of the sons, became president of Trinity College, now Duke University, Durham, N. C.

"Our family moved here to the Longtown section of Fairfield County about 1884, and bought this farm upon which I have lived ever since.

"I think Fairfield was one of the nine counties declared to be in rebellion against the U. S. Government in the days of Ku Klux, but no great disturbances took place here so far as I recall. I took part in the Red Shirt brigades that did so much to elect Wade Hampton governor in 1876. I wore a red shirt in the parades and did what I was commanded to do by General Bratton, Major Woodward, and the leaders.

"A canvass of the State took place before the election in 1876. It commenced at Anderson and ended at Columbia. Fairfield County organized clubs.

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The club members, on the day of a speaking in Winnsboro, dressed in red shirts, mounted on horseback, and rode to Winnsboro in military formation. I have heard that they did this in every county.

"On the day of the speaking here, I suppose there were at least three thousand red shirts on the speaking ground. It was a grand sight; it put heart in the whites and dread in the blacks.

"At other elections, before this, Negro women would dress up in men's clothing and vote. How many, I don't know, but we did catch [one?] at Ridgeway, in 1876, trying to vote for Chamberlain for governor. We were on the lookout for them, and they must have gotten scared and made no attempts, except this particular one.

"Women of the Negro race were more violent in the abuse of the Democratic Party than were the Negro men. It was common for the Negro women to threaten their husbands with separation if they voted the democratic ticket under persuasion of the whites. These women were advised, encouraged, and urged by the Negro preachers and white scalawag politicians to assume this manner and take this drastic action toward their husbands in order to hold them in line for the radical party at the election box."

[Information about SGML version of this document.](#)





American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1940

Item 36 of 66

[Joseph Stewart]

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Place of origin *{Begin handwritten} Winnsboro, S. C. {End handwritten}* Date *{Begin handwritten} 6/28/38 {End handwritten}*

Project worker *{Begin handwritten} W. W. Dixon {End handwritten}*

Project editor

Remarks

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W11053

Project #1655

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"Dr. William Hall was the richest man in the neighborhood. He built, at his own expense, Bethesda Church and gave it to the Methodist Episcopal denomination. Some of the preachers who went out from Bethesda were John R. Pickett, Phillip Pickett, and James Kilgo. Mr. Kilgo had three sons to enter the Methodist ministry. John Kilgo, one of the sons, became president of Trinity College, now Duke University, Durham, N. C.

"Our family moved here to the Longtown section of Fairfield County about 1884, and bought this farm upon which I have lived ever since.

"I think Fairfield was one of the nine counties declared to be in rebellion against the U. S. Government in the days of Ku Klux, but no great disturbances took place here so far as I recall. I took part in the Red Shirt brigades that did so much to elect Wade Hampton

governor in 1876. I wore a red shirt in the parades and did what I was commanded to do by General Bratton, Major Woodward, and the leaders.

"A canvass of the State took place before the election in 1876. It commenced at Anderson and ended at Columbia. Fairfield County organized clubs.

Page 5 { page image }

The club members, on the day of a speaking in Winnsboro, dressed in red shirts, mounted on horseback, and rode to Winnsboro in military formation. I have heard that they did this in every county.

"On the day of the speaking here, I suppose there were at least three thousand red shirts on the speaking ground. It was a grand sight; it put heart in the whites and dread in the blacks.

"At other elections, before this, Negro women would dress up in men's clothing and vote. How many, I don't know, but we did catch [one?] at Ridgeway, in 1876, trying to vote for Chamberlain for governor. We were on the lookout for them, and they must have gotten scared and made no attempts, except this particular one.

"Women of the Negro race were more violent in the abuse of the Democratic Party than were the Negro men. It was common for the Negro women to threaten their husbands with separation if they voted the democratic ticket under persuasion of the whites. These women were advised, encouraged, and urged by the Negro preachers and white scalawag politicians to assume this manner and take this drastic action toward their husbands in order to hold them in line for the radical party at the election box."

Information about SGML version of this document.



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{in page} Approximately 2,700 words

48 C {Begin handwritten} Revised by Author {End handwritten} SOUTH CAROLINA WRITERS' PROJECT

LIFE HISTORY

TITLE: TRICKED BY GYPSIES

Date of First Writing February 1, 1939

Name of Person Interviewed Nick & Janie Young (Negroes)

Fictitious Name Nick & Janie Fuller

Street Address None

Place Blythewood, South Carolina

Occupation Farmers

Name of Writer Helen Shuler

Name of Reviser State Office

"Spot! Red! Shet your mouths. Ain't you got no more sense than to keep on barking?"

"Please, ma'am, if you don't min', come over here where I's washin'. I just gotta get dese clothes on de line."

The path to Janie's wash bench led across last year's cotton field.

"How many acres we plants? Lordy, chile, I ain't know for shore, 'bout fifteen, I reckon.

"My chillun send me money? Sometime dey send some, but it ain't much.

{Begin page no. 2}"Please, ma'am, tell me what it is you is aimin' to git at? Well, it seems to me de hard times I's had b'longs to me. It ain't for anyone else to know.

"Oh, yes, ma'am, 'bout dem gypsies now. Dat was de awfulest thing. One day I was a settin' dere in de house just a sufferin' wid my rheumatism, and dese two women and a man drive up to de door. De man was a-drivin' de autymobile, and he ain't crack he mout' to say nothin'. De women come in de house. Dey tell me dey can help me. All I gotta do is give 'em a little sumpin'. Dey puts deir arms 'round me and honey me up. Den dey ask me for what little money I has. I ain't mind givin' 'em dat money no more than I mind givin' you dis collar I's washin'. I just hands it out to 'em. When I come to my mind, and dat money and all them other things done gone, it 'most killed me. I ain't know what dey do to me. Dey muster hypnotized me or sumpin'. Dey drive off wid two of my very best quilts what ain't never been an a bed and my brand new dress what ain't even had de scissors stuck in it. I ain't never tell Bub all day git, 'cause after it's all gone, 'tain't gonna fetch it back to tell. Besides all dat forty or fifty dollars and ny best quilts and dress, dey take two great big hams what was hangin' in de house. Each one of them hams weighed 'most forty pounds. And, when dey leave, dey says 'Now don't say nothin' to Bub 'bout dis, or you won't git no better. Den de nasty devils drive right on over to de field where Bub plowin'. Dey tell him dey can cure me if he will give 'em twenty-five dollars. Bub say dey rub a little yellow powder in deir hand and say sumpin', he ain't know what. And then dey caution him not to tell me.

"Bub say he keep watchin' me every day to see if I's better, and all {Begin page no. 3}de time I keep thinkin' maybe I'll be better omorrow. But, shucks, de pain ain't eased up none, and, anyway, I was sick in my mind 'cause I give away so many things. Then one da 'ub say he need some money, and I has to tell him I ain't got no money. Gee! dat was a time. But I shore was glad dat Bub do de same 'hing I do; then he can't quarrel wid me.

"Yes, ma'am, dat was de awfulest thing. But de worst part was. dat me done borrowed dat money from de Gov'ment to buy fertilizer for de crop and feed for de mule. It come in on a Friday, and dese gypsies come in on Tuesday mornin'. And we gotta pay dat money back. Dat's what put us behind las' year."

During the recital of her encounter with the gypsies, Janie's little black chinquapin eyes flashed fire, and her hands worked nervously with the clothes, as she hustled from the tub to the washpot and back to the tub again. In her bright-colored print dress, a man's old gray coat, and with a red bandanna tied around her head, Janie, a ginger-colored Negro, looked very much like one of the despised gypsies.

"How old was we when we got married? Well, let me think. I must've been 'bout seventeen, and Bub was most twenty-one. I shore wish I could've seen our marriage. It shore was sweet. Ma made me a white dress and a long white net veil. Miss Langford, she give me a pair of long white silk gloves. And she fix me a big bouquet of white flowers and tie 'em with ribbon. Dere was such a crowd, we had de marriage out in de yard. We put a table under de tree for de cakes. Ma made a cake and iced it all over wid white icing. Then some of de people present me wid cakes. All de bridesmaids fetch me a cake, too. De crowd stay all afternoon, and, when *{Begin page no. 4}* me and Bub drive off, dey throw rice at us.

"Yes, ma'am, we went right to housekeeping. Bub was hired out to Mr. Wilson, and we went over dere to live. He paid Bub fifteen dollars a month and give us a ramshackle old house to live in."

By now, Janie's mind had been diverted from the idea of telling of her hardships, and she willingly revealed the story of her life with Nick.

"We could live very well with me working all de time in de field for forty cents a day. I did anything dere was to do on a farm, 'cept plow. I sow de seed, chop cotton, hoe de crop, and put down fertilizer, and do anything else dey wants done. We work four years wid Mr. Wilson and managed to save enough money to buy us a mule and a wagon. Then Bub take a notion he want to rent some land; so we move to Mr. Wall's place. And dat year, we work fifteen acres. He charge us one five-hundred pound bale of cotton. But dat was de first year de weevil was so bad, and we didn't make no cotton to speak of.

"We didn't have near enough to pay de rent. But Bub bought wood off different places, wherever he could find it, and hauled it to Columbia. He went three days out of every week. He would leave home between one and two o'clock in de morning. On Saddays, I went with him and worked for a white lady in Columbia. She just give me things. I didn't want her to pay me no money, 'cause what she give me was worth more then what de money would buy. When de chillun got big enough, we'd take them with us. Sometimes in de winter it would be so cold we'd have to stop 'side de road and buil' a fire. After we sold de wood, Bub would give de chillun what he aim for 'em to have. You know, you have to 'lownce 'em out or dey want everything dey see.

{Begin page no. 5} We just stayed dat one year on Mr. Wall's place. Bub decided he could do better to sharecrop. De next three years, we worked on de Lathrop place. Bub had his mule and wagon, and we done de work. Mr. Lathrop furnished de seed and fertilizer. Dese years we did very well. We made plenty of corn, peas, and potatoes, and raised some hogs and a cow. But we had very little money. Yes, ma'am, a very little money."

Nick, Janie's husband, walked leisurely down the path to the spring.

"This shore is nice cool water, Janie. You ain't got dem clothes out yet? Here 'tis way past noon, and I hungry as I can be. I been cuttin' bushes 'round de field all mornin', and now I's ready for de rations.

"Yes, ma'am, it shore make a nice place for Janie to wash. Dem sweet gum trees keep it cool in de summertime, and de wind can't hit you in de winter, 'cause it down in a hollow. I box up de spring dat way to keep de trash out. Dat spring ain't never fail us yet, no matter how dry de weather.

"Shore, I been livin' on a farm all my life. Ma and Pa live over dere on de Rick's place. I always had to work hard; but I liked de country and always wanted to own my farm.

"Me and Janie been livin' first one place and den another. Sometime we rent de land and sometime we sharecrop. But it ain't matter where we livin', I hauls dat wood to Columbia."

"Yes, ma'am," Janie repeated, "haulin' wood is shore in it."

"De past year or two I ain't been able to haul no wood. You see, Missy, dat mule old now, and he most done. I just hope he'll make another crop."

"While we was livin' dare on de Langford place, Ma was trying to pay for dis farm. She had a hard time tryin' to keep up de taxes and gittin' *{Begin page no. 6}* money to make de crops, and she had to-borrow some money from us. She give us a mortgage on de place. Pa had been dead several years, and Ma had got married again. But her husband didn't take no interest in de farm, and he wouldn't help her. When Ma decided to move to Columbia, and she turned de farm over to us. We had to pay lots of back taxes and pay de other chillun's interest. Sometimes I think we'll never git through payin'."

"Missy, dey ain't nothin' like paid yet," Nick rejoined. "And dis new house, you calls it, ain't new at all.

"You know, I used to b'long over here to de Flat Branch Church. Janie, she stick to Round Top. She wouldn't change her church. And she

shore showed wisdom. 'cause now dere ain't no flat brain. Our parson used to say some from Columbia. Every time he's come to our house for dinner."

"You might call it dinner, Bub, but many a time 'twan't nothin' but bread and meat."

"Well, it was sumpin' to eat, and he was mighty glad to git it. Den de members begin to move away. Some of 'em jined Round Top, and w what was left didn't come to preachin'. Sometime dere wouldn't be a soul at de church but me and de preacher. Den he quit Jomin'. De church was dere not bein' used. So I bargained wid de few members dat was left, and I bought de buildin' for sixty dollars. borrowed de money, and now I done pay it all back.

"How I pay 'em back? Whenever I could git a day, I worked at de sawmill. And den I helped one and another wid de farm work, and I keep haulin' wood to Columbia. Den Janie, she work and help, too."

"I reckon I did help. I sold everything I could rake and scrape.

{Begin page no. 7} Payin' debts and raisin' eleven head of chillun ain't no joke."

"Janie is good help in de white folks kitchen, and we is always helping wid de butcherin'. We makes it a practice to be honest and do our work right so we can go back again. I ain't want no one to steal even one pea from me, and I ain't want nothin' dat ain't mine. I try my bes' to make my chillun do de same. When I find one take sumpin', I use de switch where it do de mos' good.

"No, ma'am, dese youngest ones what's at home now go to school, but de oldest ones didn't take to books. Dey'd ruther work on de farm, and we shore needed 'em. Dere's three of 'em up in High Point, North Carolina. Minnie is a nurse and maid for some white folks. Sometimes dey sends me a little money. Little Nick is married, and he works at de sawmill. Arthur works over yonder in de dog hospital and gits five dollars a week. He helps me a little, but can't send much. One girl is married, and de other five are still with us. Me and Nick didn't have no chance at schoolin', and we wanted to send our chillun. Dey can all read and write, and dat's more than we can do. We shore had a hard time gettin' all dese chillun raised. Sometime dere wasn't too much to eat, and we was glad when de summertime come, 'cause den we didn't need much clothes. De good Lord keep us well, and dat shore helps. Little Janie is de onliest one what had any trouble to 'mount to anything. Her tonsils was bad, and we had to take her to de clinic. Dey claim dey out 'em out. But I ain't know, 'cause her throat bleeds some yet."

While Janie finished up her washing, Nick, sitting on an upturned water bucket and leaning back against a tree, told about the farm and his crops.

{Begin page no. 8} "We got one hundred acres in one trac', and forty acres in another. Lordy! No, ma'am, dere ain't but forty or fifty acres cleared. De res' is woods, mostly oaks and sweet gums and poplar, with a few pines. My crops dis las' pas' year was pretty near all failures. I planted six or seven acres of cotton. But dere was so much rain, and de weevil eat 'em up so bad, I ain't git but one bale. I plant my corn in de bottom lan', 'cause it de richest, and I ain't have no fertilizer. But de rains come and drown 'em out. Den I had peas in de corn, and, when we pick 'em, dere ain't but six or seven bushels. Since me and Janie give all dat money to dem gypsies, I ain't had none to buy fertilzer. And dis flat, sandy lan' shore takes a plenty. If I could get steady work somewhere's 'til time to start de crop, or if I could git on dat PWA, it'd shore help. Taxes is just pilin' up. Dere must be morn'n a hundred dollars back taxes, and I just don't see where dey comin' from. And I don't know if I can borrow from de Gov'ment again dis year or no.

"No, ma'am, I ain't never had much time for nothin' but work. Sometime I go coon huntin' wid de white folks. I's de guide, 'cause I know all dese woods 'round here. But I 'member one night I gits all turned 'round, and we gits lost. It's daylight before we gits home."

"Did the gypsies help the rheumatism, Janie?"

"Help? No, ma'am, dat dey ain't. Right now I got a piece of red flannin' pinned across my shoulders. When I wake up dis mornin', I couldn't hardly git my head off de pillow. Dey shore never done me no good."

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Revision No. 79 B.

Approx. 2500 words

SOUTH CAROLINA WRITERS' PROJECT

LIFE HISTORY

TITLE: WPA ROAD

Date of First Writing Jan. 31, 1939

Name of Persons Interviewed Charles Seabrook Arthur W. Bailey F.W. Johnston (white)

Fictitious Names (Not necessary)

Place Edisto Island, S.C.

Occupation WPA Workers

Name of Writer Chalmers S. Murray

*(me of Reviser State Office and Author {Begin note}{Begin handwritten}*C10 *{????}{End handwritten}{End note}*

*{Begin page}*Project 1655

Chalmers S. Murray

Edisto Island, S.C. LIFE HISTORY WPA ROAD

The man who work on the Etiwan WPA road project, reported for duty at eight o'clock sharp. Thirty-nine Negro laborers answered the roll call, their voices ringing out cheerfully in the frosty air.

All of them had long handled shovels in their hands. They were variously dressed: some in overalls, some in coats and trousers held together in important places by brightly colored patches. The thermometer was hovering around 35, and many of the men were wearing two pairs of trousers, old shabby pants covering the newer ones. Tin buckets and bottles of coffee were in evidence. There was not a sullen face in the group. The laborers all appeared to be in good health.

The superintendent, the timekeeper, the foreman, and the truck drivers were white men. The foreman was a college man and an ex-army officer; the superintendent, a small farmer; the timekeeper, a mechanic out of a job; and the truck drivers, farm youths detached from the soil by adverse circumstances. None of them except the foreman had seen the inside of a college.

Most of the workers, white and black, rode to work in automobiles. A few *{Begin inserted text}{Begin handwritten}*,*{End handwritten}{End inserted text}* who lived only a few miles away, walked; a handful rode horses. The Negroes paid on the average of twenty cents a day for their transportation in passenger cars or trucks.

*{Begin page no. 2}*For them walking was out of the question. Those who rode, lived on the other end of Etiwan Island, at least twelve miles from the job.

"I get up at six every morning," said the foreman. "Of course it is black dark then and I feed the animals by lantern light. I get my breakfast. It is too much to expect of my wife. She has plenty to keep her busy beside getting up in the cold dark."

The other workers had similar experiences. Some of them said that they had to arise at five when they had firewood to cut, water to draw and cows to milk. Generally their wives fixed lunches for them the night before. "Too dark for fumble 'round with bittle 'fore day crack. one Negro remarked. "The old hen got for dress my kettle off 'fore she fall sleep."

As soon as the timekeeper checked his rolls, the laborers were divided into two crews. One crew began working with a steady purposeful swing. A large green truck and the other group was assigned to ditching. Soon the shovels were moving rhythmically with a steady purposeful swing. A large green truck drove up, the engine racing. The men jumped to the ground, shovels in their hands. The loose yellow dirt started to move in a steady stream from the roadside to the truck's body.

The men were warming up to their work. It would be a steady pull from now on until *{Begin deleted text}* twelve o'clock *{End deleted text}*, noon.

{Begin page no. 3} The water boy came by with a bucket from which projected the handle of a tin dipper. He was a serious looking Negro youth of about 25, neatly dressed, and wearing dark glasses. The nearest well is three quarters of a mile distant. Until knock-off time, the water boy will keep walking between the well and the place where the dirt is flying. Wielding shovels for hours at a stretch is dry work, even on a cold, dampish January day.

The youth with dark glasses deals with two elements *{Begin inserted text}* *{Begin handwritten}* - *{End handwritten}* *{End inserted text}* water and fire. There are periods when everyone's thirst is quenched, and then the boy fills out his time by tending the fire. About eleven o'clock a small fire is kindled on the roadside, not for the purpose of warming hands and feet, but to keep the lunches warm. The buckets are placed in a ring around the coals, and the glass bottles full of coffee, in the center. The water boy visits the fire once in a while to see that none of the buckets are burned or the bottles broken. He adds a twig or two when the flames die down.

The sound of soft singing is heard, coming from the place where the second truck is being loaded. The Negroes are singing so softly that the words do not register with the group of white men, even though the singers are only seven yards away. The Negroes might be filling in a grave *{Begin inserted text}* *{Begin handwritten}*, *{End handwritten}* *{End inserted text}* so low and mournful is their song.

{Begin page no. 4} "I don't object to singing at times," the superintendent says, "but this thing of one loud song after another had to be stopped. It interfered with the work. Oh, it might help when they are pulling on a load *{Begin deleted text}* *{?}* *{End deleted text}* helps them keep together. When we were moving logs on a CWA project several years ago they used to sing: 'I thought I hear the captain say, ho, ho, ho.' They would pull hard together at the word 'ho.' But they have got to remember that they come here to work - not to sing".

By this time the ditch diggers have heaped a big pile of earth along the edge of the road. Before long there will be several *{Begin deleted text}* trucks *{End deleted text}* *{Begin inserted text}* truck *{End inserted text}* loads to move. The earth will be used for the fills or top surfacing. It is a good grade of soil, suited either for fills or top surfacing. "The government saved on this dirt," says the superintendent judly. "We had to buy very little dirt outside. Most of it was already here."

The ditches are not dug "by air." Stakes placed at intervals along the road indicate the depth and angle; line cord and the surveyor's levels insure accuracy in excavating and grading. The men evidently take a real pride in the clean cut symmetrical ditches. Once in a while a Negro laborer will step back, survey the excavation and say: "Now ain't that a pretty ditch?"

{Begin page no. 5} "Come on boys, come on boys!" sings out the superintendent. The shovels move at a faster tempo. The foreman echoes the command. "Come on boys *{Begin inserted text}* *{Begin handwritten}*! *{End handwritten}* *{End inserted text}* Throw it out *{Begin inserted text}* *{Begin handwritten}*! *{End handwritten}* *{End inserted text}*" The sun goes under a cloud and the white men shiver. The Negroes do not seem to mind the biting wind and the absence of sunshine. A few laborers are obviously sweating.

"Do the men knock off to rest now and then? *{Begin deleted text}*" *{End deleted text}* I should say not." The superintendent seemed irritated at the question. "They don't knock off for any purpose except to eat lunch. They are supposed to take care of their bodily needs before they leave home. But I can tell you this - the work doesn't hurt them. They thrive on it."

"They are hardly ever sick," the foreman adds. "None of the laborers have lost more than five percent of the working hours on account of sickness during the past ten months. As a matter of fact they cannot afford to be sick for more than five days in succession. If they are absent five days hand-running, they are automatically dropped from the rolls. That's the regulations."

The timekeeper looks at his watch, turns to the superintendent and announces: "Twelve o'clock."

The superintendent, a stockily built little man, draws himself up to his full height and shouts: "All right, boys, Knock off for lunch."

{Begin page no. 6} The men scramble out of the ditch, brushing the earth from their clothing. They are joined by the laborers who have been leveling the roadbed. All carry shovels on their shoulders. The thirty-nine Negroes walk toward the fire where their lunch awaits them. The white men assemble at a fire of their own. As a special treat the timekeeper has brought along a peck of oysters. The oysters will be roasted and eaten with cheese sandwiches and coffee.

The Negroes open their quart buckets and begin eating without ceremony. Table spoons are stuck into masses of hominy grits soaked with bacon grease, are pulled out with a quick motion, and then disappear into wide open mouths. There is much smacking of lips and sucking of spoons. Some of the men have brought sweet potatoes and they divide the tubers with their fellows. The coffee is now steaming hot. The men drink it direct from the bottle, scorning cups. Cups are for women, children and sick people, they say. Those who didn't bring fried fish produce butts meat fried to a turn, or fat pork.

"You got for eat meat on the job or bear going to get you," explains one of the Negroes.

When they talk about "bear getting you," they mean that you will faint with hunger and exhaustion.

{Begin page no. 7} They laugh and joke as they eat, kidding the bachelor members of the crew about their scant lunches. They talk about the coming planting season, the revival to be held in the African Methodist Episcopal Church on Sunday, their ill neighbors, and trout. They recall how a certain young man named "Boy Rat" used to gorge himself with sweet potatoes until he could hardly move, and had finally been released from the project. "This ain't no place for trifling nigger," observes an oldish man.

Around the other fire there is also laughing and joking. The superintendent, the foreman and the time-keeper have known each other all their lives. The time-keeper's wife died two years ago and he is "courting" again. He uses part of his precious half hour recess to drive to the postoffice, {Begin deleted text}, {End deleted text} where a letter awaits him from his girl. When he returns his friends pretend that they have eaten his lunch. This is no joking matter for the timekeeper for he has an enormous appetite.

By half past twelve the men are back at work. Three and a half hours before time to knock off for the day. The minutes pass slowly when the lunch is behind them; the last hour is the longest, so the foreman says. There is no slacking of effort, however. The shovels move rhythmically as before and none of the laborers pull on their watch strings.

{Begin page no. 8} The youngest of the crew is around 21. He is of slight build, but his arm muscles stand out like heavy cord, and his shovel seems a toy in his hands. The oldest on the project is a man nearing sixty. His skin is pot black and shriveled; his form tough and wiry. He is said to be one of the best workers on the road - and the ugliest.

Several months ago the men over 65 were discharged since they were supposedly eligible for social security benefits. The superintendent says that if the truth is known they were really unfit for hard work. And one of them grumbled continually and spread dissatisfaction among the others. "The trifling ones are all weeded out now," the superintendent asserts.

The white men have from two to three dependents; some of the Negroes as many as ten. All of them say that without this government work they could not hope to clothe and feed their families and pay the doctor bills. Over and over again they have tried to get outside jobs but there was no use, the foreman says. He for one has reached the conclusion that private industry has no jobs to offer men who have been down on their luck since the depression set in and who are getting along in years. "When a man reaches forty it is all over for him. Friends and politicians have made me promises but they were just talking, trying to let me down easy," the ex-army officer remarks.

{Begin page no. 9} During the ten months the road project has been in progress only one man has found outside employment. This was a Negro who quit recently to join a county road building gang.

About one third of the workers, including the white men, run small farms on the side. They say that there is little if any profit to this farming business, but it helps to provide them with vegetables and meats, and if they are lucky they can pay taxes out of cotton sales. On the whole they break about even with their farming ventures from a cash standpoint. Thrown out of the WPA job, they declare that they could not make a decent living. A large stake is needed for successful truck farming. There is no money in planting a few acres of cotton. Thousands of dollars must be available to equip a modern, motorized farm.

Few of the Negroes who rent or own land plant cotton. An acre or so of peas and sweet potatoes is about all they can manage. No one can carry on a farm by working only on Saturdays and holidays - at least not in a very efficient manner. Some of the more industrious raise hogs and chickens, and a small percentage own cows. Scant attention is paid to vegetable gardens; even watermelons are seldom planted. The men want to rest up a bit on non-work days, put on clean clothes and "take a walk out," as one of them expressed it.

{Begin page no. 10} Jobs on the Etiwan plantations do not pay a living wage. One has to work from sunrise to sunset to earn 75 cents. Beside this is only seasonable employment, except in rare instances. Etiwan farmers white and black say that they cannot pay high wages with cotton bringing less than nine cents a pound and potatoes and cabbages a glut on the market.

During the time the project has been running, only one man has been discharged for cause. "He knew too much," the superintendent comments. "He thought he knew more than the chief engineer. And although he was a strong, hefty man, he was always slacking. I just had to let him go. He was a bad influence on the men."

The superintendent says that the road is laid out by an engineer from the county road commission, and that the work is inspected at regular intervals. The county commission furnishes the tools and the two motor trucks for hauling earth. The WPA pays the laborers.

Every month the superintendent turns in a written report, telling how far the work has progressed, and giving the time required to complete certain stretches. He is provided with a level to check the grades and depths. The foreman has charge of part of the laborers. The timekeeper fills in a report at the end of each day and administers first aid to the men when necessary. In the event of serious accident, he {Begin page no. 11} is instructed to rush the wounded one to the nearest physician.

The project will be completed by the end of February, the superintendent predicts. Of the four miles of projected road, at least three miles have been finished and all of the grubbing has been done. The roadbed measures 28 feet from ditch to ditch, and 50 feet overall including the ditches. When the last shovel of dirt has been dug, the farmers enroute and the people of Etiwan will have a durable, top surfaced

highway that will hold up under heavy motor traffic.

The superintendent turns to the timekeeper and says: "Lord, this has been a cold day. I have been cold every minute. Wish I had my feet propped up in front of a roaring fire. How is the time going anyhow?" He looks at his watch. The timekeeper consults his. Ten more minutes yet.

Men in the ditch seem to be working like automatons. Lines of weariness are appearing on the older faces. The young men are apparently as fresh as they were eight hours ago.

The watch hands crawl around slowly and finally one points to four and the other to six.

The superintendent yells: "Time up. Store your tools.

The men stop working, at least they ease down to a stop. Several keep their shovels going for another minute or two so they can cut down little humps on the ditch edge.

{Begin page no. 12} They march in line to the big wooden box which stands under a small oak, and one by one put their shovels away. The automobiles and trucks are throwing out clouds of smelly blue smoke. An ancient looking Ford truck refuses to start. A Negro is turning the crank as fast as his arm can work, and cursing under his breath.

In five minutes the road is bare of black laborers. Automobiles are disappearing around the sweeping bend that skirts the river bank. The white men stand around and talk for a while, then the foreman says. "Boys, I've got to start for home. Got wood to bring in and water to turn off. Looks like its going to freeze tonight."

"Hope you are wrong," answers the timekeeper. "I would hate to see ice in this ditch tomorrow."

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Manuscript

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{in id number}W11062{End id number}{Begin page}{Begin handwritten}Beliefs and Customs - Folkways{End handwritten}

Accession no.

W11062

Date received {Begin handwritten}10/10/40{End handwritten}

Consignment no. {Begin handwritten}1{End handwritten}

Shipped from {Begin handwritten}Wash. Office{End handwritten}

Label

Amount {Begin handwritten}5 p.{End handwritten}

WPA L. C. PROJECT {Begin handwritten}Writers'{End handwritten} UNIT

Form[md]3 {Begin handwritten}Folklore{End handwritten} Collection (or Type)

Title {Begin handwritten}Alice Buchanan Walker 82 years old (white){End handwritten}

Place of origin {Begin handwritten}Winnsboro, S. C.{End handwritten} Date {Begin handwritten}6/28/38{End handwritten}

Project worker {Begin handwritten}W. W. Dixon{End handwritten}

ject editor

Remarks

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{Begin page}Project #1655

W. W. Dixon,

Winnsboro, S. C. {Begin deleted text}390575{End deleted text} ALICE BUCHANAN WALKER 82 YEARS OLD. (WHITE)

Mrs. Alice Buchanan Walker is a cultured gentlewoman, a widow, who resides in a handsome two-story house on South Congress Street in the town of Winnsboro, South Carolina.

"I am a lineal descendant of Thomas Woodward, the regulator mentioned in the Colonial accounts of the early history of the State under the royal charter. Captain Woodwood was Captain of Rangers in the Revolutionary War. My grandmother was Anne Wyche Williamson, a niece of Colonel Thomas Taylor, who figured prominently in the early history of the State. The late circuit judge, Osmond W. Buchanan, was my eldest brother. My father, Dr. Robert Buchanan, married Rebecca Woodward, and I was born in Winnsboro, S. C., June 20, 1856.

"I learned the alphabet and how to read in our home at my mother's knee. My first school attendance was in a private school taught by Mr. & Mrs. Josiah O'Bear. Mr. O'Bear was the rector of St. John's Episcopal Church on East Liberty Street, Winnsboro. I next attended the school for young girls, taught by Mrs. Catherine Ladd in the old Priscilla Ketchin brick house still standing on Congress Street and now used as an apartment house. Later, I studied Latin and mathematics under a very rough teacher, Mr. Benjamin Rhett Stuart. I attended Columbia College and was graduated at this institution, taking first honor in the literary department and in music. Professor Samuel Jones was president of the college when I was graduated. For years afterward, I was invited to play at commencements and to assist in the school plays and charades.

{Begin page no. 2}"My parents did not permit me to see the Yankees nor anything of the confusion in the town caused by Sherman's 'bummers', but the glare of burning homes and the sky-piercing flames from St. John's Episcopal Church awed and terrified me greatly.

"Twelve hundred slaves followed the Yankee army from this locality under the cover that they were carrying a mule, and a milch cow. In crossing over to the Lancaster County side of Catawba River on flat boats and rafts, many of these Negroes were drowned. Many found their way back, naked and half dead from cold and hunger. All our slaves went off under this delusion except two Negro boys, Henry and Reason. The Yankees had killed or driven off every animal on my Grandfather Osmond Woodward's place, except three cows and one old horse. They destroyed all vehicles but a rockaway. Reason and Henry promised to do the milking, till the garden, and peddle the milk, butter, and vegetables with the old horse and rockaway vehicles if allowed to stay on. I have kept the old wooden table that they made. It has been repaired once or twice but it still stands and is in use in my kitchen this morning. I would like for you to see it. Both Negro boys grew to manhood. Reason stayed here and became a good carpenter, but Henry moved to Arkansas.

"Among the young ladies of my society and set were the daughters of Col. James H. Rion, Kittie, Floride, and Maggie Rion, Deborah Wolfe, Annie Beaty, Sallie, Hattie, and Annie McMaster and Ella, Lill, and Marion Elliott.

"You ask about the style of dress? The old hoop skirt was before our day, but corsets and bustles were worn. White was the prevailing color for hose, and we wore black shiny slippers with moderately high heels. The head {*Begin page no. 3*}dress? The hair was worn high on the head, on a chignon. Earrings in the ears and gems in the hair were part of an evening dress.

"Hats? We were partial to the flat, wide-brimmed, leghorn hats. A wreath of flowers encircled the top of the brim and long streamers or bands of ribbon floated from the sides and could be tied under the chin. The winter hats were more gorgeous. They were trained with ostrich plumes and feathers. There was a hat called 'white chip hat', which was adorned with bright colored feathers. Girls and ladies wore more jewelry then, than nowadays.

"Nearly all elderly women had an outdoor bonnet made of gingham cloth, with splints in it to hold its form and to keep it from flapping down over the eyes and face. All the girls in our set rode horseback. They wore a riding habit. The back part of it came down to cover the saddle, and the skirt part was a guarantee that her male escort would never get a glimpse of the hosiery covering her lower extremities. A riding party was a gay party, and sometimes we secured Major Woodward's pack of hounds and went fox hunting with the men.

We had many dances in the Thespian Hall on Washington Street. Jazz music had not come into favor when I was young. The big apple, the Charleston, the fox-trot, and the two-step were unheard of in my generation of fun and frolic. The polka, the gallop, and the waltz are what we learned and enjoyed at our dances.

"The boys in our set, as I remember them, were T. W. Lauderdale, J. F. McMaster, Creighton McMaster, Willie Calhoun, Preston Rion, and my husband, David V. Walker.

"On the 2d day of May, the Gordon Light Infantry always gave a prize drill and picnic. There were speakings and the presentation of prizes. That night the annual military ball was given. This was the social event of the {*Begin page no. 4*}year. Many visitors from Columbia and the surrounding towns attended.

"Mrs. Ladd's school for girls gave many concerts. I remember I sang 'Buttercup in Pinafore' at one of the concerts.

"Visiting? There was much more social visiting in my girlhood days than at the present time. People from the town visited such homes in the country as Major Woodward's and Mr. E. P. Mobley's and General E. G. Palmer's at Ridgeway.

"One of the visits the Rion girls always looked forward to with keen pleasure was a visit to the home of Dr. Baruch, in Camden. On these visits to Camden, we saw the splendid exciting horse races. We also attended a ball, where we made many acquaintances and friendships. Some of these friendships have endured throughout the years.

"Yes, freckles were the terror of many a girl's social days. A girl whose skin was susceptible to these little turkey egg dots, washed her face every night in buttermilk and wore a gingham bonnet out in the yard. Her hands were ever encased in gloves, however hot the day. Yes, all women and girls carried a smelling salts bottle with them. I think the affection went out of style about thirty years ago.

"Women were sometimes worshipped for the abundance and length of their hair. It was a custom to save every strand as it clung to the tooth of the comb, and, when the strands became sufficient in numbers a switch was made of them and replaced in the coils of the living hair.

"Courtesy and gallantry of men toward girls and women? Now let's see if there is a real lack of it nowadays. If so, let's try to discover the contributing causes. what you complain about may be a superficial appearance rather than a deep rooted intentional disregard of the difference of sex.

{*Begin page no. 5*}Aristocratic society before and after the war was composed of planters, lawyers, physicians, and the clergy; bankers were next admitted. Shop keepers or merchants came later. This society got its ideas from Scott's novels. Women were ever on a pedestal and would have remained there forever had not [Don Quixote?] been written; woman suffrage came about; the public school system established; and coeducational facilities provided. Again the industrialization of the State, cotton mills, women bookkeepers and stenographers make the old style of gallantry absurd and out of date. But, wherever and whenever the girl is worth it, there still abides, deep down in the heart of every gentleman, the same chivalry of the male for the female as it existed in the days of Sir Walter Scott and his Ivanhoe."

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{Begin id number}W11059{End id number}{Begin page}{Begin handwritten}Beliefs and Customs - Folkways{End handwritten}

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Date received {Begin handwritten}10/10/40{End handwritten}

Consignment no. {Begin handwritten}1{End handwritten}

Shipped from {Begin handwritten}Wash. Office{End handwritten}

Label

Amount {Begin handwritten}6p.{End handwritten}

WPA L. C. PROJECT {Begin handwritten}Writers'{End handwritten} UNIT

Form[md]3 {Begin handwritten}Folklore{End handwritten} Collection (or Type)

Title {Begin handwritten}Chester County Judge J. H. Yarborough (white){End handwritten}

Place of origin {Begin handwritten}Winnsboro, S. C.{End handwritten} Date {Begin handwritten}6/28/38{End handwritten}

Project worker {Begin handwritten}W. W. Dixon{End handwritten}

Project editor

Remarks

{End front matter}
{Begin body of document}
{Begin page}Project #1655

W. W. Dixon

Winnsboro, S. C. {Begin handwritten}6/25/38 trans{End handwritten} {Begin deleted text}390572{End deleted text} CHESTER COUNTY JUDGE J. H. YARBOROUGH

(white) 82 YEARS OLD

James Henry Yarborough, Probate Judge of Chester County, South Carolina, is serving out his second term of four years. He is a candidate for re-election in the democratic primary this summer to begin his third term, Jan. 1, 1939. His office is in the courthouse at Chester, S. C.

"Well, old fellow, if you are going to write something about me, I want you to start off by saying that in my long life I have never been worth, in dollars and cents, above my liabilities, as much as one hundred dollars.

"I am descended from the earliest settlers around the Jenkinsville and Monticello sections of Fairfield County. My father was William Burns Yarborough, a lover of nature, stars, flowers, birds, and trees. He was full of sentiment and high ideals, but he was not very practical in looking after and increasing his substance of material things. My mother, before marriage, was Elizabeth James, but I hasten to assure you that she was not related to Jesse James, the bandit, nor his family.

"I was a tousled-head boy when the Yankees reached Jenkinsville and our old home, after crossing at Freshley's Ferry on Broad River. The invading army confiscated everything, such as corn, wheat, oats, peas, fodder, hay, and all smokehouse supplies. My recollection is that they came in February, 1865. I was then a freckled-face boy nine years old, and I fought like fury to retain about a pack of corn-on-the-cob that the Yankee's horses had left in a trough unconsumed.

{Begin page no. 2} I remember, too, how glad I was to see the bayonet fixed on the muzzle. He began teasing me about the corn. The little dog ran between my legs and growled and barked at the soldiers whereupon with an oath the soldier unfeelingly ran the bayonet through the neck of the faithful little dog and killed him.

"When that cruel war was over, it would have been wiser had the whites and ex-slaves been left to their own resources and inventions, to work out their future welfare. There was no lack of affection or loyalty on the part of the Negro, nor was there a lack of love and an unshaken appreciation of self-interest upon the part of the whites. Things might have been different if suffrage had been granted gradually. But with immediate equal suffrage, or the right to vote, came the carpetbagger with his preachments of social equality and the tantalizing bag of tricks to get for every Negro 40 acres of land and a mule. The Negroes were credulous and believed all the absurdities the knaves told them. The result was an inevitable curse for the Negro and lots of trouble for the white people. It ended only when Hampton was elected in 1876. Hampton is still my hero and a man of greatest worth in the annals of South Carolina.

"I went to school at the Old Broad River Academy. At that time I was only a boy in my teens, but I wore the red shirt in the parades of the Hampton movement.

"At this period of my life, my Jenkinsville companions and I had never been around much. A visit to the county seat, Winnsboro, was a great event in our lives, and we regarded a visit to Columbia and the State Fair then just about like you or I would look upon a visit to London or Berlin now. I remember, with intense amusement, when Alley McMeekin, Glenn W. Ragsdale, *{Begin page no. 3}* Henry Parr, Charley Chappell, and myself, all country bumpkins, went to the State Fair. While on the grounds, we smoked Virginia Cheroots continuously. We attracted attention, I tell you! As we passed a coterie of well dressed distinguished gentlemen, of the character of Col. Richard Singleton, we were asked where we lived. Alley McMeekin was the most talkative one of our crowd. He removed the cheroot from his mouth, lifted his hat, and with a low bow to the sedate gentleman, replied, 'Sir, I live about 300 yards from Uncle Joel McMeekin's spring.' We teased Alley about this piece of grandiloquence forty years afterward. Poor fellow, he died last summer.

"The next place I went to school was Furman University, Greenville, S. C. Leaving there, I taught school at Spring Hill, Lexington County; next, at St. Johns, in Newberry County. School teaching is a more or less quiet existence, and, to better my physical being, I went to Leona, Texas. But cow punching was too strenuous, so I returned to Jenkinsville and accepted a clerkship with Jno. S. Swygert & Co., at Dawkins, S. C. At night, while holding this position, I borrowed law books from my friends, E. B. & G. W. Ragsdale of the Winnsboro bar, read law, and was admitted by the State Supreme Court to practice the profession the year of the earthquake, 1886.

"I soon lost interest in law and tired of trying to save the hides of criminals and of acquiring dubious settlements in civil cases for more or lose selfish litigants. I felt a call to the ministry and went to the Theological Seminary at Louisville, Ky. Having attained my degree in theology there, I received a call at once to the Little River Baptist Church in Fairfield County.

One of the most beautiful spots in my memory is the ten spot with a golden background that Mr. William D. Stanton gave me after I preached my *{Begin page no. 4}* first sermon. I labored in the ministry forty-five years and found it rich in spiritual compensations.

"I married Lily Inez Harden. Our children are Mrs. J. A. Riley, whose husband is head of the Sand Hill Experiment Station; Mrs. E. H. Pressley, whose husband is associate professor of astronomy in the University of Arizona; Dr. James H. Yarborough, Jr., veterinarian, in Miami, Florida; Mrs. D. J. Leslie, Rock Hill, S. C.; W. G. Yarborough, Assistant County Agent at Edgefield, S. C.; and Mrs. S. H. Harden, Jr.

"Our neighbors, before and immediately after the War Between the States, were the Stantons, the Rabbs, the Alstons, the Piersons, the Glenss, and the Ragsdales. There was a great deal more visiting among country folks then than there is nowadays. And visiting then meant an all day of it. A man would have his carriage and take his whole family to visit a neighbor. You asked me about the children? Oh, you see there was no public school. Usually rich folks had tutors in their homes. The tutor was left in custody of the home, but the children were usually taken on the visit. On arrival, the ladies and children were conducted to the parlor and the men into the dining or sitting room. Wine and cake were served in the parlor, and a decanter of brandies was passed around in the dining room.

"After such reception, the men mounted horseback and rode over the plantation on an inspection of the crops and methods of cultivation. The guest was supposed to observe and make suggestions of improvement and tell of the methods he had tried and found successful on different kinds of soils. While the host and his male guest were thus occupied, chickens were being slain - never less than six - in the kitchen. Suspended in the wide fireplace in the kitchen was a large iron pot in which was boiled a sizable, well-cured, country ham. This *{Begin page no. 5}* was the prerequisite of a sumptuous plantation dinner.

"On the dinner tables one could always expect a ham, two plates of fried chicken, a large chicken pie, vegetables of the season, a pan of candied sweet potatoes, rice, and several different kinds of pies and custards. The dessert most likely served was boiled custard and pound cake. Layer cake, I don't remember. I think it came into vogue after the war.

Yes, sir, great changes have taken place in family life since my youthful days. Parents were more revered then, and they also exercised more authority. Women occupied a more elevated sphere. A boy had to get permission from the parent before he could pay his addresses to a girl. This would give the father a chance to inquire about the fitness of the young man who was aspiring to be his son-in-law.

"Our slave quarters were substantial log houses. They had two rooms, with a chimney in the middle, and two windows that were closed against rain or wind by wooden shutters on hinges. Slaves were humanely treated and well fed and clothed. They received the same

By the way, Dr. Glenn was a noble man. He was married three times. In those days married women had very little rights in regard to property. When a woman of property married, the property became the husbands. Dr. Glenn married Miss Sarah F. Mobley, a daughter of a rich planter, John Mobley. When she died, Dr. Glenn returned the property to her father, even to the jewelry and trinkets.

Ches were the centers of social influence and the standard of moral excellence and good citizenship in my youth. Roads? In rainy weather they were impassable. In dry weather every traveler had a linen duster to slip (*Begin page no. 6*) on over his or her clothes to keep off the dust of the highways.

The great men of my youth were Dr. J. C. Furman, Dr. James H. Carlisle, Dr. Moffatt Grier, and Prof. Means Davis, all leaders in education; General John Bratton as a soldier and private citizen; and General Wade Hampton as the State's political redeemer.

I can't tell you about how ladies dressed in those days. It was a question then and a mystery now, how they got about in any comfort or pleasure. A young man in those days, to be in the swim, must have a horse and buggy, a long-tailed broadcloth coat, a white or buff vest, a pair of French calfskin boots, costing not less than \$16.00, and a pair of kid gloves. To be real swell, all this was topped by a tall, shiny, beaver hat.

I conclude by saying it was a shame in those days for a man to part his hair in the middle or shovel food in his mouth on the end of his knife blade."

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