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Reggie C Leighton

Interviewee

Rt. 3

Address

Monticello, Miss. 39654

Priscilla P. Ophansen

Director

Lincoln-Lawrence-Franklin
Regional Library

Aug. 22, 1978

Date of Agreement

Life in Lawrence County, MS; The Quarters; Superstitions; Brush

arbor; Ghost stories; Songs; Weather signs; Medicine.

Subject of Tape(s)

Lincoln-Lawrence-Franklin Regional Library
Oral History
Data Sheet

FULL NAME Peggie Smith Holloway Daughtry
ADDRESS Rt. 3, Monticello, MS PHONE _____
BIRTHPLACE Lawrence County, MS DATE OF BIRTH 1898
EDUCATION St. Jean's School, Lawrence County, MS

OCCUPATION Housewife; farmer

TRAVELS Kentucky, Ohio, Tennessee, Illinois

SPOUSE'S FULL NAME 1st - Lloyd Smith
BIRTHPLACE Lawrence County, MS DATE OF BIRTH Unknown
OCCUPATION Farmer

NUMBER OF CHILDREN One (1)

NAMES OF CHILDREN

S. L. Smith

FATHER'S FULL NAME Lucius Cato
BIRTHPLACE Lawrence County, MS DATE OF BIRTH Unknown
OCCUPATION Farmer

MOTHER'S FULL NAME Laura Cato
BIRTHPLACE Lawrence County, MS DATE OF BIRTH Unknown
OCCUPATION Housewife; Cook; Housekeeper

MAJOR NATIONAL AND/OR LOCAL EVENTS OF IMPORTANCE DISCUSSED

INTERVIEWEE'S AREA OF INTEREST AND/OR CONTRIBUTION TO THE COMMUNITY
Ghost stories; Food; Superstitions; Weather signs; Brush arbor; Medicine;
Song; The Settlement or Quarters;

Evelyn Bennam
INTERVIEWER

April 13, 1977
DATE

Rt. 3, Monticello, MS
PLACE OF INTERVIEW

Peggie Smith Holloway Daughtry
INTERVIEWEE'S NAME

An Interview with
Peggie Smith Holloway Daughtry
April 13, 1977

Interviewed by
Evelyn Benham

Mississippi
Department of Archives and History
and the
Lincoln-Lawrence-Franklin Regional Library
Oral History Project
Monticello and Vicinity

BENHAM: This is an interview with Peggie Smith Holloway Daughtry, Route 3, Monticello, Mississippi, April 13, 1977. Interviewed by Evelyn Benham.

Mrs. Daughtry, what is your full name?

DAUGHTRY: All of it?

BENHAM: Yes,

DAUGHTRY: Peggie Smith Holloway Daughtry,

BENHAM: What is your address?

DAUGHTRY: Monticello, Route 3.

BENHAM: When were you born?

DAUGHTRY: 1996.

BENHAM: 1996? No, 1898, I think it is. You said you were seventy-nine (79). How old are you?

DAUGHTRY: Seventy-nine (79).

BENHAM: You're seventy-nine (79), yes. Okay, so it's 1898, I think. You say it.

DAUGHTRY: 1898.

BENHAM: Did a midwife help your mother when you were born?

DAUGHTRY: Yes, ma'am.

BENHAM: Now, where were you born?

DAUGHTRY: On the Benson Smith place.

BENHAM: Where is that?

DAUGHTRY: Right up the road there.

BENHAM: In this county?

DAUGHTRY: Yes, ma'am. Lawrence County.

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BENHAM: What is your father's full name?

DAUGHTRY: Lucius Cato.

BENHAM: And when was he born? Can you remember?

DAUGHTRY: No, ma'am. I can't remember.

BENHAM: All right. Where was he born?

DAUGHTRY: He was born in Lawrence County.

BENHAM: What kind of work did your father do?

DAUGHTRY: Farmed.

BENHAM: What was your mother's maiden name?

DAUGHTRY: Laura Cato.

BENHAM: How do you spell the first name?

DAUGHTRY: L-A-U-R-A.

BENHAM: When was she born?

DAUGHTRY: I just don't know.

BENHAM: Where was she born?

DAUGHTRY: Lawrence County.

BENHAM: Did your mother work outside of the home?

DAUGHTRY: Yes, ma'am. She worked for Mr. Billy Fox. Cooked and washed.

BENHAM: What church were you brought up in?

DAUGHTRY: St. Jean's. Member of St. Jeans Baptist Church.

BENHAM: Can you describe a church service? What did you all do at the church on Sunday morning?

DAUGHTRY: They would first have Sunday School. And then they would have prayer service and then preaching.

BENHAM: How long did it last?

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DAUGHTRY: However long it took, Well, I reckon about three (3), between three (3) and four (4) hours.

BENHAM: What year did you start school?

DAUGHTRY: I started when I was five (5). I don't know exactly what year; I just went with the teacher, you know, for company till I was six (6).

BENHAM: What was the name of the school that you went to?

DAUGHTRY: St. Jean.

BENHAM: Where was the school located?

DAUGHTRY: South of Oma.

BENHAM: I've asked you where it was located and you've already told me. What year did you start school?

DAUGHTRY: When I was five (5).

BENHAM: How many children were in the school?

DAUGHTRY: Well, about thirty (30) of us.

BENHAM: How did you get to school?

DAUGHTRY: Walked.

BENHAM: How far were you from school?

DAUGHTRY: I was about a mile-and-a-half.

BENHAM: Can you describe the school?

DAUGHTRY: Well, it was an open school, you know. We had a wood heater in it. But we'd get some warm at the time, get back and let the other one get there.

BENHAM: Was it a wooden building?

DAUGHTRY: Yes, ma'am.

BENHAM: Did you have lots of little rooms?

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DAUGHTRY: No, ma'am, just a solid building.

BENHAM: Just one big room?

DAUGHTRY: One big building.

BENHAM: What kind of chairs did the children sit on?

DAUGHTRY: We had benches.

BENHAM: And did you ever write on slates?

DAUGHTRY: Yes, ma'am. Blackboards, too.

BENHAM: All right. How long did you go to school?

DAUGHTRY: I went until I was fourteen (14), right at fourteen (14).

BENHAM: Why did you stop going to school?

DAUGHTRY: To work.

BENHAM: All right. Well, that's a good enough reason. What did you do after that, after you worked, I mean. Well, after you stopped school, you said you worked.

DAUGHTRY: I would hoe, plow, pick cotton.

BENHAM: Well, did you do this for someone else or for your family?

DAUGHTRY: No, ma'am, Papa, for my father.

BENHAM: As a very young person, how did you feel toward white people?

DAUGHTRY: Well, I always played with them in my coming up.

BENHAM: All right. Were white people kind to black people when you were young?

DAUGHTRY: They were to me. Couldn't tell about the others.

BENHAM: Well, I've always felt that they were too. What sort of social life did you have when you were young?

DAUGHTRY: Well, I went to church and school and Sunday School. They

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would have little parties, you know, for the young people, and we'd jump vines and play ball and did all such like that and played.

BENHAM: And what kind of games did you play when you were a child? Do you know the names of some kinds of games that you played when you were a little girl?

DAUGHTRY: Nothing, only with dolls. No, ma'am, we didn't have no kind of games. Nothing but balls, you know, like that.

BENHAM: Well, you played hide-and-peek.

DAUGHTRY: That's right. Yes, we sure did.

BENHAM: Yes, you played catch, didn't you?

DAUGHTRY: Yes, ma'am.

BENHAM: Well, do you know any other names? Did you jump rope?

DAUGHTRY: Jump rope, climb trees - we did all that.

BENHAM: Yes, just about almost did everything the boys did, didn't they?

DAUGHTRY: That's right. Sure did.

BENHAM: How much were you paid for a day's work when you started working for the public?

DAUGHTRY: Forty (40) cents.

BENHAM: A day?

DAUGHTRY: A day. Sunup to sundown.

BENHAM: What sort of work did you do?

DAUGHTRY: Hoe, plow.

BENHAM: And you did this when you worked out for some other people? You did this?

DAUGHTRY: Yes, ma'am.

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BENHAM: And how old did you say you were when you did all this?

DAUGHTRY: When I first started to work, I was seven (7) years old. First started to plowing, I was seven (7). The plow'd throw me down; I'd get up. I wanted to learn how and after I learned how, they'd get ready to go to fishing and then I'd cry because I couldn't go. Had to plow.

BENHAM: So you kind of learned a lesson right then and there, didn't you?

DAUGHTRY: Yes, ma'am. Yes, ma'am.

BENHAM: How did young people court?

DAUGHTRY: How did they court?

BENHAM: Yes. How did they court?

DAUGHTRY: The boys would come to see the girls and sit in the house with the parents, and when they were going to church they'd be with us. We'd be just ahead of our parents and they'd have a light. Flung a light over.

BENHAM: I know, that's how it was a long time ago. And you know, they do that in the country where I was born in Nicaragua. You know, they would have a chaperon, they were never alone hardly until they got married and then they were alone.

DAUGHTRY: Yes, that's the way they did you.

BENHAM: What were weddings like?

DAUGHTRY: Oh, I thought it was beautiful. They would have on their veils, and they'd have a big eating afterwards. And I just thought it was real nice, but I'd always feel sorry. Look like I'd want to cry...

BENHAM: Lots of ladies cry, you know, and mothers cry too. You said that you were married more than once. How old were you when you first got

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married?

DAUGHTRY: I was seventeen (17) when I first married, going on seventeen (17).

BENHAM: What was your husband's first name, full name? What was your first husband's full name?

DAUGHTRY: First husband's name was Lloyd Smith.

BENHAM: When was he born?

DAUGHTRY: I just couldn't tell you.

BENHAM: Where was he born?

DAUGHTRY: He was born in Lawrence County.

BENHAM: What kind of work did he do?

DAUGHTRY: Farmed.

BENHAM: Where did you live when you got married?

DAUGHTRY: I married in Franklin, Louisiana, 1913 is when we married.

BENHAM: And how many children did you have?

DAUGHTRY: Just one (1).

BENHAM: And what are their names? What is his name?

DAUGHTRY: His name's S. L.

BENHAM: How do you spell that?

DAUGHTRY: You just put S. L.; that's the way we had him spell his name.

BENHAM: Oh, S. L. What did the "S" stand for?

DAUGHTRY: That was his name, just named S. L. That was all the name.

Means nothing.

BENHAM: Just S. L.

DAUGHTRY: Just his name, S. L.

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BENHAM: What sort of jobs did your friends and neighbors have?

DAUGHTRY: Along then? Some worked on the railroad and some at the mills and some in the woods getting ties, logs. Some worked at gins. Just different things.

BENHAM: All right. What are some special types of food that black people enjoy?

DAUGHTRY: Greens, potatoes, syrup, corn, and okra, all like that. Water-melons and pumpkins.

BENHAM: What kind of meat do you all eat?

DAUGHTRY: Hog meat and beef.

BENHAM: Well, did you ever cook a possum?

DAUGHTRY: Yes, ma'am. Possum, coons, too. Rabbits, squirrels, birds.

BENHAM: That's what I mean. Did you ever do any sharecropping?

DAUGHTRY: No, ma'am.

BENHAM: Do you think that sharecropping was a good thing for people?

DAUGHTRY: Well, it was for them that didn't have their own mules or plow.

BENHAM: Why did people sharecrop?

DAUGHTRY: Because they didn't have anything of their own. No mules, no plow tools; that's why they worked on halves.

BENHAM: Did they have a house?

DAUGHTRY: The white man's house. They didn't have any. I didn't have any, but we rented.

BENHAM: Why did you decide to move to the settlement?

DAUGHTRY: From Louisiana, you mean?

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BENHAM: Yes. From wherever you were. You called this place a settlement out here.

DAUGHTRY: Oh, you mean from here?

BENHAM: Right. Why did you decide to move here?

DAUGHTRY: Why did I decide to move here? Mr. Hennington was selling here.

BENHAM: Who?

DAUGHTRY: Mr. Levy (?) Hennington. He was selling this land.

BENHAM: Oh, Hennington.

DAUGHTRY: And my father and mother were staying up there on Mr. Walt Nix's place, and I came down here and bought this so they'd have somewhere to stay. That's why I left Mr. ~~Hennington~~ and came down here to take it. Fixing somewhere for them. And so they died and I just lived here.

BENHAM: They died here in this house?

DAUGHTRY: One of them. Mamma, she was up on Forty with Ora when she died. She stayed here with me. She got sick and Mrs. Vernon (?) got her on the welfare. They were giving her seven (7) dollars a month, so Ora wanted her and she went up there and stayed, you know, but she came back and forth and stayed with me till she got down because she didn't want to leave here. She said this was her home.

BENHAM: Yes, that's how it is. When you put your roots down, it's very hard to leave, isn't it?

DAUGHTRY: Yes. She didn't want to leave. Ora wanted her.

BENHAM: What year did you and your famioy move to the settlement?

DAUGHTRY: 1939 when we moved in.

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BENHAM: What is the name of this settlement?

DAUGHTRY: What they call it here? They used to call it the Quarter.

BENHAM: All right, Why is it called the settlement?

DAUGHTRY: There were so many houses then, people. All up and down this road it was houses, people. Back over yonder in my pasture there were three (3) houses over there and one (1) right in the corner up there. There were lots of houses, lots of people.

BENHAM: How many would you say? How many people would you say, Black people, lived here in the settlement?

DAUGHTRY: In this one?

BENHAM: Yes,

DAUGHTRY: I don't know, I can't count all of them.

BENHAM: Talk a little louder.

DAUGHTRY: There was Uncle Ike Walker...

BENHAM: Well, I mean just sort of judge about?

DAUGHTRY: Oh, how many people?

BENHAM: Yes, about how many people? About how many people do you think were here?

DAUGHTRY: Well, there were about a hundred (100) in this settlement, children and all.

BENHAM: Well, that's good, How did the people entertain themselves in the settlement?

DAUGHTRY: Well, they would visit one another and share with one another. If one killed a hog, he went all over the settlement, Maybe they'd have enough left at home for one meal, Send Sister so and so some, Brother so and so some

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till it was gone.

BENHAM: Well, did those people come and help them to clean, to kill the hog?

DAUGHTRY: Yes, ma'am. And them that didn't come they got their meat. That's the way they lived, Love and be friendly. Just killed something, it just went to every house.

BENHAM: Well, do they do that now?

DAUGHTRY: No, ma'am. They don't. If you don't see the smoke, you don't know.

BENHAM: But they still kill hogs and things like that?

DAUGHTRY: Yes, ma'am.

BENHAM: But it's only for themselves.

DAUGHTRY: For theirselves. They put it in the deep freeze. They don't share it with you now.

BENHAM: Well, in a way you can sort of look around and see that there's just a very few people are left here now. And it could have been because they didn't sort of share, maybe. I don't know. I just thought maybe it could be. Did the people in the settlement have their own homes?

DAUGHTRY: Well, there were two (2) to my knowing, Uncle Frank Leyoun. Well, there's three (3). Uncle Frank Leyoun and....

BENHAM: How do you spell that "Leyoun?"

DAUGHTRY: F-R-A-...

BENHAM: The last name, I mean.

DAUGHTRY: Leyoun. L-E-Y-O-U-N.

BENHAM: All right. Just about two (2) places?

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DAUGHTRY: And Marcus Benson, he had a home, And Uncle Will's house and _____ . There's four (4) of them, The rest of them were like I was - didn't have nothing,

BENHAM: What are weather signs? What are weather signs?

DAUGHTRY: A weather sign?

BENHAM: Yes.

DAUGHTRY: You mean for planting?

BENHAM: Or for whatever. Whatever, what are some of the weather signs?

DAUGHTRY: The weather, weather signs?

BENHAM: Yes.

DAUGHTRY: Well, some of us go by different things, Some say in the weather if you see a star shoot, to call which way it goes is a sign of death.

BENHAM: Well, which way would it go?

DAUGHTRY: It's according to the way one is sick, If you're sick that way, and it goes that way, they say that's a sign of death.

BENHAM: Oh, you mean like a star falling in the sky?

DAUGHTRY: Yes, yes, I know you have seen them shoot.

BENHAM: Falling or doing whichever way.

DAUGHTRY: Well, they claim that's a sign of death, So I don't know.

BENHAM: All right, Is there any more? Can you think of any more of them?

DAUGHTRY: And for bad weather, whenever you see the geese are going south, that's a true sign.

BENHAM: What does that mean?

DAUGHTRY: Going to be cold.

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BENHAM: Geese going south.

DAUGHTRY: You see them coming over going south, it's going to be cold.

BENHAM: Well, do we have any geese around here? Or is it ducks?

DAUGHTRY: I don't think. I don't see nobody with any geese now. I used to raise them. Them wild geese, they come from up the country and go south. I know you've seen them.

BENHAM: Yes.

DAUGHTRY: Some say they go to New Orleans, some say they go to Florida. I don't know where they go, but they go through here.

BENHAM: All right, can you think of some more? Can you think of any more? Are you getting tired?

DAUGHTRY: No, ma'am. I ain't tired. I'm trying to study.

BENHAM: All right, go ahead. You can study some more about it.

DAUGHTRY: About the weather.

BENHAM: Well, what about a ring around the moon - did it mean anything?

DAUGHTRY: That's a circle. They say that's a sign of death, too.

BENHAM: Really? A circle around the moon?

DAUGHTRY: Yes, ma'am.

BENHAM: I thought that meant rain.

DAUGHTRY: No, ma'am. The sun draws water. When you see the sun drawing water, that's a sign of rain. You see all the spangles in the sun? Be drawing water.

BENHAM: I see. You mean the sun...

DAUGHTRY: The sun...

BENHAM: Is drawing the water?

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DAUGHTRY: Drawing water, but it's coming back. It's going to rain when you see the sun drawing water, It's going to rain.

BENHAM: I see. And what does the circle around the moon, does it mean a death in somebody's family?

DAUGHTRY: That's what they tell me. It means the sign of death. It may not be round where you live, sign of death.

BENHAM: All right. Well, what about when your bones ache? Does that mean bad weather?

DAUGHTRY: Bad weather - that's a sign. When your limbs go to aching, that's a sign of rain.

BENHAM: Well, you might think of some more when, you know, when I keep asking you some things. Can you tell us some superstitions that the people in the settlement believed in?

DAUGHTRY: What they believed in?

BENHAM: Like superstitions. Like a black cat crossing their path, what it meant?

DAUGHTRY: No, ma'am. I can't tell.

BENHAM: You all didn't have any around here, any kind of superstitions?

DAUGHTRY: Yes, we had some cats, but I never heard of. I heard them say this old tale though. They said that you get a black cat and kill it - not kill it - put him in the pot alive and boil him and get that bone.

BENHAM: My land. Well, go ahead. That's all right.

DAUGHTRY: You get all them bones and the water and go up the stream. That's the one you could take.

BENHAM: What do you mean, go up the stream?

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DAUGHTRY: The bones water does the work; they go up the stream. The rest of them go down. Now, you take them that go up it, you know, and like you've got a store.

BENHAM: Like you have a what?

DAUGHTRY: Like you've got a store.

BENHAM: A store?

DAUGHTRY: I can take that bone and go in there and you can't see me.

BENHAM: Oh, you'd be invisible.

DAUGHTRY: Mother said a man tried that and went in the man's store. They say, "What are you doing there?" He said, "You don't see me." And that man beat the fire out of him. That bone wasn't any good. That's an old joke and I imagine they tried it, because they say he put a cat in there alive, put the lid on it, and got that bone. If you got the black cat bone, you could do anything; couldn't see you. But he went in that store getting that stuff and that man saw him and he told the man.

BENHAM: My lands. I can imagine what happened there.

DAUGHTRY: Oh, Lord. That's all I ever knew about an old cat. Lord a mercy.

BENHAM: Well, let's see. What kind of crops did you plant? What kind of crops did you plant?

DAUGHTRY: Corn, cabbage, potatoes, peas, sugar cane, all that.

BENHAM: How did you keep your crops after you picked them?

DAUGHTRY: How did I keep it?

BENHAM: How did you preserve your crops, you know, after you picked them?

DAUGHTRY: Oh, well, we made preserves out of some and the peas, we canned

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them.

BENHAM: Long time ago you canned them?

DAUGHTRY: Yes, ma'am.

BENHAM: Did you ever dry any of them?

DAUGHTRY: Yes, ma'am, we dried them, wipe them out. They put a few in jars, you know. Way on down in my coming on.

BENHAM: Yes, that's what I mean. You see, we're trying to find out what you did a long, long time ago.

DAUGHTRY: Yes, ma'am. We canned a few. Preserved watermelon rind, that's good. We preserved that. I think we did pretty good.

BENHAM: Yes, you did. You're still here to talk about it, aren't you?

DAUGHTRY: Yes, sir. Many a one can't, can't speak.

BENHAM: That's right.

DAUGHTRY: They're here and can't speak, but I thank the Lord that I'm able to speak and see.

BENHAM: That's right. That's a lot to be thankful for, isn't it?

DAUGHTRY: Yes and I thank Him.

BENHAM: Did your feelings change towards the white people during the civil rights movement?

DAUGHTRY: No, ma'am. I loved everybody because I was a Christian; couldn't help myself. You've got to love.

BENHAM: That's right.

DAUGHTRY: Didn't change a bit.

BENHAM: That's good. Were any of your ancestors slaves?

DAUGHTRY: My grandmother was.

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BENHAM: What was her name?

DAUGHTRY: Peggy.

BENHAM: Peggy what?

DAUGHTRY: Peggy Taylor. She was a Taylor.

BENHAM: And where was she living?

DAUGHTRY: Oh, Honey, she stayed with Mamma and them when I was little. A white lady, you know, they had her until slavery broke, you know. Then she married.

BENHAM: Well, do you know the names of the families that your ancestors served? You said this is your great-grandmother?

DAUGHTRY: My grandmother.

BENHAM: Your grandmother.

DAUGHTRY: My mama's mamma.

BENHAM: All right then. Do you know of any of the people that she served as a slave? Do you remember any of them?

DAUGHTRY: No, ma'am. She used to tell us the names, but it's been so long. She lived to get a hundred and five (105).

BENHAM: My goodness.

DAUGHTRY: She died right up there where old Elzy's wife lives. In 19-- , Grandma died about 1912, I believe. Christmas Eve, sure did. Died right up there.

BENHAM: Was this in Lawrence County?

DAUGHTRY: Yes, ma'am.

BENHAM: Did you ever talk with any of the slaves or the ex-slaves?

DAUGHTRY: You mean them that had her as their slave?

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BENHAM: No, any... Did you talk to any slaves?

DAUGHTRY: Oh, yes, ma'am, Aunt Sue and Uncle Malcolm, there's a gang of them would tell about. Then I had an aunt that was in the slavery days. Sell them, you know, like you sell horses, Sell them, you know.

BENHAM: Yes, Well, where did they sell them? Where did they sell these slaves?

DAUGHTRY: Some of them were in Virginia, just different places. I used to go to Uncle Ralph's and Aunt Sue's and sit down and let them tell me about it. Then Grandma would tell me, I just always loved old people. I'd go sit under them and hear them talk about slavery times.

BENHAM: Yes, I know. I've always liked old people, too. They have so much to tell about.

DAUGHTRY: That's right, They wouldn't allow them to pray, They had to slip off. Better not let them see you praying.

BENHAM: You better not let them see you do what?

DAUGHTRY: Praying. You couldn't pray and let them see you, They'd beat you.

BENHAM: Oh, if you prayed?

DAUGHTRY: Prayed.

BENHAM: Oh, you mean the white people would beat the slaves,

DAUGHTRY: Beat the colored...

BENHAM: If they prayed.

DAUGHTRY: That's what they said. They'd whip them, They caught Grandpa down in the field praying and tore him up.

BENHAM: And what did they do?

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DAUGHTRY: They whipped him. And they started under a brush arbor after slavery. That was their church, under the brush arbor.

BENHAM: How do you spell that?

DAUGHTRY: Old St. Jean's down here was a brush arbor.

BENHAM: What's that?

DAUGHTRY: Was a brush arbor.

BENHAM: What's that?

DAUGHTRY: Brushes. Cut brushes, made...

BENHAM: Oh, they cut...

DAUGHTRY: Poles.

BENHAM: Oh, they made a church.

DAUGHTRY: Made a church out of brushes.

BENHAM: Out of brushes and trees. Oh, I see.

DAUGHTRY: Until they got where they could get their lumber, that's what they did.

BENHAM: I see. Well, how old is St. Jean's Church, do you know?

DAUGHTRY: Oh, Lord, way before I was born.

BENHAM: You think it's about a hundred (100) years old?

DAUGHTRY: I know it is.

BENHAM: Oh, well, that's amazing. That ought to be... I am going to check into that. They might want to come and see that during the Pilgrimage or something. Would you all object to them coming?

DAUGHTRY: No, ma'am. Nineteen and a hundred - that was a church then. I was four (4) years old. That was a church then way before I was born. And the church I remember, it got burned down. They're teaching school there. I

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went to school there and...

BENHAM: You mean the church, St. Jean's was a school?

DAUGHTRY: Yes, ma'am.

BENHAM: And then it became a church?

DAUGHTRY: It was a school and a church. They had nowhere for them to go to school.

BENHAM: Did you go to school there?

DAUGHTRY: Yes. Not where it's sitting. It was over back up where the old cemetery is.

BENHAM: Well, is the cemetery still there?

DAUGHTRY: Right there.

BENHAM: Is the old church still there?

DAUGHTRY: No, ma'am. It got burned up and then they built out here on the road.

BENHAM: I see.

DAUGHTRY: Used to go back there to school. To church too.

BENHAM: Well, what kind of stories did these slaves tell you? Can you think of some of them besides that they...

DAUGHTRY: Whipping them?

BENHAM: Whipping them. What other stories? Did they tell about coming from Africa? Did they ever tell about that?

DAUGHTRY: Some of them came from Africa, some of them came out of Virginia, and just different places, you know. It's been so long, I haven't ever had to memorize it. I just can't think of all of it, you know.

BENHAM: Well, can you think of one story that stood out in your memory

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that they told about?

DAUGHTRY: Nothing, only the time the war, they said the men would come in the house and get the meat,

BENHAM: What war was this? After the Civil War?

DAUGHTRY: The Civil War. And would get the meat and clothes out of the house and ride up and down the road on it. Throw them out. Said the women would be crying. They'd just tromp it. That's when they buried money then, you see.

BENHAM: Well, was that in Lawrence County?

DAUGHTRY: I don't know where it was.

BENHAM: I see.

DAUGHTRY: I wasn't here.

BENHAM: All right. Oh.

DAUGHTRY: I just heard them talking.

BENHAM: Oh, you just heard. But you did know what war that was?

DAUGHTRY: It was the first war, the Civil War.

BENHAM: It must have been the Civil War.

DAUGHTRY: That's what they said. They buried the money and the men ran off and hid and the women just screaming. Just came in there and got their sheets and things off their beds and meat and threw it out there in the road and get on their horses and ride all up and down the road.

BENHAM: And tramping it into the ground.

DAUGHTRY: Tromping it into the dirt.

BENHAM: Oh, my goodness.

DAUGHTRY: Yes, they said the women used to just cry.

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BENHAM: Yes.

DAUGHTRY: Well, when they said freedom, she said some of them tried to fool them, but they let them know they were free. They cried at them so she said, "Thank God, I'm free at last."

BENHAM: You mean that's when they freed the slaves?

DAUGHTRY: Yes, ma'am.

BENHAM: Do you remember when that was?

DAUGHTRY: No, ma'am. I wasn't here.

BENHAM: All right, but you might have heard.

DAUGHTRY: I heard her tell it, but I don't know what year it was. Way back yonder.

BENHAM: All right.

DAUGHTRY: Yes, they said, "Thank God Almighty, I'm free at last."

BENHAM: Well, do you know of any customs that these slaves brought with them from their country, from Africa? What kind of customs did they have?

DAUGHTRY: Not that I know of.

BENHAM: Did they do anything like their ancestors in Africa used to do and when they came over here to America, did they continue to do that or whatever? How did they feel about, like when a new baby was born? Did they go through any kind of ritual? Did they? What did they do?

DAUGHTRY: Now, let me tell you about that. When a baby was born, you didn't know it. We children didn't know anything about that. Like me, say, if I have one tonight.

BENHAM: One tonight what?

DAUGHTRY: A baby.

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BENHAM: If you had a baby?

DAUGHTRY: If I had one and you came by there and see, well, you'd go tell Sister so and so there's a stranger at Sister Peggie's house. They're going to ask was it a man or woman? If it was a boy baby, they'd say a man. A girl baby, they'd say a woman. But we didn't see any baby till we went to church. But now they see them before they get here. And women get in that shape, they didn't wear old tight belted things and when we say that baby, they'd tell us, "Granny, Mama, ah, Granny, Mama, Santa Claus is going to send us a baby." We didn't know. We'd get axes and go hunt one in hollow logs. Not find out where the log is.

BENHAM: You were staying there and hunting all day, weren't you, Peggie?

DAUGHTRY: We children would get in them woods and hunt us a baby. Well, you see, we never did know anything.

BENHAM: That's right.

DAUGHTRY: And you better not sit up under them while they're talking; they'd knock you over.

BENHAM: Yes.

DAUGHTRY: You had to get out from there. When you see, just like you came here this morning. If there's children here, they hit them woods and get out of here till you left. But now when you go to their house, they beat you in there, just looking up in your face. And I could slap them back out that door.

BENHAM: You mean the children?

DAUGHTRY: The children. Why sure, they'll do it.

BENHAM: The children will do what?

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DAUGHTRY: I said now a days if they're out playing and see company coming to your house, they'll run there to see what you're going to talk about.

BENHAM: That's right. They do that.

DAUGHTRY: But we better not have done that.

BENHAM: That's right. I know I've gone through that with some of my children. They'd be right there and you couldn't say a word. All right. Can you think of any other customs that they did? How did people in Africa do like when, suppose they got married, you know?

DAUGHTRY: Didn't none of them marry. I don't know whether they married or...

BENHAM: What they did or anything like that? Can you tell me something about a funeral? How are funerals conducted at St. Jean's?

DAUGHTRY: Well.

BENHAM: Well, wait a minute before we have the funeral. I want to ask you something about a wake. You know, when somebody dies, where do they put the body so that everybody can come and see it?

DAUGHTRY: In the church.

BENHAM: Now, that's a wake, isn't it?

DAUGHTRY: Yes.

BENHAM: Can you describe a wake for me first?

DAUGHTRY: How they do?

BENHAM: Yes.

DAUGHTRY: Well, they take them in and then they'll open them up and let everybody who wants to see, see them. Well, they'll keep it open till about ten, ten-thirty and then they'll close and have prayer and go home.

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BENHAM: Oh, they don't stay there all night?

DAUGHTRY: They don't stay there all night. They used to, but they don't now. And the next day, they get all the family and relations in a row and seat them. Then they attend the funeral. After the funeral, the pallbearers take it to the cemetery. Then they keep it there. So that's a funeral.

BENHAM: What does voodoo mean?

DAUGHTRY: Ma'am?

BENHAM: Voodoo,

DAUGHTRY: What is voodoo?

BENHAM: Do you know what it means?

DAUGHTRY: No, ma'am.

BENHAM: All right. Was it ever practiced here in the settlement? Well, I know it's a part of, it's a religion. You know, voodooism, Voodooism. Was any of that ever practiced around here?

DAUGHTRY: Not that I know of.

BENHAM: All right. Well, let's see, I have heard about a cemetery near here called St. Jeans that has pictures of the dead people on the grave-stones. Can you tell me about this?

DAUGHTRY: Well, one of them is my great-grandson, my grandson, talking about my great-grandson, Excell (X. L.), that's the one. And the other one is Willie Walker; the other one, Marion Johnson; the other one, Willie Curtis, I think it's him; and the other one is Malachai Benson's boy, Jimmy Benson. That's about five (5) of them, I know there's four (4).

BENHAM: All right. What did the people do when they got sick in the settlement?

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DAUGHTRY: What did they do?

BENHAM: Yes, how did they take care of themselves?

DAUGHTRY: They would go to the doctor and...

BENHAM: Well, suppose there wasn't a doctor, I mean a long time ago, you know. What did they do?

DAUGHTRY: Well...

BENHAM: If there wasn't a doctor around,

DAUGHTRY: They went in the woods and got herbs and made teas and rub with different things. Buy antiseptic, quick relief, calomine, quinine, turpentine, all like that and carry and it would get you up. There weren't near as many diseases as there is now.

BENHAM: Well, was there ever any medicine men or women in the settlement?

DAUGHTRY: Well, the granny woman. Oh, we had a doctor, Doctor Hennington at Oma. And he left, he died and Dr. White saw them then. But he soon left and so then we didn't have any more doctors up in here then. No men in Georgetown or Monticello.

BENHAM: Well, what did - but you didn't have any medicine men or women? What did you call them before you even had any doctors here?

DAUGHTRY: Well, they called them midwives, is all I know.

BENHAM: Well, did you have a medicine man? Did you have a wise man or whatever you called him?

DAUGHTRY: No, ma'am. They went to their store. Our father, he would give us calomine and he would buy this, a box of hoarhound candy and box of peppermint for worms. And if we took a chill or fever, he'd make you out some of calomine this evening and take a dose at four and the other one at six and

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the next morning a big dose of oil and then you'd get up and then in the next day or two you're ready for school or field or wherever you want to go. And they had antiseptic, quick relief, camphor and asafetida if your stomach bothered you. They'd give you some of that in that water. That'd knock that up.

BENHAM: Do you still use any of these old remedies?

DAUGHTRY: I got camphor. Really keep my asafetida drunk. Drunk up and got some camphor. And the antiseptic, they make it so strong now. I got antiseptic mouthwash, but I haven't got any to take really sometimes for a cold. But now, that medicine look like it did more good than all the doctor's medicine.

BENHAM: Those old remedies are good. They were good, weren't they?

DAUGHTRY: And there wasn't any high blood, Wasn't any kidneys and all like that. Now, you can't eat meat; your blood will run up. Mine's up now. I can tell by my heart beat. That's why I went back to the doctor and had him to check it. And you never know anything about anything like that. You eat anything, peanuts, anything all the time at night - hog sausage - but you can't eat it now.

BENHAM: Yes. I wonder why that is?

DAUGHTRY: I say it's just like a man. They done ruined man now with fertilizer and it won't make without it.

BENHAM: And they won't what?

DAUGHTRY: They won't make nothing without it. Now, we used to plant corn and cotton and make more than we could gather. And then we got to the place where if you don't put any fertilizer there, you needn't look for any-

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thing. You won't get anything.

BENHAM: That's right. Well, it's been taken off.

DAUGHTRY: Yes.

BENHAM: Taken off for so long without putting anything back, that it won't grow.

DAUGHTRY: And then the river has washed a lot of the soil off the swamp land.

BENHAM: That's right. And did you ever grow any of these herbs or healing plants?

DAUGHTRY: No, ma'am. Sure didn't. Now, mulleins used to be here all the time, but the cows, I think keep up with it. I haven't seen any. Now, like cold, they would get mullein and pine-top and boil it - strong and sweeten it. It would cut all that hoarseness out of your throat.

BENHAM: Do you do that? Do you still do that?

DAUGHTRY: No, ma'am. Because I haven't got any mullein.

BENHAM: No mullein?

DAUGHTRY: Yes.

BENHAM: I wouldn't know what it looked like.

DAUGHTRY: You don't know mullein?

BENHAM: No.

(Begin Side Two of Tape)

BENHAM: What are some cures for different ailments like colds?

DAUGHTRY: Like cold? Cold?

BENHAM: Yes.

DAUGHTRY: I use coal oil and a...

BENHAM: And what else? How did you do that?

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DAUGHTRY: And a, well, I take that coal oil, don't do much rubbing; I just dab it, you know, for my joints and then I use this here Vaporub. It's good.

BENHAM: But what I want to know is, what you did a long time ago for these things.

DAUGHTRY: I didn't have it a long time ago.

BENHAM: You didn't have colds?

DAUGHTRY: Oh, colds? You mean something using the mullein and the pine-tops?

BENHAM: Yes, yes. And you said something about boiling, burning the coal, coal oil.

DAUGHTRY: Oh, well, you burn the coal oil. You put your sugar in a spoon and put you a little coal oil - you damp it good. Then take you a match or straw and set it afire and let it cook till it's brown.

BENHAM: I see.

DAUGHTRY: And then you eat it.

BENHAM: Oh, and that's supposed to help your cold?

DAUGHTRY: That'll knock it up.

BENHAM: It'll knock it out?

DAUGHTRY: Knock it out, that coal oil.

BENHAM: Do you still do that?

DAUGHTRY: No, ma'am. I'm taking doctor medicine.

BENHAM: Well, how come you don't do that other medicine?

DAUGHTRY: You see, I'm trying to get my blood pressure down.

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BENHAM: I see.

DAUGHTRY: So I can use these things.

BENHAM: I see.

DAUGHTRY: I don't want to harm myself.

BENHAM: I see.

DAUGHTRY: And as long as my blood is up, I won't fool with anything like that. When it goes down, then I can go ahead.

BENHAM: Well, what did people do a long time ago? Did they have high blood pressure?

DAUGHTRY: I never heard tell of it. Heart trouble, nothing.

BENHAM: Well, what did people do for rheumatism a long time ago?

DAUGHTRY: I never did see anybody with that much. They would rub, get them some antiseptic, quick relief, anything like that or coal oil.

BENHAM: What kind of leaf?

DAUGHTRY: Quick relief, quick relief.

BENHAM: How do you spell that?

DAUGHTRY: It's in a bottle like antiseptic, but it's light and antiseptic is more, you know, red color. Both of them are good for colds and joints and pains. Just put a little water in a glass and some sugar and stir it up and drink it.

BENHAM: And that was good for your rheumatism?

DAUGHTRY: That was good.

BENHAM: What about arthritis?

DAUGHTRY: Well, I guess all of it is about the same thing. It works alike. Some say bursitis, some say arthritis, some say rheumatism. So I don't

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know just what the name. I can say it's a joint-acher.

BENHAM: A joint-acher. That's a good one. That's a brand new name that I've never heard.

DAUGHTRY: Yes, sir. That's what I would say. It sure ain't. Like yesterday, my knee in there. Of course, the doctor gave me some arthritis pills. He says, "Peggie, you got that old rheumatiz." I said, "I got something because my knee to hurt here. I can't hardly make it," I run up on Mr. Carl and he says he had it in the shoulder. I said, "Oh God, let me get away from you." That's all you hear them complain of now is the arthritis, bursitis, rheumatism, Lord a mercy. I tell them, I said, "Mine's old age and I done worked myself to death." Fine home. I used to go to school, Icicles would hang on the mule's mane and trees bent and you couldn't stay home; you had to go. We didn't have but a few months and you sure had to go. Couldn't stay there.

BENHAM: Well, how many months did you all go to school, really?

DAUGHTRY: I would say we got about four (4).

BENHAM: Out of the whole year?

DAUGHTRY: The whole year. Now the children just ride to the school. You'd have to walk from way up yonder off of Forty, back up old St. Jeans. Day and night. Teacher boarded with us. If I ever had a buggy and a mule, old mule would run away every day. Teacher got scared of it. She boarded and me and John stayed out there with her a while, She started boarding there; we had to walk. Lord a mercy you weren't going to stay there; if you were sick they'd give you some oil and calomine.

BENHAM: Get you up and going.

DAUGHTRY: I tried to play sick; give me that calomine. I was sorry I

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had played sick.

BENHAM: I bet you did. You know, children will still do that now, won't they? They'll just do it in different ways.

DAUGHTRY: That's right.

BENHAM: How were the Negro children who had no parents taken care of?

DAUGHTRY: Well, they would stay with their closest friend. Now my father, he raised several of them. Some of them were kin to him.

BENHAM: Well, suppose they didn't have any kin? What did they do with the children, the babies? What did they do with them?

DAUGHTRY: Didn't leave no little young babies.

BENHAM: Were some babies ever given to people who had no children?

DAUGHTRY: Not that I knew of. Not that I knew of.

BENHAM: I remember when I was taking the 1960 census, and I went way up somewhere - I don't even remember now where, you know - close to the Copiah-Lincoln line, you know, in Lawrence County. The babies, you know, who had no parents, they were given to people who had no children. Or people who already had children who had left home, they gave them to raise. Did you ever know about that?

DAUGHTRY: My aunt had one. She gave to her brother's wife a little boy. She died. Aunt Minnie. A baby boy. I wasn't big enough to know how it went.

BENHAM: Well, what did they do with the old people?

DAUGHTRY: They stayed with their children till they died.

BENHAM: Well, do they still do that?

DAUGHTRY: There ain't none.

BENHAM: No more old people, huh?

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DAUGHTRY: They're old all right. But there ain't none of them I know of. Ora ain't got a daughter. She got a granddaughter. I ain't got any. I got a grand, got a great-grand, got a granddaughter that stays with her. Mia ain't got nobody; she's near about blind.

BENHAM: Well, what do they do if they have no children or no grandchildren to take care of them? What do they do?

DAUGHTRY: Go to the homes. Some of them put them in the homes as it is.

BENHAM: Well, years ago what did they do? They didn't have homes years ago.

DAUGHTRY: No, they kept them.

BENHAM: They just took them in. You remember that old man, what was his name? Uncle Willie, that was walking along the road and you just took him in, didn't you?

DAUGHTRY: Uncle Walt.

BENHAM: Uncle Walt, yes.

DAUGHTRY: Yes, I kept him. I sure did. He couldn't tell anything.

BENHAM: He didn't know what his name was even.

DAUGHTRY: After we got him down there to the Welfare office, I said, "Uncle Walter," I said, "she's going to ask you a lot of questions." I says, "She ain't going to allow me to be in there." And I said, "What you know, you tell the truth." So we walked down there and Mrs. Hickman asks him, says, "You got any money?" He says, "Yes, ma'am. I got some in the Hazlehurst bank."

BENHAM: He told the truth, didn't he?

DAUGHTRY: Well, directly she called me. My daughter just wrote Miss Peggie. They asked me and I told them, "No, ma'am," I says, "He ain't got

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any daughter." I haven't seen her yet." I said, "For the bank part now, you don't take my word." I said, "You call up there and you'll see." She said, "I know he ain't got any." I said, "Well, call up there and see if you think I." I says, "I don't know. You just call up there and see." That's what she could have done. Yes, sir. That's the third time he came here to stay with me.

BENHAM: Oh, he had come before?

DAUGHTRY: He stayed with me and Buford.

BENHAM: Oh, I see.

DAUGHTRY: And Mr. Henry got him, Went up there and then he ran away from him and came back here.

BENHAM: I see.

DAUGHTRY: Then he came and got him. Told him he's going to finish this crop. "That son-of-a-bitch," he says. Mr Henry came in and said, "Walt, how's your back a holding out?" Walt laughed when he left. "That ain't none of his damn business. He didn't buy me. He asked me how my back's a holding out."

BENHAM: I'll be. He wanted him to come back and work for him, didn't he?

DAUGHTRY: Yes. Uncle Walt wouldn't go back. No, he wouldn't go back that time.

BENHAM: They mustn't have treated him right or something.

DAUGHTRY: Them little boys tried to put him in the river.

BENHAM: Put him in the river?

DAUGHTRY: Yes. Uncle Walt went in to milk. They had a dairy, you know. They wanted one of them cans of milk. They dragged him to put him in the river. And they had him there trying. They came here one night and I wouldn't let them

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have it. Tried to pull him out there. Uncle Walt finally went to the door. You see, they left the gate open out yonder and they had two, they allowed to get him in their car a going to beat him or kill him, one. That's what they...

BENHAM: They were going to beat him?

DAUGHTRY: And Uncle Walt...

BENHAM: That was the reason he didn't want to stay there.

DAUGHTRY: Yes, and went to the door there to the gallery. And I got up then and went out there and they come in _____ sitting. He said, "Come on Walt, we got a possum out here; you can have the possum." I saw the other two out there...

BENHAM: How big were they?

DAUGHTRY: Oh, Mr. Henry's boys? They're taller than me. Tall, I ain't. And there was another one with them. But this one came in here.

BENHAM: How long ago was that?

DAUGHTRY: That was before Uncle Walt died.

BENHAM: Well, how long ago? Twenty (20) years ago?

DAUGHTRY: No, Honey, let's see when Uncle Walt died.

BENHAM: Fifteen (15) years ago?

DAUGHTRY: No, ma'am. He died since me and Red been married. "Red, you know what year Uncle Walt died in?" I don't know, let me see now. I generally put it down.

BENHAM: That's all right. Okay. And anyway you said they were going to show him the possum.

DAUGHTRY: Yes. And take him and keep a going. They had come with John Henry. John Henry stayed up there in the old house on this place and

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they had made a ketchup.

BENHAM: A what?

DAUGHTRY: Made a ketchup. Had put on one of the boys.

BENHAM: Oh, ketchup.

DAUGHTRY: And made like he was shot.

BENHAM: Oh.

DAUGHTRY: Uncle John says, "We want some water. This fellow here's shot." And he played shot, you know. John said he figured it was a trick. So he said, "All right. Wait here till I come back." And he went in there and got his gun. They took out. So John Henry told him to beat it. And Mr. Henry's boy was behind. And they went on up there and where you turn in to Mr. Henry's, they had him laying out there and a white man came along and saw him and got Mr. Henry because they thought the boy was hurt or something. And while he was gone the boy got up and ran. And John told Mr. Henry how them boys came in and did, he told him. And them boys never did come back and worry Uncle Walt any more. He didn't allow it, that.

BENHAM: That's the reason he didn't want to stay there.

DAUGHTRY: Yes.

BENHAM: Well, did he have to stay there?

DAUGHTRY: He promised Mr. Henry he was going to stay there.

BENHAM: Oh, oh.

DAUGHTRY: He said he wanted a mule to plow and Mr. Henry bought one. "I done bought that mule and I want you to come on back and plow," I didn't say anything because that was their mess. I didn't make it. But as soon as he got through there, he left there and came right back here.

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BENHAM: He knew that you were kind to him and wanted him to stay.

DAUGHTRY: I was mighty good to the old soul.

BENHAM: I'm glad you were.

DAUGHTRY: Yes. I think about it, I say, "The Lord will bless me."

BENHAM: Yes, the Lord will bless you.

DAUGHTRY: I bathed him just like I bathed a baby. I sure did.

BENHAM: That's right. It's all going to be right down there on that tape. Well, that's too bad. I don't know. Well, let's go on to the next question, okay? Do you know any ghost stories that are supposed to be true?

DAUGHTRY: Ghost?

BENHAM: Yes.

DAUGHTRY: Well, when I stayed on Forty.

BENHAM: Where is that?

DAUGHTRY: On Mr. B. F.'s place, we moved in a house. Couldn't hardly stay there when we first went there. There was someone walking around that house.

BENHAM: Really?

DAUGHTRY: Just acting like human, till they'd get to a certain place and they would stop. Well, we all were sitting in there. And so my husband was gone; he went over to Oma. And it snowed and it snowed all night.

BENHAM: Is that house still standing?

DAUGHTRY: Right there, right there.

BENHAM: Where is the house?

DAUGHTRY: It's up there on Forty.

BENHAM: Yes, but where?

DAUGHTRY: On B. F.'s place. Bill of Oma.

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BENHAM: Bill? Who's Bill?

DAUGHTRY: You don't know B. F. Camack?

BENHAM: Oh, the Camacks? The old Camack house?

DAUGHTRY: It ain't the Camack house, the old Billy Fox house. But he owned the land.

BENHAM: And Billy Fox's place is still there?

DAUGHTRY: Still there.

BENHAM: I'm going to come get you and I am going to go up there sometime and we'll take a picture of it, okay?

DAUGHTRY: That house is still there.

BENHAM: We'll go in the daytime. Okay. All right. And that's where this walking...

DAUGHTRY: Not there. Where I stayed. That house is off of the road, but you can see it.

BENHAM: Where is it? Is it still standing?

DAUGHTRY: Still standing.

BENHAM: And where is this place?

DAUGHTRY: It's on the same place.

BENHAM: All right. We'll go up there sometime. Anybody living in it?

DAUGHTRY: No, ma'am. And I told him, I said, "Well, the man came to the steps." Another man there, he kept the mules up at the big barn then. He said, "Well, tell Mike I'll feed the mules; he won't be going to have to come up there." And so Lloyd came through and he fed the mules. Just as he fed the mules, he met this man going to feed them. And he said, "I just left your house." And he told him, "Yes." So he come on. And I said, "Lord, where have

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you been in this snow?" He said, "I just got here." He said, "I just come from feeding the mules." I said, "Well, there has been somebody here, come before." I had my hand over the door facing.

BENHAM: What did you have?

DAUGHTRY: My hand up over the door facing when the man came on the steps. I didn't know him.

BENHAM: And did you see the man?

DAUGHTRY: Yes, ma'am.

BENHAM: And that was supposed to be the ghost?

DAUGHTRY: Yes. And I told old Lloyd, I said, "Lloyd," I said, "you've been here." He said, "I ain't." I said, "Well, there's something been walking in that snow, you hear it? Trump de trump trump, de trump." And so he lit the lamp and went in the kitchen.

BENHAM: Oh, it was dark.

DAUGHTRY: And when he got there, it started walking again. He came out and went all around the house and pretty soon then he came back. When he came back he had some long hunting splinters. He had some splinters with him, you see. And when he came back in there, he went to walking and walked. I don't know when I went to sleep, sometime that night, and I had a hold of him.

BENHAM: I bet you did.

DAUGHTRY: And that thing walked all the way around that house, And so another time...

BENHAM: My gosh.

DAUGHTRY: I had his sister and his niece went to bird thrashing. Preacher John had cut down a thicket, you know, and we decided we'd go to bird thrashing.

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I wasn't going to stay there at night, and he called me Monk. And he said, "Monk, you all going to get your bait of birds Thursday night." I said, "Oh, we ain't going to stay out there till ten o'clock." So we came back. And there was a cedar tree there by my garden. I said, "Pat, you and Birdie let's go around here by the cedar tree and probably we will find one." Just at that corner of the house, I heard something blow (blows) that away. Birdie said, "What's that, Aunt Peggie?" I said, "A c-c-c-cow."

BENHAM: A what?

DAUGHTRY: And there wasn't any cow. But there was something there behind me, you know. And so I ran alright and I had the light right on him. And so I ran right on and kicked my shoes up under the bed and she did the same thing. Something came to the door. Harump, harump, harump. Pat ran under the bed.

BENHAM: You mean something came to the door trying to get in?

DAUGHTRY: Knocking there like a mule kicking. Lloyd outside the bed. I hit him in the back and he came to the door with me. There wasn't a thing. Wasn't a thing. Didn't see nothing. But I held him in the back all night, I know it. Pat was up there under the bed hollering. I said, "I know that was something." And Lloyd said, "I been seeing a man come this way," and said, "but I figured you'd be scared to come and cook supper," you know. Aunt Ora stayed there. Had a little old girl. She had a little old wooden box she'd turn down and something would get under that box - scratch, scratch, scratch.

BENHAM: You mean inside of the box?

DAUGHTRY: Inside. In the daytime, And you'd take off the box and look under there, nothing.

BENHAM: And all this over at that house?

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DAUGHTRY: That house, I got a horseshoe and then I got some coke-turpentine and some cord string and tied it round the foot of the beds and put that horseshoe up there. That stopped it and Lloyd's brother went there one night. We went to church. Came a storm and something run them away from there. He said he went in the kitchen to eat and he heard something pawing the pickets and when he came to the door he says a black horse was standing up on his hind feet pawing. Boy, if we hadn't made it there we'd a got burned out because he ran away and left the lamp lit and the door open and we made it there just before the wind got too rough.

BENHAM: Where did you go?

DAUGHTRY: We were coming from church. And he ran off to another part of the house.

BENHAM: And left you all?

DAUGHTRY: Left the door open, the lamp burning.

BENHAM: My goodness.

DAUGHTRY: You see, there weren't any electric lights then. Left the lamp burning, he said that horse was just scratching.

BENHAM: And was it a real horse?

DAUGHTRY: A real spirit, but it was in a horse form. Red' said he got away from there. Red called him and asked him...

BENHAM: Was that a ghost horse?

DAUGHTRY: Ghost.

BENHAM: It was a ghost?

DAUGHTRY: Ghost.

BENHAM: But it looked like a horse?

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DAUGHTRY: A horse. That's what he said, it was just a pawing.

BENHAM: Isn't that something. Well, does it, is it still doing that up there?

DAUGHTRY: There ain't nobody there. It stopped before I left. I put them horseshoes and things up there. I stayed there by myself. I'd be scared, but I never heard anything. Jump in the bed with you. Sometimes...

BENHAM: They just didn't want anybody in the house, did they?

DAUGHTRY: I just don't know what they wanted. That was a new house. There wasn't but one somebody died there. Of course, they had to tie him. I stayed with him, because he'd rabbit dance with them children and...

BENHAM: Rabbit dance?

DAUGHTRY: Yes.

BENHAM: How does the rabbit dance?

DAUGHTRY: Just like that, kicking them back feet.

BENHAM: Oh, like that.

DAUGHTRY: That was the way he used to do for us. And that was him under that box. And one night he had it tied around over a dress. And we ran off and let our supper burn up. It burned up. "Mama, look at that dog. Oh, oh, oh."

BENHAM: And you couldn't see the dog? But she could see the dog.

DAUGHTRY: She could see it, yes. Supper burned up. I just laughed. Yes, Lord, you and me is just having a jubilee time.

BENHAM: Aren't we just having a good jubilee time is right.

DAUGHTRY: And no fire.

BENHAM: That's all right. We don't care. It's getting warm anyway, isn't it? Well, can you think of any other? Now, these ghost stories are supposed to

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be true?

DAUGHTRY: Yes, ma'am. That, that, that part of it is true. I know because that thing blew at us. I know it wasn't no cow, but you see after it broke the run, that threw me behind. And I told her it was a cow. She said, "What's that, Aunt Peggie?" I said, "Nothing but a cow, come on." I went running round the tree and _____ right back and ran in the house. She did the same thing, fast, she thought up that. It went _____ just like a mule kicking the door. And Lord, I grabbed her and Pat said, "Ahhh," and got up on the bed.

BENHAM: You got under the bed?

DAUGHTRY: Pat did, his sister. No, I had more than a... I wasn't studying about getting in no bed that night.

BENHAM: Where were you?

DAUGHTRY: You see, she was, they slept in the house and we slept in the next room there. In the bed, I done run and hopped in the bed before he hit the house. Just look like it was going to bust that door open and Lord, I opened that door and there wasn't a thing out there. Not a thing.

BENHAM: Well, did you ever hear anybody say that the house we live in is haunted?

DAUGHTRY: No, ma'am.

BENHAM: Somebody once told me that, but I've never, I've never run into anybody, any ghost. Well anyway. Can you tell me about one of the stories? Well, you have just now told me about that. All right. How has being a black person in Mississippi affected your life?

DAUGHTRY: How many?

BENHAM: How, by being a black person in Mississippi, how has it affected

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your life?

DAUGHTRY: It hasn't affected any.

BENHAM: It hasn't?

DAUGHTRY: No, ma'am.

BENHAM: Well, how do you feel about it?

DAUGHTRY: Well, I feel grateful. Know that as long as I've been here I ain't run across any problems.

BENHAM: You feel that Mississippi is the best place for you to be?

DAUGHTRY: I know it.

BENHAM: Yes.

DAUGHTRY: Right. Best I know of.

BENHAM: I think so, too. I think we have handled all our problems and I think the rest of the whole country now looks up to us instead of looking down at us, don't they?

DAUGHTRY: Yes, ma'am.

BENHAM: Did your feelings change toward white people during the civil rights movement?

DAUGHTRY: No, ma'am. Never changed a bit.

BENHAM: How has life changed for the black people during your lifetime?

DAUGHTRY: How has it changed?

BENHAM: Yes.

DAUGHTRY: Well, in a way, they're doing better now than they ever have done in their life. The Lord has blessed them. So many of us disabled to work and He made a way for us. And the next thing, there's more of them converted now than there used to be.

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BENHAM: Converted to what?

DAUGHTRY: To Christ. They's saved, We all are sinners, but we are saved sinners, you see. And they are lost sinners, And a person that doesn't have Christ, he's dead already. But a one that's got Christ, he's alright; he's been generated and born again. He's got a new life; doesn't die any more. You don't die but one time. And when you die of this sin and be born in Christ, you don't die anymore. You just sleep away. Because He's living. And that's what I like about the community now it's more. It ain't as much disturbingments in it as it used to be.

BENHAM: Just as much what?

DAUGHTRY: Disturbingments, you know, evil doings.

BENHAM: Oh, you mean disturbings.

DAUGHTRY: Disturbing one another. Looks like when they meet you, they meet you with a smile, looks like they glad to see you. But in my mother's days when they were coming on, there was more love than there is now, Because they would go piece away with one another and get to shouting and next thing you know the other one would turn around and transfer one and I'm going to piece away with you and then you turn around and going to piece with me. Talking about the Lord.

BENHAM: Oh.

DAUGHTRY: Well, they don't do that now. But they will talk about it. And the people at my age so old we can't drive, we can't visit. We used to cooperate more together than we do, But I can't drive and Red don't want to go where I want to go at times and that just keeps things messed up. If I could walk like I used to, I wouldn't ask him to take me; I would go and take myself.

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I used to just would go on but they'd find me somewhere up there done give out.

And the Lord blessed me and made me to live as far as I am and I'm thankful.

And if they continue on like it is, why, talking about Him, He'd be here.

BENHAM: Him, who are you talking about?

DAUGHTRY: Ma'am?

BENHAM: Who are you talking about?

DAUGHTRY: I just said we talk about Him.

BENHAM: Him? You mean Christ?

DAUGHTRY: Christ. Yes. We, if we live with the Christ, that's all the joy we want here among one another.

BENHAM: That's right.

DAUGHTRY: Ain't anything but love nohow.

BENHAM: That's right.

DAUGHTRY: And you got to love everybody. I can't love you and hate somebody else. I got to love you and love Him, too. That's what He wants us all to get on one accord.

BENHAM: That's right. And that means for everybody.

DAUGHTRY: Everybody.

BENHAM: Everybody on the face of the earth.

DAUGHTRY: Everybody, saints, sinners, just, unjust, all, everybody. Ain't just me and you, it's everybody.

BENHAM: That's right. Well, Peggie, have you done much traveling?

DAUGHTRY: No, ma'am. I right smart. Well, let me see, around Brookhaven and McComb, Georgetown, Hazlehurst, Hattiesburg. Well, I been North, now.

BENHAM: North? Where is that?

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DAUGHTRY: Peoria, Illinois, up Kentucky...

BENHAM: Peoria? Illinois? Well, that's good.

DAUGHTRY: Kentucky, Ohio, and all that across the river over there.

I don't expect to make it back there no more.

BENHAM: Do you have any kinfolks up there?

DAUGHTRY: My great-grandchildren, all of them are up there. That's where my grandson lives. They have a brand new home.

BENHAM: They live in Kentucky?

DAUGHTRY: They live above Kentucky. I went to Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio, all those.

BENHAM: All right.

DAUGHTRY: And they shipped him. I mean the plant brought him to Jackson. He's employment manager there. He just kept on at me to go home with him when he was in Munsey, Indiana. I wouldn't go. So, he came down here and I went back with him. I was glad I went.

BENHAM: Sure. You got to see some of the country, didn't you?

DAUGHTRY: Yes, ma'am. So that Sunday, he took me over every which way riding and looking and showing. I enjoyed it while I was up there.

BENHAM: Well, Peggie, what are you hobbies?

DAUGHTRY: Ma'am?

BENHAM: Do you have any hobbies? What do you like to do in your spare time?

DAUGHTRY: Well, in my spare time I love to piece quilts, and wash is about the two biggest. Well, I have to cook, you know.

BENHAM: Yes, cook. But that's not a hobby.

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DAUGHTRY: No.

BENHAM: No, that's not one. Well, what did you used to do a long time ago? You used to make quilts and what else?

DAUGHTRY: Make quilts. I've made quilts the way you see them make quilts and...

BENHAM: I don't mean working; I mean a hobby.

DAUGHTRY: Things you like to do.

BENHAM: Things that you liked to do. Did you ever make your own clothes?

DAUGHTRY: No, ma'am. I used to redo them, but I never did sew them. I'd make such as like a slip or an apron. But a dress, I never did make no dress. I never did try to make one. I always had somebody to make me a dress. And I never did do that. I had my hands full doing everything else. There's something to be done all the time.

BENHAM: Yes, when you keep a house, you do, don't you?

DAUGHTRY: That's right.

BENHAM: Well, could you sing or recite your favorite spiritual song? Maybe a poem that you know.

DAUGHTRY: I might could, I don't know.

BENHAM: Could you do it now for me?

DAUGHTRY: I may get it right.

BENHAM: Well, even if you don't.

DAUGHTRY: You want - about how long a song would you want?

BENHAM: Well, if you can sing it and tell me the name of it and then sing it. Now, what's the name of it? Is it a spiritual?

DAUGHTRY: Spiritual.

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BENHAM: All right. What's the name of it?

DAUGHTRY: Let me see. I got several in mind, but I don't know.

BENHAM: Well, just tell me the one that you like the best.

DAUGHTRY: I believe "Jesus On the Main Line," I believe that's it.

BENHAM: All right, is that the name of the song? All right, do you want to sing it? You want to kind of get up a little closer and sing it?

DAUGHTRY: I want to see whether I want to sing that or not.

BENHAM: All right.

DAUGHTRY: I'll try it. I don't know what kind of noise I'm going to make though.

BENHAM: That's all right.

DAUGHTRY: You ready?

BENHAM: Tell me the name of it?

DAUGHTRY: "Jesus On the Main Line."

BENHAM: All right, make it distinct so we can understand.

DAUGHTRY: You understand that?

BENHAM: Yes, now start.

DAUGHTRY: Jesus is on the mainline

Tell Him what you want.

Oh, oh, Jesus is on the mainline

Tell Him what you want.

Oh, oh, Jesus is on the mainline

Tell Him what you want.

You can ring Him up and tell Him what you want.

Ring Him up, ring Him up

Tell Him what you want.

Oh, oh, ring Him up, ring Him up and

Tell Him what you want.

Oh, oh, ring Him up, ring Him up
Tell Him what you want.
You can ring Him up and tell Him what you want.

If you want your soul revived
Tell Him what you want.
Oh, oh, if you want your soul revived
Tell Him what you want.
Oh, oh, if you want your soul revived
Tell Him what you want.
You can ring Him up and tell Him what you want.

Ring Him up, ring Him up
Tell Him what you want.
Oh, oh, ring Him up, ring Him up
And tell Him what you want.
Oh, oh, ring Him up, ring Him up
And tell Him what you want.
You can ring Him up and tell Him what you want.

Jesus is on the mainline
Tell Him what you want.
Oh, oh, Jesus is on the mainline
Tell Him what you want.
Oh, oh, Jesus is on the mainline
Tell Him what you want.
You can ring Him up and tell Him what you want.

BENHAM: That's beautiful, Peggie.

DAUGHTRY: I thought to carry it longer, but I didn't.

BENHAM: You could carry it longer if you wanted to.

DAUGHTRY: That's all right. That's enough now.

BENHAM: All right. Thank you, Mrs. Daughtry, for your interesting talk.

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DAUGHTRY: Yes, ma'am,

BENHAM: And this is the end of the interview.

(End of Interview)

(Transcribed by Evelyn Benham)