

Interview with WC "Dub" Tomlinson
July 15, 2003
Statenville, GA
Laurie Sommers, interviewer

Volume check Tyler is name of grandson.

Tape 1, Side A (only one side recorded) Counter #s from Panasonic transcribing machine

DT= Dub Tomlinson
LKS=Laurie Sommers

[] = summarized material. All other material is verbatim transcription.

DT When you oversaw those workers there were certain things you had to be on the look out for, because they'd do their work rather shabbily if you'd let em. Some of 'em would. Some of em I don't remember their names much. But we rode behind those workers on a horse. There was 14 or 15 turpentine camps here in Echols County.

LKS Start with announcement, Tues. July 15, 2003 Statenville Public Library..... Fill out interview data sheet.

DT [William Candler, named after my dad, my dad was named after a governor. Dub comes from W. 171 Dubs Road, Lake Park, GA 31636. 229-244-3656, Echols County. Born 2-27-31 in Haylow, GA Star Route. Started off on rhythm guitar, went to playing lead also, mainly a vocalist. My group the Suwannee River Troubadours, traditional country music. Tomlinsons came from NC. I don't know about the Petersons, was my mother's name (Eula Mae). Father William Tomlinson, Sr. Missionary Baptist. My father was a Primitive Baptist, my mother was a Missionary Baptist. We weren't big churchgoers. Handicapped for transportation, mainly. Occupation: Langdales, worked for them twice. First time in early 50s, in Council, GA, I was their cowman down there. The JW Langdale Company, which was one of their companies. Been a cowman, owned several cattle ranches in my life, cattle foreman, worked with timber all my life, cause even the cattle ranches had timber on 'em. Langdale again in 1970. Heavy equip operator. Worked up to supervisor job, was a harvesting supervisor. Looked after their timber cutting and burning of woods. 16 years before I retired in '86 due to health. Music playing was a moonlighting job, mostly on weekends. (LKS asks about making cattle whips) I never made 'em, I could use 'em. (no wood carving or working) I can use a whip, kill a snake with it.]

LKS I wanted to start with your family experience with turpentine. You speak in the book about your work and your father being a woods rider.

DT We owned 532 acres of land, which was a land lot, which more or less was 490 acres. And we put the turpentine timber up on it. But they leased it out. And some time

after the lease worked out we took over working it ourselves. There was 13,000 trees—boxes—on the property and most of it was in and around the Swamp.

LKS Where was this property?

DT It was on land lot 375 in Echols County. (we look at map) Find the Tarver Road there...this road right here, see this bend right there, that is where our home was.

LKS So when you write that you were 4 miles outside Tarver (that's right] do you consider yourself growing up in Tarver?

DT Well, they had a commissary there, and my sisters lived there off and on. But we'd visit there. There was a lot of people lived in Tarver, a bunch of people there. And Barnes camp was west of us right there on the railroad....And that was a turpentine camp. And over here, was another turpentine camp, called the Lashlee Place, also Lon's Still and the 4-Mile Camp.

LKS That was pretty close to your home place.....On your home place

DT We had 13,000 faces and some of the trees had four to five faces on them. We dipped some of it, but most of the time we hired that done. My father and myself.

LKS Just the two of you.

DT yes.

LKS And you would hire who to do the dipping?

DT African American, local, some of the local ones around there would come do it in their spare time.

LKS And were you and your father the first people in your family to work turpentine (no m'am). Tell me about that.

DT Well my grandfather on my mother's side, they worked turpentine for years. JJ Peterson. Jesse James Peterson. It was in around Echols County. As a matter of fact, land lot 375 was originally his, he gave it to my mother. 374 he traded a mule for it, gave it to another one of his daughters.

LKS Did you know your grandfather?

DT Oh, yes.

LKS Did you work together?

DT yeah, they owned hogs together in the woods. And they later on my father bought him out. [anyone else in your family] I was the only boy. [paternal side were farmers, no turpentine that he was aware of]

LKS Your grandfather, was that a primary source of income—did he lease out his land.

DT Well, on his own property he didn't do it, he'd hire it done. And he also had a shingle mill, and they cut crossties. The turpentine was all over the woods where we were. We were in the woods all the time working the hogs and cattle. And it was just a part of everyday life.

LKS Reading your book, I really [before] hadn't made the connection between the open range and running the cattle and the hogs, and the connection with turpentine woods. and the turpentine woods.

DT It was all together. The cattle just went everywhere. Right here in this town the hogs used to just walk all over town here. And cattle would come up [LKS open range ended when?]

DT Well it came right around 1950, but they gave them so long to get them out of the woods before the law began to take hold of it. But they was an awful lot property over the years that there was nobody on, just miles and miles. And the old homesteads been given up and people moved off of em. And the land been absorbed by the major companies.

LKS Could you maybe walk me through the cycle of the year as you remember it, turpentine it and combining it with cattle,

DT Well, we penned cattle, what they called penned cattle. We'd build pens in our fields mostly out of wire, and we'd put cattle in the pen and they'd stay in there at night. We'd take the calf away from the cow and keep the calf in pen, and then at night we'd turn the calf out and let the cow stay in the pen. This was done for the fertilizer. When they'd stay so long, we'd move the pen to another area on the field. This was before planting time. We'd plow the ground, that was our main source of fertilizer. [What did you plant] Well, we'd plant different things, we'd plant corn, we'd plant sugar cane, we'd plant all kind of vegetables for home use, then we'd plant velvet beans, and chufas. Chufas was a hog feed. It was kind of like a peanut, only it grewed in a grass-like top and the bottom of it was just hang, they were sweet, and they fed the hogs.

LKS What kind of vegetables did you grow?

DT Oh every kind, beans, tomatoes, cucumbers, squashes, peas, just about everything....We had cucumbers all the time, Mama's make pickles. And they had big gardens, did a lot of canning. Put in fruit jars. And my mother had a big old pressure cooker . It held so many jars, and a wood range. She'd use that pressure cookers to put up jars, and they'd do it for days on days. Every kinda vegetable that could be put up.

LKS Something your mom and your sisters did?

DT That's right.

LKS Did you help?

253/000: DT Well, maybe to gather it. And then to carry the wood. I'd have to keep the wood fire going when I was a boy, little boy.

LKS Just had the one sister?

DT 4 sisters. There was 3 older than me and one younger.

LKS OK, we've got you penning the cattle.

DT. We'd also milk them. Now what we'd do, we'd break those cattle. They was range cattle. They weren't dairy cattle. They were range cattle, what we used to call a common cow. And their average weight was 550 to 600 lbs. for a cow, and a bull was 750 to 8. But we'd have the cow in the pen and calf on the outside, this calf'd want to get to its mother. And we'd open the gate or gap, we'd have gaps to the gates on those pens. Most of the time they was fence rails that we could let down, let the calf in and let him suck enough to get the milk down, and then we'd cut the calf away from the cow and milk two udders. And let the calf have the rest of it. And we'd milk sometimes 12 to 20 head. Every morning. And they'd take the milk and they'd churn it, you know separate the cream and the butter. And they'd make cream from the milk and they'd make butter. And then they'd make so-called clobber. And that was something we ate all the time was clabber.

LKS Certain time of year when you would round up the cattle?

DT That was in the spring. And we didn't pen the cattle the whole year. After we began to plant our crops we'd turn the cows and calves back out in the woods and let em roam on the range.

LKS Plant the crops about when?

028 DT At their regular planting time, in the spring. From April and May. Then of course you always grow a fall garden. Just like you'd grow a spring garden. Some

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Plants would grow better in the spring than they would in the fall. But the turpentineing

LKS What would happen with the cattle in the summer then?

DT They'd just be out in the woods about their business. We'd do all of our neutering and branding and earmarking in the spring. We had a month there. (he takes some water) Well, we brand those calves, our brand was CT, Candler Tomlinson. Incidentally the road that goes by the old home place is called Candler Tomlinson. But its been taken over by the paper company. Its not graded by the county anymore. But the turpentine was

17 mostly a summer thing. Whenever it got cold the turpentine wouldn't run of course, and we didn't do it. But we didn't do this regularly. We worked those trees, we probably kept em a year and a half and we found out that it was taking us away from our livestock and we had to release the timber, or that's what Pa done. And uh, he ride woods sometimes for the turpentine camps to bring in extra money. His job would be to oversea the laborers in the woods and to keep time and I'd ride with him on my horse when I was out of school.

LKS Who would be his employers?

DT The Langdales. Troy Dukes mainly, he was a manager of Tarver there, but he worked for the Langdales. DUKES.

LKS and is that the main camp where your father was a woods rider?

DT yeah. That was the main one. The year before I was born he done that, he rode woods for a lot of turpentine people. Before he settled at the old home place.

LKS Did your grandfather do that as well, do you know?

38 DT He may have. Not my paternal grandfather, [LKS maternal, JJ Peterson]. He probably did, he had his own property you know, and he was also a senator, and I think a representative, too. Back then we had one in each county. And its not like it is now where its set up in districts. Each county had a senator and representative. ...But he had farms and he had cross tie business, and he had turpentine business. .. But he had all that. If he did any woods riding much I don't know about it.

LKS So your father was doing this before he bought the home place and settled down.

DT That's right, that's right, my grandfather gave that to my mother and they moved there in 1926.

LKS Is your home place still there?

DT well the land is but that's all. You can't even tell there's been a field or a home.

LKS You and your father than only really worked turpentine for a year and a half.

63 DT Well, steady, yeah. But we'd do it sometimes a little each year, but a small area. Maybe 2000, but we didn't work that whole 13,000.

LKS Where did you sell your gum?

DT Langdale.They'd pick it up at Tarver. They had a still there, but I think our turpentine came after that still burned, and it was all on in Valdosta.

LKS How old were you when you were doing this?

DT Well I started chipping when I was about 12 or 13. And right on. When I was about 16 I chipped 2400 in a day.

LKS You write about that in your book. Can you tell me that story?

DT 77 Well, we had a, this land, these trees was put in drifts. The turpentine people, they'd plant, they'd paint land lines through the woods in a straight line. And what was between each line they'd all have a number. Some would be 500, some'd be a 1000, whatever was in it. But we didn't use no lines, we just used roads or the field or creek or the branch for the line, whatever was in that area that's what we, that's the way they were counted. But we had, behind our field was a 1500 acre drift, we called it. And across the road from it was an 800 acre drift. And then there was a branch, a ford in a creek, and on behind it was a bend in the creek and it had 900 in it. But for some reason the 1500 acre drift hadn't been chipped and worked as high as the 800 drift had. And my father, stooping bothered him, and he said if you'll start in the 1500 I go over here and start in the 800. And then whenever I get through with the 800 I'll get with you in the 15. I was young and I went at it, you know. Began, it felt good, it was early. I begin to see I was getting things knocked up pretty fast...And I just stayed with it. And by lunch time, the time I went into dinner, I had chipped just about all that 1500 mostly. And I wouldn't tell him. I went to the house and he'd already come in and eat and he said he's fixin' to go hunt me... It was just a few trees along the flat behind the field there wasn't no bushes growing I lacked, and a few up in some old palmettos that I didn't get before lunch. And he asked me how far I got. And right in the back of the field, in the middle of the field was a big gate to run cattle through, and I said I'm close to that big gate. But I'd went all the way around. And he get up and went on to work, and I ate, and hit it again. And it didn't take me but about 45 minutes to finish up that 1500. And I crossed the creek to that 900. But that was scattered, the timber was scattered. And it was smaller timber and there wasn't as many faces on the trees. And it took about as long to chip that 900 as it did 1500. But I got it just a little before sundown. And I went home, and he wanted to know where I was at, I told him I finished it. He said, Aw, thought I was talking about the 1500. He said, Aw you ain't no such a thing. I said, yeah, and the 900 too. And he wouldn't believe that at all, he said You joking me. He said, You left some of them boxes, you couldn't chip them trees that fast. He said I'm going to ride them up. The next day he got a horse, and he began to ride and look. Found 3 trees. [laughs] But at night when I was layin' there, my arms were just jerking you know. You could hear that hack just whack bat bat bat in my sleep. [laughs] Hard days work..

LKS 139 And did you always work alone when you were working? Did you ever work

DT Well, when we were working together he'd take a side, we'd have an idea about where we were going to join up to each other; we could see each other through the woods you know. But, I still have dreams at night about chipping turpentine boxes, going down through the rough places and looking out for snakes like we did, you know. That was a constant worry. Cause they were everywhere.

LKS Did you take your cow whip with you for the snakes?

DT No, if you found one you just hunted you a stick and killed him. Didn't have no cow whip (laughed)

LKS What were the other dangers you were concerned with?

DT Yellow jackets. They just eat you up. And wasps, them old wasps would get on them tins and build a nest. You go away to chip that tree it'd stir em and they'd sting you. That was one of the worst things.

LKS What did you do in the woods for medicine

DT I didn't pay it no attention, put chewin tobacco on it, you know. I didn't chew tobacco but I smoked, used Prince Albert to roll our own. Take and chew up a little of that tobacco to put on it. Most of the time you just pay it no attention. But them yellow jackets was bad. They'd eat you up. Especially the horses, too, you know. Get on em, when we was working the cattle. These old fire lines, they'd plow these fire lanes, you know. That bank up there, they'd put their nest in them banks, and the horse step in em. And they'd eat you up and the horse. And you better go [laughs] cause a yellow jacket'll follow you, ain't like a wasp. A wasp, he'll sting you but he ain't run you but 8 or 10 feet. But yellow jacket'll follow you a half a mile.

LKS Mostly the insects and the snakes. Were you concerned about anything else, animals in the woods?

DT 176 Naah. Wasn't nothing else like that I was worried about. They was some bears further west of me, but I never saw one. Of course we had some panthers down there. Of course you've, that's in the book what we heard that night. That's the only time I ever heard one, except one time I saw one. It was two or three years after that. Could have been the same one, I don't know.

LKS Did your father pay you?

DT Well, that was the family doing. If I went to town Sat. afternoon I'd get a little money, but I won't ever forget. There was a sawmill, the Strickland boys here in Echols County bought a sawmill. And they come round there and put it on our property cut the worked out timber. And they sold it not too long after that to some boys from Tarver, Chanceys and Lewis boy. The Lewis boy'd been captured overseas and stayed a prisoner

for years. But they brought that sawmill and I went to work for them snaking logs 16 foot logs with an old mule for \$6 a day. Well I made 3 days that first week, and when I got to the house mama I was going to town and Mama had a grocery list for me to buy things she needed out of that 8 to 10 dollars. [laughs]

LKS 208 Where was town that you bought

DT Jasper mostly. We was 12 miles from our old home place to Jasper. ...Florida line right there....[we look at map and location of the home place]

LKS When you were working turpentine, if you were going to chip boxes, would you just devote yourself to that for the day, and if you were working cattle on a different day

DT Well, most of the time we devoted it to it, but you always had the hog dogs with you. And if a big hog come by we decided we wanted to catch, we'd catch him and tie him down. But instead we could come get a wagon and a horse to bring him in with.

LKS Would that have been true just for someone like yourself who was chipping your own trees or working on your own land, for example, catching the hog for example, which is on your property. If you were a, if a black turpentine crew was working for Langdales outside Tarver that was leased by Langdale, would you know, would they also stop if a hog came through

DT Well, we wouldn't have probably. But I don't thing they ever did that. ..They were owned, those hogs were owned, and we had them earmarked. Most of them. Of course a lot of them you didn't. But they go wild and you couldn't find em and they'd get grown and unmarked. But the turpentine workers was not our problem with stealing or anything like that. ...Hogs was our biggest money maker.

LKS 245 You would stop and catch a hog if it was an unmarked one or one of yours

DT restart 000 Well, they were our hogs because we had such a vast range. If it had been in somebody else's range we wouldn't have caught em.

LKS OK, how large was your range?

DT was about 10 by 15 miles...

LKS Was that determined by the different cattle—

DT it was from Tom's Creek south to just north of Baker's Mill which was about 5 miles from Jasper.

LKS and how was that determined? Land you owned?

DT no, The livestock men had it worked out between 'em. We didn't go—the hog might go, but we didn't go over where our dog could start hunting. And if his hog came over on ours and we caught it, we'd notify him, you know, that we had his hog.

LKS Cause it would be marked—

DT That's right. And we've had hogs to just stray and sow and pigs go somewhere else and they'd notify us and we'd go get em and vice versa, like that. And it was the same with cattle. Course cattle mingle more than hogs did, and we didn't have as many cattle thieves and we did hog thieves. We had to watch that pretty close. Specially if they had a mechanized vehicle they could catch one and take of with it, we wouldn't ever know it.

LKS More of a problem once cars became

DT That's right. We didn't have a graded road to our house for about the first 8 or 9 years of my life. It was a wagon road.

LKS So did hog stealing become more of a problem after

DT 037 Later on, yeah. But we usually knew who they were and we watched it pretty close. They'd set trap pens behind, build pens out of wire and hide em behind bushes, and trap em. But if you had a good dog and rode your woods regular that dog 'd bay that hog up in that ?. Wind em, bay em up, we never had any fights or shootings or nothing like that about it. It got bad one time when I was real little with some people. But it was never, it would just tear up the pen and go on and let the man know you'd found it. Generally that's what'd happen.

LKS near the end of this tape, how're you doing....

DT I'm all right.

061. END OF TAPE 1, SIDE 1

Tape 2, Side a

Announcement, July 15, 2003, 2nd tape with WC Dub Tomlinson

008 DT There was a group of people, I won't give any names, our earmark was two half Fluer de looses (sic) in each ear, which is a "V" shape in the bottom part of the ear. Of course it was on record here in the courthouse as was cow brands. This individual went out and started cropping off the ends of the ear. Which would make his mark two half fluer de looses in each ear. We begun to find some of our sows with their ears clipped off. Now this was not me, I was too little. This was my father and my grandfather. And they had a lot of problems about that thing. They was talking guns at one another. It was, what I understand, it got to be pretty bad. But luckily enough it never happened but what they done, they come out here and they put an upper bit in the hog's ear, which is a little

half moon cut, and that made us two half Fleur de looses (sic, see same story in Lad in the Pine Woods, p. 51) and an upper bit in each ear. And that clipped him see. Of course then they started catching all the sows that they could catch in the woods that he had to crop their ears off, anyway, and he was trying to make out like they was stealing his hogs after he'd cropped our hog's ears off. It got to be pretty bad. Took a little range away from us for a while, but eventually it was gained back. Luckily didn't nobody get shot or, but it could have been.

LKS 027 Were there stories from your childhood where this kind of thing did result in violence and people were killed or did it usually not go that far.

DT Well, not from that standpoint. There was one killin, but I think that was done from recruitin men. Turpentine business. It was a fellow by the name of Henry Padgett was killed by a man named Whittle (?) right there at Tom's Creek Bridge, first bridge you cross between here and Fargo, killed him right there, shot him with a shotgun. But I think it was something to do with labor on these turpentine camps, but I'm not sure of that...

LKS Were they both black men?

DT No, they were both white. Henry Padgett was a half brother to my uncle and Jimmy Padgett owned some turpentine camps at Needmore and I think Pineland at that time. This was before Langdale maybe took it over, but I'm not sure. But Henry Padgett was working for Uncle Jimmy or Woodie, that was the half brother, and this stemmed from that situation.

LKS 042 When you said that your chief income was from the hogs, obviously the amount you would get paid would have varied at different times in your life. When you were a boy, say, and you were born in 1931, say around 1940 or during the War, what a hog would have brought.

DT Yes ma'am, I sure can. We'd sell these hogs to farmers, and 50 lb or 60 lb. hog, what we call a year old, or 75 lb hog, they were from anywhere from ? in age to a year old, anywhere from \$3 to 5. And a big hog, 7 to 8, and later on they got to be a little higher, but that was normally, but we sold hundreds of them each year. In 19 and 46, they grade em you know, back then they would grade a woods hog, they don't do it no more, I mean grading like #1 or #2, you know, hogs, but they was palmetto berries all over these woods. Especially on a 2-year burn, and they'd fatten a hog and it was just as good as if it was come off of peanuts. And we sold about \$2400 dollars worth. A #1 hog out of the woods that year, which was quite a bit of money back in 1946.

LKS How would that compare with say, what you would get for selling a barrel of turpentine?

DT 063 Well a barrel of turpentine, we'd get about \$9 for a barrel back then. \$9 to \$11 dollars a barrel. If we were working for labor you'd get so much a thousand, which was about 3 to \$5 a thousand. Just for the work, not selling the gum. Dipping, was, I

remember when it was a dollar a barrel. Just for dipping a barrel of gum. But that wasn't none of my, I couldn't do that, I just never could dip gum.

LKS Why not?

DT I got it all over me and it just get on my britches and pants so bad till I couldn't stand it, and all over my hands. I think I got in too big a hurry, and I had corns on my hands, and that tarry bucket, it just about peel them corns out of my hands, and it just made my hands so sore, I never could dip gum much. But I could chip. I could pull.

LKS You mentioned selling the hogs to farmers.
Would there be auctions?

DT No they'd trade on them. Like, I want \$4 for this one over there. I'll tell you what I'll do, I'll give you 3, or, well let's split the difference, three dollars and a half. It was tradin like that.

LKS Was it always trading for cash or would you trade for

DT We'd trade for corn a lot of times, you know. Of course, the farmer always got what he wanted for the corn. But we didn't grow a lot of corn. We didn't have but 15 acres down there. And then we had a little garden spot with about 3, but we didn't put the garden there all the time. But we'd trade for corn, we had 2 or 3 farmers that want hogs, and they'd bring us corn and they used a #2 washtub for a bushel of corn. And course some of them, my daddy would say, All right, just measure it out, pour it in the crib...

LKS You talked just now about a 2 year burn. Tell me a little bit about the burning schedule, was it an annual thing

DT 087 You see, our property was divided by a road pretty much, and we'd burn one side one year and the other side the next, for cow burn. But there wasn't enough of it to do us no good. We had to have a cow burn on what was in Superior Pine and later St. Regis and they'd send the fire crews out and burn the area that we wanted for a cow burn. And every other year was when those palmettos would mature to grow a berry. And huckleberries was the same way. ...You it in the winter, when the weather was cold.

LKS Would you burn around the crops of trees where you had turpentine?

DT wouldn't burn where they had turpentine. Way back there they used to work the turpentine tree about 7 years. And pull it way high with a long stock you know. And when the woods get so rough they would take men and go in there and weed around each tree with a hoe to where when they burned the woods it wouldn't burn the tree. And, but just for cow burn we didn't put em where the turpentine trees were.

LKS You said way back, so by the time you and your father were working you weren't really

DT They changed that thing where they didn't work em but about four years, and then they'd flip the side of the face of the tree and work em 4 more. They'd, Superior Pine, they didn't let em do no double facing much, they let em single face and then if it was worked up so long then they'd let em flip to the other side of the tree and work it up. That's the way they did that.

LKS What's the difference between that and double face?

DT Well a tree grows, for one thing, longer, double face means its got a face on each side. And single face, just put it on one side of the tree.

LKS (clarifies difference, double face is working both sides of the tree at the same time. Flipping would be 4 years one side and then flipping to other. So instead of taking 4 years to work the tree you'd take 8).

DT Most of them got to doing it like that. Some of them'd go 5. That was to let the timber grow longer. If they faced it down to a 9" tree, breast high, the tree in time would grow to a 12 inch, which is a good saw mill tree. That was why it was done. That was also to prolong, a small landowner particularly, that would prolong the income instead of getting it all at one time, you'd have it spread it out over a year, about 8 years you got a steady income there.

LKS Is that what you did, you and your father?

DT 136 No, on our place we faced everything all at one time.

LKS And did you use the trees once you'd worked them out, for timber or no?

DT Well, that was done after we sold it. We sold the old worked out faces once or twice on it, one time I know it was quite a bit of it worked out years before, before this 13,000 was put up. And we sell that, those ? faces, those trees.

LKS What do you wear when you worked in the woods?

DT Well, I wore overalls and sometimes khaki britches, not much mostly overalls. Blue jeans, not much, most overalls.

LKS Anything to protect your hands or hat?

DT I wore a hat all the time. I think I picked that up from Roy Rogers [laughs} Still wearing one. I generally wear a Stetson white hat, but this belonged to my father and I wear it. I've had this hat since 1973.

LKS You mentioned during the story about your record # of trees in a single day and you came back for dinner at noon, did you ever carry food out into the woods?

DT Well we did when we were hog hunting now, [LKS but not when you were turpentineing?] No, it was all closer to home, you could walk to the house, see. 532 is not too far a walk, you know. And sometimes we ? the wagon with us and bring back a load of wood you know, when we come in, but most of the time we'd come in the noon at dinner and we'd take a long of an hour, but I didn't that day [laughs, referring to his chipping boxes story] I was proud of that, see.

LKS so you'd never have any food? Would you have something to drink out in the woods?

DT 167 Well, we had water in jugs mostly in glass jugs, but we mostly drank out of the creeks. Pa used to take what we called sweetened water, he'd put syrup in a gallon jug of water and he said that was good for our, get so hot on us. We didn't take no salt tablets back in those days, we didn't know about those things. But he'd dig a hole in the ground big enough for that jug to sit in, set it down in that hole and cover it up with straw where it'd be kinda cool. We'd drink that sweetened water. And course all the creeks wasn't fit to drink out of everywhere. But most of the time we had branches that the water was good in. If the water just stood we didn't drink it. But it was good running water we'd drink it.

LKS What would you take out in the woods when you went hog hunting?

DT 178 Oh my goodness. We'd have tea cakes and ma'd cook up all kind of stuff: peas and rice, course we always carried a hunk of meat, smoked middlin or side, you call em, we called em middlins', and slice that bacon off there. We'd cook that you know, in the morning and at night, sometime at noon too. But [LKS out in the woods] yeah, on a fire and frying pan. Have an old coffee can that we'd make, just a can that you buy coffee in and we'd make coffee in, make that out of branch water. Somehow or another that branch water made better coffee [laughs]. But we drank coffee every day. Every day in the woods.

LKS How would you carry it out? This was in the cooler weather, right, so you weren't so worried about spoilage?

DT Well, stuff didn't spoil back in them days like it does now. But in the old days when I was a cow huntin I had a flour sack. We used to buy it in 25 pound bags. Mama had a little pan about that big around {like 8"} and she'd put my lunch in that pan and cover it up and put it in that flour sack, and I'd tie a knot in that flour sack and tie it to my saddle. Well, it's all right, but a lot of times I'd be a goin' into those woods and that horse'd get hot, and that thing a bouncing and you'd get hair on it, and have to get the hair out of the sack before you could eat it [laughs]. But we, we took that wagon, we'd always have plenty to eat on the wagon. We'd stay down there sometimes, well, I've been know to stay down there two weeks at a camp that we had in the woods. WE had several of em scattered all over that area I was tellin' you about.

DT 208 But the turpentine situation, I learned a lot from my dad you know, Like I told you he worked turpentine woods for different people and on occasion, and I'd go with him. He taught me all about how to do it.

LKS And how did he learn, do you know?

DT He just learn it as a boy. [from?] I have no idea. They may have had turpentine on their place when he was a boy but I don't remember any of that being talked about much.

LKS You had 4 sisters and your mother. Did they have any role in the turpentine at all?

DT No, they didn't do anything with that. They just washed clothes and cooked and scrubbed the house, and ironed. Women's work, Canning, they'd work the vegetable end of it. The home life.

LKS you do write briefly in your book, Henry Coleman, one of the turpentine men, and you say his wife and daughters ironed for your mother. [Right]. Do you have any other recollections? I assume Henry Coleman was a black man.

DT He was. At Barnes.

LKS Recollections of role of women and children of the black workers in the camps around you and what they may have done?

DT Well there were a few women that worked in the woods a dippin'. But I don't remember their names. Seem like I remember seeing a few that'd go. The women most of the time they'd do ironing for people and they'd do washing for people. We had several women that worked for us at different times. And then there was a couple that came there, just stayed there was a housekeeper. We had a place for them there to say, and sometimes they'd, there was a house across the creek from us that sometimes they'd live in and work for my dad cross tying. But there was two in particular, Amy was one of them. She whooped me more times than Mama. She could run me down. And mama'd say, "put it on him, Amy!" She'd whip me out [laughs]. And then another was named Betty, she had her arm all ? bad. And she could do.

LKS Did they have husbands and families?

DT 248 Yeah, they had husbands. Or if there weren't enough turpentine camps somebody'd go get em on the wagon, and let em work during the day. But most of the time we'd share the clothes do em, let em work close to em at their home. Mama got to where she wasn't able to do it, she got awful heavy in her later years, course she died a young women, she was just 51.

LKS You grew up then close to these several camps that we were talking of [Yeah] Barnes and Lashlee Place and Tarver.

DT and then Alexanderville was just north of Tarver about three miles.

LKS did you spend any time, or do you have any recollections of what those camps were like? Housing,

DT 261 Yeah they were mostly built out of cypress lumber, four, once in awhile a five room that'd be added on. But they were mostly four rooms with a porch. Some of em were shotgun built you know. A-frame. Then some of them had side porches. But all of them were heated with fireplaces. One fireplace. Flues for a stove. And they weren't sealed. They may be on the top some, but never on the walls. You could, I'd seen em put newspaper, tack it on the wall or anything they could to keep the wind from blowin' through there. It was a pretty bad on em you know, I would imagine. In cold weather. But the houses were small enough if you kept a fire all night long it pretty well warmed it. But they had a garden spot, you know, that they could do a little garden if they wanted to. Most of them that had families did. And ? patches and that that'd last about the whole year. But companies wouldn't do a whole lot about fixing their house up. If it was done they done it themselves. Patchin or whatever. If a board broke on the floor they'd go get something and put it there. The company didn't do much with it unless one just about rotted down, and then they would go and put a crew in there and fix it.

LKS Was it more common to just have men living without families, single men ?

DT There was a lot of em, but not, I think it was more families.

LKS You have one description here of, a man, Willie Brown who most of his crew were his own children, was that unusual? Kids that young, age 5?

DT That's about the only one I remember. But he made all them youngins work. I don't know, no telling how many he had in the teams. His son got 14 now, one of his sons still living. He was one of those men I was telling you I was going to let you talk to. But I don't believe he would talk to you. He's very shy. Only thing you'd get out of him would be yes ma'am or no ma'am.

LKS You also talked about a rolling store that came out of Valdosta and sold to the turpentine workers. Tell me what you remember more about that.

DT 307 They was, HB Guess in Valdosta, he had a rolling store. They started out carting the fish truck, but they got to carrying everything. They'd bring stuff. Fresh vegetables on there. Go down to these camps every week and sell em to people. But the main, there one in particular that was sent out by Valdosta Grocery Company, and it was a big truck. And they carried everything. They didn't come near our house at that time. But they had kerosene drums on there, you know. And compartments. They had ice, not where they sold ice but where they had frozen fish in there, cold fish in there. Course we didn't ever buy none of them, we had plenty of fish. But they carry flour, everything in the world they had it if you could get it in a grocery store just about. Sell a lot of salt fish.

LKS What time period would that have been?

DT 330 I'd say from 37 right on up to end of time I lived there. It was still going on around these camps. After I left.

LKS Would those have been the competition for the commissary?

DT Yeah, it was. But they didn't pay it no attention. If it did I didn't hear anything about it. One man in particular, he'd go down there in the season and haul apples, he'd sell apples. His name was Roy Crews. And he sell apples to em. I don't know how he'd go get em, but he'd bring em there. And peaches was another thing. When the peach crops come in you could see them trucks go around to them camps.

LKS Did local farmers like you or others sell fresh vegetables to the camps also?

DT Not much. We sold a lot of meat, now, but now vegetables. Most of the vegetables, we'd give it to em. But meat we'd sell it. And lard and sausage and Ma would take and cook up sides in little pieces, maybe an inch square, she'd cook it, and then ? it down in a kind of lard. And when you'd put it in there and it'd keep. And she'd take and dip it out and warm it up and it was ready to eat. And she'd do sausage the same way. And of course we had sausage hanging on them, a sight ?{laughs}. Ham...

LKS Would she sell those to the workers at the camps?

DT They'd come over there and buy it, we didn't haul it to em. Back during the war when they had food stamps, we sold a lot of it to em, cause they couldn't get those stamps. They'd come there and buy meat and lard from us because they couldn't get stamps to buy it.

LKS And the commissary was still going on at that time, that system?

DT Yeah, but they didn't sell a lot of the stuff we did. Mostly what they sold was dry goods, dry food, they didn't have stuff like that much.

LKS 367 Do you also recall Tarver was the biggest camp.

DT That and Mayday was the two biggest camps.

LKS But even in these smaller camps—I know you're a guitar player. There must have been entertainment going on in some of these camps at night. I don't know if you were allowed to go down there as a boy. Do you have any sense of what might have happened?

DT You mean in the black people? [yeah. Did you have any interaction} Well, no not like that. I remember old Buddy Jack singing the blues, but he didn't play a guitar, he tap

on a barrel and use that for his music and sing. But I don't remember none of them played guitars and stuff.

LKS Any juke joints or any music making? Or drinking?

DT 381 They'd have em, but its mostly drinking. They might have had an old record player or something. But they'd go to fighting and we'd have to go separate em. Get them bossmen out every Sat. night.

LKS Was your father involved in that at all?

DT 386 I was later on, like I was telling you. After I got married, first year. When you get ready we'll talk about that. I worked one year with Autry turpentine, I'd rather not use the name though. It don't matter. Baker's Mill. Autry owned it. Walter Autry, I believe his name was. I worked there a year. {what time period?} I got married in 1951 and this was 1952. I didn't stay there but nine months.

LKS You had to go down there on Sat. Night.

DT Lord have mercy. Every Sat. night. I hate to tell this tale, it's a little bit rough. {It's up to you.} Well it's nothing nasty, it's about something that happened. I had a house and there was a road just south of my house and a road going around my house. I had laborers on a road across from my house on the east side, I was growing a garden on the South, and behind that garden there was a road and some houses on the other side. But we had hired this new man, oh maybe two or three weeks before. He'd come in here from somewhere. Big tall black skinned man. And I had walked out on my back porch, and I heard something tap! Bum, bum, bum, bum. Drumming you know. Bap! And I couldn't figure what it was. I knew it was somebody. So I walked across that garden and stood there listening at that house. And you could see the light, just lamp light through the door. And I climbed over the fence and walked on over up to the porch, and I hear TAP! "Ahhhhhh." And he was just cutting her. And I listened for a few minutes, and I just walked up and kicked that door open. And he was settin' on the bed with her head between his knees and he had her shoe, hitting her right on the top of her head with that shoe and it was just blood just pouring. If you put that in there its up to you, but I got him off of her, she didn't belong there, she belonged back up there with somebody else. And she'd just come down drinking. Got her back up there, we cleaned her head up best we could. Got some women in there. I got after him, don't have you staying down here on this end of the quarters tonight. And I had one that every Sunday morning about 4:00, he'd come knock on my winder, and he said, Loan me 50 cents. And I got to where I just laid 50 cent piece on the window sill and get it back on Monday, you know, the next week....

LKS Know what he used it for?

DT By him a drink. Shine. [laughs]

LKS 450 I know you have a story in your book about your dad selling moonshine at one of the camps.

DT Yeah, when I was real small. He was, they think of anything they had to do to make a living back then. Depression if you know what I mean. He was making some, him and some of my uncles on my mother's side. But he'd sell it, he'd put them two jugs on his horse, I was behind the saddle ridin' holding on to him. I couldn't have been over 5 years old. We went into an old house didn't have nobody living in it, at Barnes' camp. They was a sawmill there. And at one time a turpentine still there. But not in my memory, not in my lifetime. But that sawmill was going. And there was turpentine and I think they sawed cross-ties there too. I know they cut an awful lot of them. But he rode up there and tied his horse to a tree or a bush or whatever. We sat down on that porch just before 12:00. Course he didn't know that they was going to work that afternoon. He figured they'd knock off at 12. And he said his jug there on this porch. And he had him some little cup that he'd pour them a drink out of. And he had some half pint bottles that he'd carried and some corks. And he set there waiting and the whistle blew. And they come right on, 3 or 4 of them over there. He would sell them a drink. And I forget what he get for it, a nickel or a dime or something like that. And he'd pour out a drink in that cup and hand it to em. It wasn't long before here come man that owned it. And he'd s big old pot bellied man, chest and chin out like that. And he had a big old pistol in his belt. I was a little boy and I thought was something. Cause my daddy carried a gun but it wsn't where you could see it. [laughs] He come walking across there that pistol in his belt and I just know'd he's gonna shoot somebody or Pa. Scared me. And he says, I thought I told you don't come back over here these quarters with that shine until I let my men off. I want to work this afternoon. Course a little cussing going on. I can't do it with a bunch of drunk men he says. Pa didn't pay him no attention. He just kept pouring. Reckon he said something like You hear what I was saying? Says, tell you what you do, Pa told him. You get out on the railroad crossing with that big old gun you got, and you keep em on the other side of that railroad if you don't want em to get nothing to drink. [laughs] He went on about his business.

LKS 516 We'll talk another time about the Suwanee River Troubadours and your band. I know you've written a # of songs in your day. Have you ever written any lyrics that talk about working in the woods?

DT No, never crossed my mind. I'll try to write you one though. {note: He did!}

LKS Back to your experience in camp you were a supervisor for, was there a church or a school located in those camps?

DT They had churches that they'd hold churches in. They was, them youngins'd catch a bus and go to school some, but they wasn't supposed to go back in those days. And a lot of them didn't go, most of them didn't. I'll tell you a story about another instance here about a little boy. His name was Andre. He was 11 years old, maybe, could have been 12. When I went to work there is was cold, and we were putting timber up you know. Facing em, putting the faces on the trees. And his guardian was an uncle named Luke.

Little boy Andre he had him toting cups. And he was barefooted. And I seen him break the ice on them ponds in the morning carrying cups for them trees. I said one morning, Luke, why don't you buy that boy some shoes? Aw, he don't want em. He won't wear em. Andre got to coming up to my house and we was feeding him, too. [laughs] On Sat. I'd take the truck and take the older hands to town at 1:00 and I stayed till about 4:30 or 5 and I come back. And if they wanted to catch that truck back fine, and if they didn't they'd have to find their own way home. But Andre he on both trips. I come get my wife and we go to town and bought our groceries in my car. And he got where he come up there and he'd go to town with me. Well we'd go to the movies generally on a Sat. afternoon. And Andre he'd go too. I'd pay his way in the movie which back then they was segregated and him upstairs. He'd go to sleep every time and I'd have to go up there and get him, wake him up. But he'd tote wood in for me. We used the wood stove. I was going down the road and he's back in the back seat asleep and I told my wife, I says, when you get in the house tell Andre to bring in a few pieces of wood off a back yard back there. And she did, she didn't know what was going on. And I [laughs] went in there and grabbed a sheet off the bed and went out the front door and went down to the commissary and he had to walk right by. I put that sheet over my head and he come along, whistling, and I walking out behind [laughing] and he saw that sheet. Lord have mercy. You never seen a young in screech as hard in my life. And he took off going in the woods. And I seen I had a messed up. And I never ? so hard, and I got after him. And I finally run him down by hollering and calling his name. But I pulled that sheet off. When I caught that kid his eyes were that big and he was just hollered, you know. I felt so ashamed of myself. But he never did come back and go to town with us any more.

LKS 608 end of tape.