

Oral History Project:

Interviewee: Lottie Mae Carter

Interviewer: Laurie K. Sommers

Interview Report Date: May 10th, 2001

Oral Interview Date: May 10, 2001

Interview Location: [REDACTED] Waycross, Georgia, 31501

List of acronyms: LMC= Lottie Mae Carter, LS= Laurie Sommers, Unknown 1= UK 1,

Unknown 2= UK 2, Unknown 3= UK 3

Transcript by Colleen B. Folsom

[Begin Transcription at 00:01:09]

Laurie Sommers: Okay, I'm just going to make a little announcement here. This is May 10th, 2001 in the home of Lottie Lee Carter in Hoboken or Schlautervale, I guess is where we are

Lottie Mae Carter: Waycross

LS: Waycross? Your address is Waycross. Laurie Sommers, field worker for the South Georgia Folklife Project.

LMC: [unintelligible]

LS: Test. Yeah that's what confuses me about these addresses, but...

LMC: Yeah. Waycross is fine.

LS: Okay, just. What I'd like to do with the tape is I'm gathering some history and some memories and stories people have about growing up in this area and singing out of the notebook and also some of the singing and traditions associated with the Primitive Baptist Church and I have been particularly interested to talk to women who have a life-time of experience...

LMC: Uh huh. [00:02:14]

LS: just living in this area and that's why i'm very pleased that we could do this and these tapes are going in a collection at the University at Valdosta State about South Georgia that I'm trying to develop where they'll be available to anybody who's interested...

LMC: Mhm. [00:02:33]

LS: to listen to them and if you say something you rather not have on the tape or you know you think of something and maybe it doesn't come out quite right we can you know we can redo it or you could say it again, but that's just sort of on to... you know so I can get your words down right and not just based on my memory from notes and I have a little permission form for doing the interview at the end that I'd like you to sign that it was ok and that we did this with your permission and your comfortable with it. Will that be alright?

LMC: As far as I know it will be [00:03:09]

LS: Okay. Alright. So we can, I usually just, we do it, and then you can see if there's anything you want to change and then we can make those notes on the form. And I just wanted to start, I know when we were visiting before and you were feeling...

LMC: I'm not, I'm not out for publicity or anything.

LS: Right, No. This is not for publi[city], this is more for just information and knowledge so.

You told me you were born on February 26th,

LMC: Yeah [00:03:42]

LS: 1910.

LMC: Yeah.

LS: And is your name 'Lottie' is that your name you were given or is that a nickname?

LMC: Yeah Lottie, Lottie Mae, Lottie Mae. Uh huh.

LS: Mae. M-A-Y or M-A?

LMC: M-A-E

LS: E.

LMC: No, I believe M-A-Y [unintelligable].

LS: Okay, M-A-Y Lee, and then you married Mannen Carter.

LMC Mhm.

LS: Okay.

LMC: Mannen Michael Carter

LS: Okay. You said in November of 1935 I had written.

LMC: Mhm.

LS: And what is your mailing address here Mrs. Carter? [00:04:21]

LMC: My What?

LS: Mailing address. What. What.

LMC: This?

LS: Right here where you live.

LMC: Uh huh. Waycross Route 2, Box 275.

LS: Okay, Route 2,

LMC: 2. Uh huh

LS: Box 275

LMC: Uh huh. 31501.

LS: 31501?

LMC: Mhm.

LS: Okay.

LMC: I think that they say that it has been changed but I don't know.

LS: Okay.

LMC: That last number I think has been changed there or another, [unintelligible] but I don't know what it is. That's, That's [unintelligible] been so long.

LS: And this is Brantley County here?

LMC: Yeah, Brantley County.

LS: Okay, still okay. And you were born in Brantley County?

LMC: Yes. No, I was born in Pierce County.

LS: Pierce County

LMC: But it's now Brantley.

LS: Okay, and that's where your home-place was? You were born at home? [00:05:16]

LMC: Uh huh.

LS: Okay. And you were raised up in High Bluff was that the church that you were...

LMC: Yeah. Uh huh.

LS: were raised up in. And did you, are you a member currently of High Bluff?

LMC: Yes. Uh huh.

LS: Okay. Okay. And I know you had ten children so that has to have been a full-time job.

LMC: Yeah Uh huh.

LS: Did you ever work...

LMC: Well, but now we never went to the church until officially until our children were all grown. [00:05:49]

LS: Okay. But I was going to ask first just did you ever work outside the home or were you u?

LMC: No I was just a home maker.

LS: Yeah. Just. Ten children and I'm sure...

LMC: I did one time, I [unintelligible] eating place at the stock market for six years. That was just one day a week,

LS: Uh huh.

LMC: so I didn't call that working out from the home cause my children went to school that day that's where we went to [unintelligible].

LS: Okay

LMC: That's the only time I've ever.

LS: Okay. And your father Raymond Lee [00:06:33]

LMC: Yeah.

LS: And your mother Mary.

LMC: Mary. Mary Hickox Lee.

LS: Okay. And you are... Do I remember you're the second child of the second wife.

LMC: Wife. Uh huh

LS: Okay. So your brother Frank was the eldest...

LMC: Uh huh

LS: ... of that group, right?

LMC: Yeah

LS: And then, Maddie and the other sister who died were your half-sisters who were older

LMC: Who were older. Maddie is still living.

LS: Right. Well I told you she's the one that told me I, she talked to you instead of her because you have a better memory. [00:07:17]

LMC: Yeah

LS: So, the pressure is on now from your sister huh? But she also I guess wasn't feeling well
With her shingles that she has so.

LMC: Yeah. Well she says she's still feeling that right on.

LS: Yeah.

LMC: You know they last a long time.

LS: Yep. Okay. Will you just before I put on the tape recorder you said that you, you enjoyed
being a child, that you liked your childhood, so I wondered if you probably have some, a lot of
memories of growing up and your family with all those brothers and sisters and... What as the
oldest girl, do you remember that there were certain responsibilities that you had in the family...

LMC: Uh huh.

LS: ... certain chores or...

LMC: Yeah.

LS: ... things that you were supposed to do? Tell me about those.

LMC: Well see so you see I was the only girl. My two older sisters were married and gone and I
was the only girl that it was boys. Frank was just above me. Then there was three more boys and
then I lost a little sister in there, so there was that [unintelligible] I was the only girl. So I come, I
was kind of a loner, and I lived to myself and I talked to myself. I did those things and that was
my amusement, if I was bad about something I had to get that off my chest, anything that
happened to me, I had to say it. It didn't just stay buttered up in me, it had to come out and if
nobody... Back then you didn't talk back to your parents, so you could just ask for my feelings,
my telling myself about it. [00:08:25]

LS: Hmm.

LMC: And that was the way with everything that happened I talked to that one myself.

LS: Did you play games with your brothers? Did you play with them that you remember?

[00:09:36]

LMC: Well some. There was some things we did.

LS: Can you remember any of them? What you liked to do in your... if you had time just for...
I'm sure you were very busy with...

LMC: Uh huh.

LS: ...chores and you...

LMC: Well. Maybe when we had company or something, somebody to play with, but not just with the boys. We fought and scratched. I can tell about that. [00:09:56]

LS: So you never played actually games with them, that you remember?

LMC: Nu huh, no. They had their their the boys to themselves. And I was really a loner. I liked to cook and I liked to do the things at the house, and I remember once I was on [unintelligible] but we had cotton and after lunch they told us it was time to go back and I don't remember doing it but the cotton was real tall right out the back door, that back gate there, and I had just a little bit in my back and I laid down and took a nap. And when I woke up I heard the gate squeal, it was my daddy going to work. He caught me lying down sleep. And the rest of them was at the field at work and I just you, I was going to be in trouble, but he says 'Don't you think you slept long enough [unintelligible] so I don't know how big I was, I just remember that.

LS: Well, the farm that you were raised on that's the home place right? [00:11:15]

LMC: Uh huh. Yeah.

LS: Behind. How big a farm was that?

LMC: Well now that was about an eighty-acre farm. But then my daddy owned more land, he owned over on the river he had a whole lot of land over there, a lot.

LS: On the Satilla, or?

LMC: Uh huh. On the Satilla.

LS: Uh huh.

LMC: Then there was land between ours of theirs that we were never able... My daddy wanted on that, and he couldn't he couldn't, he never could purchase that because the governor of Montana owned it.

LS: Huh.

LMC: And somehow or another you know people like that go down and buy land. And finally the [unintelligible] finally got it but we never could buy, my daddy, my daddy wanted it so bad but that would've given him more timberland on the hills and if he [unintelligible] get that it'd be.

LS: What did he raise on the farm? What crops were the main crops? [00:12:16]

LMC: We had everything. We grew everything that we... we had a garden of vegetables. And then his main crop though was peanuts and corn and cotton. So then bow weave would come along and he'd cut us out of the cotton. Then we took in tobacco.

LS: Uh huh.

LMC: and then we'd get tobacco as our money crop. And he'd always had hogs, he would sell a beef and cows. Sometimes he shut up cows and feed them for a while and then settle a home to the, like mister called it, but they had the market in Waycross. And that's the way... you see we didn't have a stock market then and places men like that would take them in bulk sometimes and then a lot of times he would put your port and take it off to sell it and just different that was our [unintelligible]. We always had a milk cow and we always had plenty milk butter, cream. We made our sweet potatoes and we had our bacon and he would... I don't know if you've ever

heard it before but back then we didn't have freezers and my daddy would kill a bee for a time and then his brother would kill one, my granddaddy, and they'd each take a quarter, that was as much as they could handle at the time. And my daddy liked to get a [unintelligible] liked all those did, a hind quarter because you could peel each section out and dry it, salt it down, and leave it overnight, then my mother would wrap it, fix corn meal and red pepper and borax and roll mix roll that in there. That would keep the bugs out of it, and hang it up and dry it, smoke it one day and then, it would keep and it was so good. If you never eaten any dried steak you ought to try it.

LS: Now did you help her with that as the oldest girl? [00:15:03]

LMC: Oh yeah. Oh yeah. We helped do all that.

LS: Did your younger sisters help too or your brothers or was that women's work?

LMC: They were not, later on when they came along we had cold storage and they would take it up there. And then finally we got freezers.

LS: Mhm.

LMC: So.

LS: But when you were helping your mother when you were young there was enough of an age difference that it was before refrigeration, Right?

LMC: Yeah. And that we did, there was no refrigeration, my daddy built a little dairy house they called it, it was a little place, about so wide, and it was up on legs.

LS: About six feet wide?

LMC: Uh huh.

LS: Yeah?

LMC: Something and that's where we kept our milk. And it would keep it but when it got real

hot weather, it got hot too. You sealed it inside and out, and put it under a tree in the shade preferably. And that would keep it a while because in the summertime, milk would go bad in a day and sour and then the way would eat up the cream and we hardly have it, it would be, for I don't know if we could skim it hardly.

LS: Hmm.

LMC: But that when you got that we could we could, it kept it a pretty good while.

LS: Now the, you mentioned curing steak, what about hogs? You must've made...

LMC: The what?

LS: Smoked your, smoked your, smoked hams too? Did he do that?

LMC: Yeah. Uh huh.

LS: Okay. You just mentioning beef weren't you? Steaks.

LMC: Uh huh.

LS: But also did it with pork

LMC: Well yeah, did it with pork. Oh yeah, Oh yeah. We had, when we had on-killings, the meat was salted down and cured and left there, it scattered out to get the animal heat out of it. He picked cold days to do that. He got all the animal heat out of it, and salted it down good, and scattered it [00:16:53]

LS: What do you mean getting the animal heat out of it?

LMC: Let it get... if you kill a hog or a cow the heat of it's body remains in there if its not cold weather.

LS: I see.

LMC: And you can't pack it up with that animal heat. It will spoil. You got to get all the heat out of the body out before it'll... and get that out, and then salt it, get it, then stack it up, covered up,

and it would keep, but so he'd always pick cold weather to do that.

LS: Did they smoke it after that?

LMC: They had.. they let us... when it was cured so many days I think it had to be ten or twelve days. And then they would rinse the salt off of it, wash it, and sprinkle it with borax and we'd go get a beargrass, its beargrass you seen how...

LS: Okay.

LMC: It stripped that up, that's what we hung it up in.

LS: Huh. Now did the did you use the red pepper for that too or was that just the steak?

LMC: Uh huh. Enough to keep the red pepper borax on that. That's to keep the bugs from getting in it.

LS: Okay

LMC: There was one time we had a time of skipper bugs and we found out that borax would keep them out. We had a good cold winter we could cure the hams with bones in them. And that the meat was so much better, and it was thicker and juicier and but if we didn't have the right kind of weather, they'd have to slab it off down, and take the bones out and dry it out quick just for it to taste good.[unintelligible]. [00:18:35]

LS: Now was that hog killing something that mostly the men and boys did or were you involved in it?

LMC: Everybody was involved. Everything with hog... with hog killing days, they swapped work. If so and so whether they got... everybody come and brought his wife and they would kill hogs and the band would kill him and get the hair off of him and put on the galas and they'd clean him, some of the boys. But my husband says he never done anything when he was growing up. His job was to clean them after they were hung up. They'd get some of the warm water and

they had a brush to scrub them and get them clean and wash them down good. And then they were clean and white as they could be when they got through.

LS: What would the girls and the women do then?

LMC: They had to do the rid the chitlins. You know they had to have that for casing you know, we didn't know what sausage case it in, that had to be took out. And then they had to be washed, they were going to empty them out and then turn them and scrub them. They'd put salt, corn shucks, and some raw grits in there.

LS: Hmm.

LMC: Strip up the shucks fine, put it in the tub and scrub them, get in there, we had to scrub them like that. And then we'd have to turn them back and it would peel that outer layer of skin off of them because in that made them tough, and turn them back and stuff them then.

LS: So was the sausage made then on the same day as the hog killing?

LMC: Uh huh. Yeah. And now before that we finally got to where we could go to the storage and get the sausage meat ground so by the— take the car and run up there to get it ground, but when I was growing up, when I was smaller, we had little old sausage [maker] just had to stand there and grind it, just cut off one little piece and grind it, kind of takes as long to grind the sausage as it would anything. And the quicker we got it done before it got cold, if we get it before it got... if it was left over night you just couldn't hardly stiff. It was so cold and stiff you wouldn't hardly stuff it to sausage. And when I was a kid our stuffer was an old arm thing about this in kind of a cone shape, went down and it had a funnel like to put the chitlins on it. And we would put them on that and we would fill up this big old thing and it had a lever that pushed down and pushed them in slowly, pull it back, fill it up, and start again. [00:21:08]

LS: Hmm.

LMC: And they'd get airy there and they'd have to stick pins in it, in certain turn the air out of if they didn't they'd be, it would fill up loose. There was a lot of stuff but later on it was...

LS: So in hog killing then while the men actually butchered the hogs and cleaned the hogs, the women were dealing with the intestines and the making the sausage. [00:22:39]

LMC: Uh huh. And then the boys would the heads was to clean, the heads and feet. That was the job for the boys. That wasn't big enough to do everything else, or either they were laid back and the women had to do it later on.

LS: Hmm.

LMC: But everything was saved. It was taken care of.

LS: Now how about girls? Did they help the women? [00:23:14]

LMC: Oh yeah. Well you see, most of the girls were going to school. And the afternoons is when they'd come in.

LS: Didn't the boys go to school too then?

LMC: Oh yeah. Oh yeah.

LS: Yeah so the kids would come in...

LMC: Uh huh. Yeah. They would have a hog killet and the neighbors would come in and help, and then all of these finishing up jobs in the afternoon when the children got in from school, they had to do that. And of course there was some cows to milk and everything to do.

LS: Well, was it a fun time after everything was done? Did they have any kind of...?

LMC: No. Everybody was tired and ready to go home. Then everybody that helped them, they'd give everybody apart of... some of the fresh. The backbones of the ribs, the things like that that was taked down. And you know, the livers and things were divided out with each other and something to have a good fresh meal. They would absolutely give you enough from the hog

killt to last your family nearly a week. And I had one little old [unintelligible] she's a little old, she was the best help, and she could can and fix all that stuff up and save it, every mouthful of it.

LS: Did you can meat as well? [00:24:23]

LMC: Uh huh. Yeah. When we got through, and the lard was cooked out and everything, then they'd put some grease back in there and if there was more bones than we could handle, they would chop them up. Backbones cut them up pieces, and fry them until they were done. You couldn't leave none of that animal water in them but they had to be fried out. And they put [unintelligible] put lard over them so that's...

LS: But they wouldn't actually be put up or canned like vegetables,

LMC: Yeah

LS: They would?

LMC: Uh huh.

LS: Oh Okay.

LMC: The next summer, if you didn't have a chicken [unintelligible] you could get some of that canned meat out and you could use it for seasoning and take those bones out and heat them, put them in the oven and heat them and melt all that grease off and drain it off, and then put the bones in hot water, boil them until they were tender and cook rice in them or anything you wanted fixing. Just make a good gravy.

LS: So was your mother a good cook?

LMC: Yes. She was a good [cook]. Had to cook vegetables and things. She was really a good cook. And [unintelligible] I was the only girl in there for a space and it hurt my feelings and the other girls would come up and she'd say 'Lottie' she says 'What are we going to do?' She says 'If you stay with [unintelligible] you'll never learn how to cook. So I got out and then the

[unintelligible], got me something to doing and lived right there in Hoboken. Worked with a good family there and that's as much of my family as my brothers and sisters is.

LS: So you went and lived with this other family? [00:27:19]

LMC: Uh huh and worked for them.

LS: And what was their name?

LMC: Burtons. And their youngest son called me, oh about, this don't need too long to take. He said 'Lottie' said when I answered the phone. I said 'Yes?' He said 'You have any trouble with putting the shoes under your bed?' I said 'No I am not!' Then he said it was just a joke, got tickled. I said 'No I am not.' But he's a little boy I took care of when I was little.

LS: Oh okay. So how old were you when that happened?

LMC: What?

LS: When you went to work for the Burtons.

LMC: Oh, I was in my twenties.

LS: So before you got married but when you were...

LMC: Uh huh. I was already dating my husband then.

LS: Well tell me about your mother, you said that she was a good cook. Was there anything that she was particularly known for that [00:28:18]

LMC: She was particularly known for feeding for everybody that come and she made cookies a lot.

LS: What kind of cookies? Do you remember?

LMC: Ginger. She would use part sugar and part syrup and one of the cousins the other day said 'Oh' said 'one of aunt Mary's cookies.' I said 'I want you all to know' that I says 'they weren't always Aunt Mary's cookies.' I did that a lot.

LS: So you know how to make them?

LMC: Oh yeah.

LS: Do your daughters know how. No?

LMC: No they don't.

LS: Did you stop making them when they were growing up?

LMC: No. No I'd make right on once in a while. In fact, Wanda over there, her husband, he comes, with a cookie jar, and I'm behind. I thought about doing that this afternoon, but I didn't.

I can't hold out. I get something started I have to quit. Just can't hold out.

LS: Well you know one of the things that has really struck me talking to various women who are in their late sixties, seventies and I see it still happening who were raised Primitive Baptist as you are, when they would be the annual meeting. Now I don't know if your family lived closed to a church or not but were you one of the families that would have all sorts of people come and stay with you? [00:29:51]

LMC: Well, we never did have as... we lived a little further off. We lived back over there and we didn't have as much company as somebody but we have had a few times.

LS: Mhm.

LMC: You know, when the, when we had children as you call "teenagers" and children could persuade their parents to go with them. We had a good bit, but not like some people did but we had, we always had plenty to eat at our house. My mother was a good cook, my daddy was a good provider, and we had it. Now don't mean we had fancy stuff everyday but we had something good to eat everyday, we had a good meal, breakfast, dinner, and supper.

LS: Have you ever heard the expression of 'blueberry doobie' something like that? Its some kind of desert with blueberry. [00:31:18]

LMC: Yeah.

LS: Have you heard that?

LMC: No I haven't heard that, but we made blueberry cobblers lots and of course we had the milk cow and the cream and everything that made them so good and my mother could cook pretty good ones. And you know, we always, she always had to have something cooked and I don't guess you've never heard of this before and one day we didn't had, we run out of fruit you know we always had stuff canned but it was right there when had to give it out.

And we come in from the field to work and she'd had a big cobbler there. And I said 'What's that?' And she says 'That's vinegar.' And she took a cup of vinegar I think and put sweetened it to taste and put crusting around it, and you know, it was good.

LS: Hmm.

LMC: It was [unintelligible] good. She had a big old pan she'd put it in and it was you know it was kinda tart and it was good, but I've never heard of anybody else making one but her. But she had, she would have a fruit desert of some kind most everyday and it'd be some kind of a cobbler or something, or either some preserves of some kind that and she would make this thing full of biscuits.

LS: She had like a bread tray, did she? One of those... [00:33:14]

LMC: Oh yeah. That big bread tray.

LS: Well did you have fruit trees growing on your farm that you could have your own fruit or berries bushes...

LMC: Yeah. Yep, we had our own peaches. We had one pear tree. I remember when I was a kid, my granddaddy had a pear tree and we didn't have one. And oh I thought pears was much better than peaches because they was at grandads. And

LS: This is your grandad John, or on your mother's side?

LMC: On my mother's side. Hickox.

LS: Hickox. What was his name?

LMC: Dave.

LS: Dave.

LMC: David. Mhm. So finally, we got a pear tree, we had a grape vine, had two grape vines [unintelligible] and so we would have grape jelly and then we had peach orchards over on the other... we didn't... the trees at our house had worms in them. They didn't turn out much. And we had two peach orchards over on the river on the far [unintelligible]. And we'd have this press peach and it was good, it was firm and it was good for canning. But it was not a juicy peach to you know just get you a mellow peach and eat it, but it didn't have a bad taste but it was, it made the best canned peaches. And that's, one year we canned five-hundred quarts.

LS: Just you, your mother, and your sisters or other women?

LMC: [unintelligible] Our daddy would come in and help out in the field because you see when peachers are ready you got to save them or their gone tomorrow. And he'd come help in out the field. And I spent one whole day one time, my job was to pack them in the jars and cook them and the rest of them peeled them and they kept me busy in the kitchen and it was just, I was just one jar after the other. When one was cooked the other was [unintelligible]

LS: Over a wood stove?

LMC: A wood stove.

LS: Did you have a fig tree? [00:35:44]

LMC: Mhm. Mhm. We had two.

LS: Did she put up those figs too?

LMC: Yeah. We preserved the figs. Figs has always been my favorite preserve. And I had a big fig tree right out back there, right out my kitchen window. And it got big enough it fell all up in it [unintelligible] figs I did let [unintelligible] every morning we'd pick figs and I saved every one of them. And one year, a part of it died and just died. And the next year the other bloomed out and then it died and it did, we found out that it rotted over at the top of the [unintelligible]. And I think what happened when it was, when we put it, when we planted, put it there, it was real dry spotted. It got a little too dry and I put an old tire around it and filled it, filled in the dirt around that, watered it and kept watering it, and it come out. And it was so dry and I think that water, but it that made it take roots right on top and the roots didn't go down, is what I think did it. And it was so [unintelligible] on top, and the weight of it just broke it off. But for about three years, we really had fig preserves.

LS: That was at this house though or... [00:37:33]

LMC: Yeah. That was here.

LS: Right. In your, in your home growing up when you were putting up different jellies or fruit or preserves, did you do things with may-haw?

LMC: No we didn't have mayhaws.

LS: Not even down by the river?

LMC: Mhm.

LS: Alright.

LMC: They had mayhaws. There was one mayhaw bush somewhere over here at my brothers and I never, there was never enough I could get to make jelly but my sister goes down on the river and gets mayhaws every year.

LS: The citila?

LMC: Mhm.

LS: Yeah. Which sister is that?

LMC: Mary.

LS: Okay. I didn't ask her about that. Yeah she...

LMC: They used to go down there to get... but I have heard her mention it and been a while.

They used to go down there to get them and...

LS: So growing up the farm you had peaches, figs, and grapes. Anything else?

LMC: And Pears

LS: Pears, okay. And you mentioned you had garden vegetables. Did you have a big garden that was just outside just for the family, for to grow vegetables to eat? [00:38:47]

LMC: Yeah. We set aside. We had a garden at the end of the lake and it was about, I recon, a quarter of an acre of it or something. It was a good garden spot, but that was our fall garden.

Then in the spring, after [unintelligible] when I was small, but they got the family got bigger, we needed a bigger garden so we went out back at the lot and planted a garden out there got we got that and it was a little closer to the house that we had there for seven years.

LS: What would be in the spring garden versus the fall garden?

LMC: In the spring we would have beans, squash, cucumbers, and tomatoes, onions.

LS: What kind of squash?

LMC: When I was a tiny kid, they used these white ones. Then we later got to use the the yellow, crooked neck squash. I like them white ones, they were good.

LS: So they were like an acorn squash?

LMC: Uh huh. But they were white.

LS: Huh.

LMC: That's, but I was a kid. I don't know whether... I don't know why. But that's the kind of squash us and all of us around there had. [00:40:22]

LS: Huh.

LMC: But then later we got to get the other squash.

LS: And beans are... What kind of beans? The pole beans or the...

LMC: Yeah. We just pole beans. The Kentucky wonders. And they'd have one roll of those and they come in later and the others was pintos for shells and what is the other kind?

LS: You have butter beans or?

LMC: No there snap beans. We use them for green beans. But I can't think of the name of it right now.

LS: And what about your fall garden?

LMC: The fall garden we had rutabagas, turnips, cabbage, mustard, collards, and things like that.

LS: And when would that be planted usually?

LMC: He would, he would usually plant, I don't know. My daddy didn't plant by the moon

LS:I was going to ask you that.

LMC: Uh huh. Lots and lots of people out... now now my father-in-law did though. He if the moon weren't right he wouldn't... you'd just be wasting your seed and fertilizer as far as he was concerned. And my daddy though all that was stupid. He says 'If you plant anything and put seed, fertilizer and plow it and take it,' he says you'll make something, and he says don't matter which moon you plant it on. What my father-in-law said it would make a long so it wouldn't bear much, and all this kind of stuff, and my daddy was just sent the way he was going to plant. As soon as he got ready, he was going to plant. So that's the way he did everything he done. His way.

LS: But you must've planted peas of different kinds, huh? [00:42:37]

LMC: Oh yeah, different kinds. We'd have the...

LS: Were those fall or spring?

LMC: Uh huh?

LS: What time of year?

LMC: In the spring.

LS: In the Spring

LMC: We would plant the snap beans and things and along you know peas don't do much till it gets hot weather. Do you remember these long red-hull peas? The shell is so easy and they make the best snaps, and that's the kind of peas that had the little acre peas was the kind we had that my daddy planted. But the acre peas was hard to shell, they finally got them to improve them. They'd try to shell them and they'd split and they'd get too tough for snaps and they wouldn't shell and he just planted enough to satisfy the family just a few. And then he did like to have a... back then we would pick our dry peas and he had a loft in the smoke house up over there and that's where he put his peas. He said the [unintelligible] that the bugs didn't bother them we didn't have, the bugs didn't, and we would just empty them up there and then they would take them out and sun them, go get you a bag, fill it, put them out in the sun and sun them and that would dry them out more from being up there, and then whip them out and he knew how to get out there and fan the broke up leaves and things out of it, it was good to have the, my dad was good at cleaning the peas from getting them out of the trash...

LS: Hm.

LMC: the leaves and there was a lot of them.

LS: Now I think that I got on a different track. I was interested in the time of year for the spring

garden. When would you plant and then harvest usually? [00:44:37]

LMC: The fall garden did was [unintelligible] spring garden, the peas.

LS: What time of year would he put it in usually, like when?

LMC: Well, he planted the beans and the cucumbers and things and about the time it stopped growing, then he planted the peas. Peas would take a little a...they bagged the peas with his corn. Corn and peas was a little bit later. But I don't know. Probably the last of March or the first of April.

LS: And what about the fall garden?

LMC: The fall garden was planted about the third week in September.

LS: Okay. And was this always your daddy who did this? Was were the women involved in the garden at all?

LMC: Oh everybody was involved. That was his... of course he told us when and what to do. And my mother was always there. She was she got the seed and done the planting herself and of course we had to dig the holes already to drop the seed and told us what to do. But she managed it and put what she wanted, where she wanted, and how much.

LS: So your mother did that, not your father? [00:46:03]

LMC: My mother.

LS: What did your father do then, he told you when to? Describe to me the role of your mother versus your father in the garden there. Who was in charge?

LMC: Well he was in charge of the horses and things and that part of it, but then he let her plant he bought seeds, he bought what she sent for, what she wanted, and then she planted like she wanted. He'd fix the roads, put the fertilizer. If he didn't, and in my daddy's last days, he was not able and he always had as far back as I can remember, he had a farm [unintelligible to help him.

And whoever the farm [unintelligible] was, was the one who did the plowing and everything till finally the boys got big enough to help.

LS: And who tended the garden then during, while the weeding it and taking care of it...?

LMC: He had the boys plow it like it needed and she was [unintelligible] she was afraid we'd cut down but she was going to handle the hole. She liked to do that and she seen to that herself. But we were there to help. If there was grass to pull or if there was anything to do while we could do that but she put us where she though we were...would do something but we helped with all of it.

LS: Mhm. You mentioned when we talked before about when the boys and girls came back from school, how far did you go in school?

LMC: To the seventh grade.

LS: And was that, what school did you attend?

LMC: Cascade.

LS: Mhm.

LMC: You know Jimmy

LS: Yeah

LMC: Carter?

LS: Mhm.

LMC: His son that lives there by...

LS: Rodney

LMC: That's the old school house

LS: Okay.

LMC: But it was right around the corner from where its at. But that's where I went to school.

And you see there is no high school anywhere around and my daddy wanted us to get an

education and my two sisters he would send them to Douglass to school and they both got married.

LS: You mean to high school or to...?

LMC: Well, on to high school. You see Douglas and Blackshear I think that was, they finally have a high school in Blackshear, but I don't know whether they did it first or not. I think Douglas was the first and then it would really... Douglass finally went in to a junior college then.

[00:48:44]

LS: Now what about in Waycross?

LMC: What [unintelligible] Waycross. Now there was a school, there was a piece a paper about it not long ago, what was that school? It was out where the those two churches are.

LS: I'm not going to be able to help you here. I'm sorry.

LMC: Coming [unintelligible] the underpass. Ava Street.

LS: Okay.

LMC: Those churches there. That's where the high...The Waycross... And there was one where they move to. It was where the building was across from where Cresson Church once was in Waycross then. I don't guess you remember that?

LS: Mmm mm.

LMC: And that next block there was the high school.

LS: But

LMC: And then they moved it out over there.

LS: But that wasn't there when you were old enough to go to high school? [00:50:03]

LMC: Uh uh.

LS: So seventh grade was pretty much what everyone did.

LMC: Yeah. Yeah. About what everybody else... and if sometimes they had a teacher that would give... there was one student got eighth grade, and went a year and got eighth grade while I was going to school. And that's all. So the teacher would just take her up, just her.

LS: Alright. Now you did tell me when I was here before, speaking of Cascade school, about going to singing school there when you were...[00:50:39]

LMC: Yeah. They would have that in the summertime between times.

LS: And how old were you when you went to singing school?

LMC: I don't know at first. They would have them all along and along between times and...

LS: Between times, meaning what? Between...

LMC: The summertime

LS: Never had it in the winter, just...

LMC: No. Not when school was in session. They would have it in the summer. And it was...

Back when they would have cotton, everybody was too worked down picking cotton. And they would kinda pick a time that everybody was sort of caught up with the work and they'd have a few days singing lessons over there or [unintelligible].

LS: So it would be during the week going through a weekend?

LMC: Yeah. Uh huh.

LS: Just...

LMC: Yeah.

LS: And would it be several weekends in a row or would it just be in [unintelligible]

LMC: No, I don't think, I think it may be, be, just... I just think it had the one weekend. And that weekend, would be on, I think it was on and fourth weekend, if I'm not mistaken. But the whole community was involved. Everything that come along, the whole community did together.

LS: And the teacher was Martin Dolly? [00:52:17]

LMC: Mhm.

LS: And tell me what you remember about happening at these schools. What did he do?

LMC: Who? The singing school?

LS: Mr. Dolly. What do you remember about what happened at the singing schools?

LMC: The singing school. Well he was the leader and he was very on the line with it. He kept everything, he kept orderly, he kept everything, and everybody sat around and he was in the center and walked and he listened and if there was anybody that was out of tune with him, he'd stop. He'd say 'There's a discord here,' and he'd turn back and start over. And he demanded discipline too. It was very serious... He says 'This is a sacred affair.' This is not a... we are trying to learn to sing.

LS: And it would be during the daytime, right? [00:53:31]

LMC: Uh huh. Yeah. Uh huh.

LS: How long would it... would it be all day, or?

LMC: No, it would be, I think one time they had it two or three days in a week for maybe about two weeks. And then the rest of the time is just on weekends. Maybe there'd be Saturday and Sunday a few times, but most of the time just in on Sunday.

LS: And this was during...this was before electricity right?

LMC: Uh huh. Yeah.

LS: So there'd be during the day?

LS: During the day?

LMC: Mhm

LS: Only during the day?

LMC: Yeah no electricity.

LS: Yeah. I'm just going to check the battery here and make sure that it's still ok. Yeah. So what did he teach you?

LMC: He taught the different parts. And one thing, he taught us too how to take the sound, you know like when everybody starts with the piano they, they give a [unintelligible] and uh he did that and he would, he could sound and he'd walk around to everybody to take it and then from there he would always tell, he'd say 'One took a certain [unintelligible],' and whichever part took the high note, that's where he started. And then sometimes, every once and a while, a base would start ahead. But most all the time soprano so...

LS: And did... he had books right? [00:55:15]

LMC: Uh huh. Yeah.

LS: You learned how to use, and do you remember what color the books were? They were those Sacred Harp books with the...

LMC: Yeah

LS:... shape notes. Do you remember what color the cover was?

LMC: Yeah. Blue.

LS: Blue.

LMC: There was one that was kind of a grayish-greenish between green and blue kind.

LS: Uh huh. You had more than one book or just one book?

LMC: Well they, they had several books, but everybody had a book.

LS: But I mean all just one kind. There weren't two different...

LMC: Uh huh. You've seen them hadn't you?

LS: Yeah. But I know they used different editions of these books. Do you still have your book,

somewhere?

LMC: Yeah.

LS: Whoops. You got company. Is that your daughter? Somebody in a blue van.

LMC: In a blue van?

LS: Yep.

LMC: Oh it's my cousin

Recording Restarts at [00:56:14]

LS: [unintelligible]

LMC: My daddy, when he was a young man, he worked for this old man that taught Sacred Harp singing. And that's... [00:56:15]

LS: What was that? Was that Mister Guy?

LMC: Guy. Uh huh. Uncle Bill Guy.

LS: Mhm.

LMC: And so I can barely remember knowing him. But my daddy's always worrying about what uncle Bill Guy said about [unintelligible]. He felt lots of him. He was a fine old man, but he was a singer. And I think that's where Martin Dolly, the one that taught us learned from Uncle Bill.

LS: So your father actually worked for him and his...

LMC: Uh huh. In his home.

LS: In his home.

LCM: And...

LS: But that was before he was married or...

LMC: Uh huh. Yeah. Before he ever married. Well, he was just kind of a young man. He was trying to find his, something to start out in life for. He tried a little bit of everything. He went for

the milk guy once and there was a store at Slaughterville and he kept that store one time. So he found out that wasn't what he wanted to be. He found out he didn't want to work at no country store.

LS: But when you first went to the singing school, I think last time when you weren't feeling well and I just stayed for a little bit, you said you thought you were sixteen or so... [00:57:34]

LMC: Something like that.

LS: Does that sound right?

LMC: Uh huh.

LS: But you had been singing before you went to singing school, right?

LMC: Oh yeah. We sung all the time.

LS: What are some of your earliest memories of singing. I mean singing out of... this kind of singing out of the book. Did you learn that by ear before you...?

LMC: Yeah. By ear, by ear. Just by hearing it.

LS: And did your family get together and sing or did you have these things for peoples...

LMC: Well I just before you say, I remember our dad didn't know that there was some of the communities that were very strict. Now my daddy was not a church member at that time and she would let her children sing. Just, you know, the school songs and things. And our daddy sang them with us and he thought that was just not right. He says, 'Singing is singing,' and he says, 'Your training your voice.' He says, 'Children are learning.' 'Every time they learn a new song,' he says 'If it's a love song or if it's things... Floyd Collins,' or something like that he says 'Oh all them kind of songs was written back then. And he says, 'Her nanny he'd join right in with us.' with it because he liked singing. And...

LS: Did he sing you songs? [00:59:12]

LMC: Huh?

LS: Do you remember? Did he sing...

LMC: Yeah. Uh huh.

LS: Like, old songs like ballads or...? You said Floyd Collins...

LMC: Oh yeah. Uh huh.

LS: Or Barbra Allen? That kind of...

LMC: Yeah. Mhm. Barbra Allen. Yeah.

LS: So you heard those songs?

LMC: All my life.

LS: Yeah.

LMC: One song that he'd sing when we'd be in the field and get tired and wanted to go home and it was too hot and we was, oh we we didn't want to work we wanted to quit and go back, we always wanted to go up to the house. And I don't know how he could tell it but I guess he could see the trees or something and he'd start singing, 'Blow to the winds of the ocean, Blow to the winds of the sea.' And he'd say 'Now see?' About that time there come the nicest little breeze. He says 'Now see?' He says 'If you'll smile,' he says 'and sing,' he says 'everything will be alright.' But we did wanna work and he was teaching us to pick cotton. Did you ever pick cotton?

LS: No. Did you?

Unknown 1: No.

Unknown 2: No

UK 1: My mom did.

LMC: I really liked to pick cotton. I liked to. But you have to put in your bag, and it would hurt

your shoulder, and it would get hot out there. I wanted to go pick cotton while they quit and come to the house to play. They'd play a long time before they went back.

LS: Was there a lot of singing in the fields, or? [01:00:45]

LMC: Oh yeah.

LS: Yeah?

LMC: We sing all the time.

LS: Mhm. Did you sing church songs or any kind of song...

LMC: If we'd heard one. Mostly just something to sing.

LS: Mhm. So in your family your saying at that time, you weren't members of High Bluff at that point?

LMC: Mmm mm.

LS: So you didn't have any views from the church about what could be sung or not sung.

LMC: Nu uh.

LS: You could just, you could just sing anything?

LMC: Yeah. We just sang...

LS: Did you have any people who played instruments in your family?

LMC: The boys had mouth harps, that's about all.

LS: Mhm.

LMC: They liked to play those. And...

LS: And did you sing Sacred Harp growing up too?

LMC: Yeah.

LS: You did?

LMC: But we do it. But now I don't know I expect I was most grown before I knew the notes

completely. It was just something that we just did.

LS: Did you get together and go to any sings in the community, where the...?

LMC: Yes. Yeah.

LS: Where were those held?

LMC: There were... The big sings were at the school house.

LS: At Cascade.

LMC: Mhm.

LS: Yeah. And was it always associated with the singing school? Or did they just have a community sing?

LMC: It was community.

LS: Uh huh. But separate from the singing schools...

LMC: Uh huh.

LS: So it would be all different times of they year.

LMC: Mhm

LS: Oh. Would they have them regularly or what do you remember? [01:02:24]

LMC: Well, sometimes it would be a long time they wouldn't have one and then they'd decide it was time for them to do something, they was getting out of practice and they'd get together and have another sing and then get started and everybody get interested and young folks just as much. But we had more [unintelligible] and it was boys meeting girls and all kinds of stuff that those things you ever see [unintelligible]...

LS: Did you ever meet a boy?

LMC: No.

LS: No? You didn't meet one at [unintelligible]...

LMC: I was shy.

LS: You were shy.

LMC: Mhm. And I was a little on the chubby side and I just... Of course I thought some of the boys was pretty good looking and handsome and all that but I was too shy to admit it.

LS: Did members of your family get together and sing, you know like, you were just talking about the sing you had at your home in February for, was that your sons birthday? [01:03:22]

LMC: Mhm.

LS: Is that who you...

LMC: Yeah. Uh huh

LS: Yeah. Well did you have that sort of thing growing up too?

LMC: Yeah a [unintelligible] once in a while we would. But our uncle [unintelligible] that our daddy did, he didn't have good health. But he was a good singer.

LS: And what was his name?

LMC: Walter. Walter Lee. He passed away in his early forty's I think. His [unintelligible]. And he always had a heart condition [unintelligible]

LS: So he would sing, I mean you would just hear him sing or...

LMC: Oh yeah.

LS: ...would you go over to his house and sing with him.

LMC: We'd be in our field. No they were over there. But he had a house full of children and he didn't have a child that sang.

LS: Hmm.

LMC: Not a one.

LS: But your brothers and sisters sing? [01:04:31]

LMC: Yeah. Well if they wanted to.

LS: Cause Silas became a singing school teacher. And...

LMC: Well Silas got into that about... his wife's daddy was the teacher.

LS: Yeah. Martin Dolly.

LMC: Martin Dolly was [unintelligible] so he got... That was his daddy-in-law turned out to be.

And he was a fine old man.

LS: And your brother Frank also sang a lot

LMC: Yeah. Mhm. Frank really was... Frank had a... Silas had a deeper, stronger voice and Frank had a mellow, soft voice. But Frank, his voice was not strong enough to be a leader, you see, your voice has got to be strong enough for everybody to look to you and Frank didn't have that stronger voice. And then he had married, and him and his wife had, I think two or three children and kind of a push and do for him to get off and go then, so much to do at home and everything so he give it up to Silas and [unintelligible].

LS: And Silas was... how many years younger than you? [01:06:01]

LMC: He's younger than I am.

LS: He is younger. How many years, do you...?

LMC: Two

LS: Just two?

LMC: Mhm.

LS: Okay.

LMC: My birthday was in February and his was two years later in January.

LS: Now did you take your children or send your children to singing school when they were growing up? You didn't?

LMC: I didn't

LS: Huh. Any reason why?

LMC: It was never close around. We went, you know, to the sings along but we never sent them to the classes, you know, when they were being taught.

LS: So they would have just learned...

LMC: Mhm.

LS: ... kind of from being there.

LMC: Mhm. Now Francine and Naurus's and Elma was the singers in our family. And so they were in the glee club at school and that's kind of, of course they could sing this, they could sing with this thing but they couldn't lead or anything. But they took glee club.

LS: Right. And when, How old were you when you joined the church, High Bluff? [01:07:17]

LMC: After my children was all gone.

LS: So how old would you have been about?

LMC: About, I've just been about twenty years. Twenty something years.

LS: After your children were?

LMC: Since. I meant we've been...

LS: You mean twenty years ago, you were saying.

LMC: Uh huh.

LS: So you would've been in your...

LMC: I'm ninety-one. I'm ninety-one now.

LS: You would've been in you seventies before you joined the church.

LMC: [unintelligible] Sixties or seventies.

LS: But you attended all that?

LMC: Uh huh. Oh Yeah.

LS: And you attended High Bluff as a girl?

LMC: Well you see, his parents went to this other church over here Maris Hill. They were charter members over there. So we would kind of, he, that was where he wanted to go to church and I went with him there and he would go with me. And so one day, I forgot what it was.

LS: You were speaking about your husband.

LMC: Uh huh.

LS: His parents were charter members.

LMC: Uh huh. They were charter members over there. And High Bluff was [unintelligible]. But one day something happened and he just, I think it was about the building, he says 'They just couldn't get it pretty enough.' Was about the only thing he ever said, he just didn't go and didn't come back he was a little bit worried. And he never did to go back, never did go back there no more. Something happened and I didn't try to find out.

LS: And then after that you started going to High Bluff?

LMC: Uh huh.

LS: And that was the church that your parents went to.

LMC: Yeah. Mhm.

LS: They were members?

LMC: Yeah.

LS: So you...

LMC: My parents on both sides were at High Bluff.

LS: Okay.

LMC: And his was over here. So I wouldn't push. I didn't want the confusion in my married life. So. [01:09:26]

LS: Cause those two churches have been quite separate in there, in the...

LMC: Yeah, uh huh. And still the same too. They had about the same beliefs but they had split up their forefathers had split up and it just caused a confusion there that... Now my daddy's mother's people were more with this other side and his daddy's peoples was this side. So it was hard for them and for us.

LS: But you...you...you didn't have any... did you still go to both churches on and off or you went over here to...

LMC: I went over here.

LS: Mars Hill...

LMC: No I went...

LS: After you were married?

LMC: After. Yeah. I went to both churches as long as long... as he wanted to but he got his feelings rumbled at Mars Hill and never went back.

LS: And did he ever go with you to High Bluff?

LMC: Uh huh. Yeah eventually. He didn't, not for a while but he did. And it was a long time before [unintelligably] wasn't going.

LS: Were you members, both of you? Were you members at Mars Hill? [01:10:43]

LMC: Nu uh. Nu uh.

LS: No. So you didn't actually join a church till you were in your sixties and seventies, is that right?

LMC: How old was I? Do you remember don't you?

Unknown 3: I remember the Baptism, and I was very young Probably around seven, and I'm

forty. So granny was probably in her late sixties early seventies. Mama could tell you. Mama would know. But I can't remember.

LMC: Yep . I could've told her but I can't [unintelligible].

LS: Right. Let me just. It's still ok.

LS: And where did the baptism take place when you...

LMC: At the river. Uh huh.

LS: What place on the river?

LMC: [unintelligible]

LS: Is it this place they call the "Blue Hog," back here?

LMC: Blue hog. Mhm.

LS: There was just a baptism the other... Julie and Cathy Lee were. So it is a beautiful spot.

LMC: It is.

LS: And it wasn't until I saw a little carving of this blue pig on the house down there, and someone said the name of the spot was 'blue hog' you know because I'm not from here [unintelligible].

LMC: Have you been down there?

LS: I was down... I went to that baptism, so.

LMC: You did?

LS: Yeah.

LMC: Well I haven't been down to that river since that buildings been down there.

LS: Mhm.

LMC: I haven't been down there because they keep the gate closed part of the time back in there.

You have to have to find out where the key is and everything and since my husband

[unintelligible] since before he died, I haven't been down there.

LS: Right.

LMC: And there has been lots of things that our church over here has had baptisms down there that I didn't get to go.

LS: So High bluff has baptisms there as well. [01:12:38]

LMC: Mhm. Yeah. Mhm.

LS: Someone was telling me they used to have another spot where they'd baptized at High Bluff, but...

LMC: They did at the creek there was... when the highway through there... that went right over it.

LS: Oh. Hah. So now they...

LMC: They had to go through [unintelligible]

LS: Right. Did they sing at your baptism? Do you remember?

LMC: Uh huh.

LS: But they sing not Sacred Harp, but out of the

LMC: Out...out the...

LS: Out of the hymn book from the meeting house. Right. And so your children were raised up in Mars Hill? The children that you...

LMC: They were raised... no not in the church, but they were raised up to go if they wanted to.

LS: Uh huh.

LMC: And. But they... there was no young people that went there and they didn't care much about it, but there's more now then.

LS: Uh huh.

LMC: And those... You know they got some differences up in the church and a year or two ago and that's these people has been baptized at Mars now. They used to be at High Bluff. [01:13:24]

LS: Right.

LMC: Uh huh. So... I said that if I ever lost my church home, or something happened, I'd not think I'd go anywhere else because if you get into something and it turns out wrong why, you might get into a deeper hole next time.

LS: Right.

LMC: So just... [unintelligible]

LS: Well there was one thing that I just wanted to do. I don't wanna take too much time and get you tired of talking but there... But I have my... I have a tape recorder in the car, and I wanted to play you just a little tape from some of the singing from the Primitive Baptist Church and ask you if it sounds... I'm trying to find... You've been involved with the church long enough, I'm wondering if the singing has changed at all and I was going to play a recording and see if... I was wondering if you were younger that the singing might have sounded a little different in the church, and I don't know if you remember...

LMC: Well, I think about that. I think it did, but you see they used to, there was so many more. And they was some good old singers back then, those men and women both they were so... And I mean they sung and they'd put their whole heart in it. But people now then it seems like their Kind of afraid. They'd get too loud or... [01:15:10]

LS: Mmm...

LMC: Most everywhere I go, it's kinda like that.

LS: Well you might wanna just visit with your family [unintelligible]. Let me get that tape recorder from the car and the I'll just and we can...

[Recording Restarts at 01:15:54]

LS: [unintelligible] Down here for a second.

LMC: They sing faster.

LS: You talking about Mars Hill and High Bluff in the split.

LMC: But now High Bluff...Now the older people back, I can remember them say, them say, then start – sings *Amazing Grace* – [01:16:07-01:16:25] **Sings *Amazing Grace*, at a slow tempo.**

LMC: *Amazing Grace, How sweet the sound.*

LMC: They'd go off like that. Then now, then they don't, they don't do that.

LS: You mean that it would just be slower?

LMC: Uh huh. Slow and drag out on each word and lots of melody in between.

LS: Uh huh. Uh huh.

LMC: And that don't do that... I know one old lady, my brother Silas was the leader, and she got on to him about it. He was singing, kind of like the notes given, and she says "Add some melody in there and make that singing worth listening too." But he said "Ahh...[unintelligible]" And she said "Add some melody in there!" She says "Put it in."

LS: So that was...That would've been an older women when Silas was...

LMC: An older women said that.

LS: Was.

LMC: Uh huh

LS: When Silas was a younger man?

LMC: Yeah a younger man. Uh huh. And he thought he was singing just right and she told him, she says, "Add some melody in that."

LS: So the singing was more drawn out...

LMC: Uh huh. Yep.

LS: ...more notes and when you were younger...

LMC: Uh huh.

LS: and your earlier memories of the singing. And you were also saying how people would sort of sing out more fully...

LMC: Yeah

LS: ...than they do today. And I have visited High Bluff a couple of times and they do kind of keep it a little more internal and your saying it didn't always used to be that way.

LMC: Yeah.

LS: Do you know when that change took place? [01:17:55]

LMC: No I don't. It's just people gradually.

LS: Mhm. Is there a reason for that as far as you know?

LMC: If there is, I don't know. It's just because they... I think, you know, this is ugly to say. But I think there gets a little envy in people and one things, that was overdone or not done enough. And they'll take it on themselves to bring out the other fellow's weaknesses. I believe that goes on.

LS: Mhm.

LMC: I just believe it does.

LS: Now I don't know if your comfortable talking about this, but I know there was some differences in the church over the Sacred Harp singing.

LMC: Yeah

LS: And your brother Frank was involved in that. Did he ever talk to you about that and his feelings about that as to...?

LMC: The only thing he ever said about it was, he says “My voice was not as strong as Silas’s was.” And he says “My family was starting.” He had children. And he says “Silas had a stronger voice than I did.” And he says, “I thought they [unintelligible] get out the way and let him run it.” But everybody said that in church though Frank was a much better leader than Silas was. Everybody liked... Frank was more mellow...

LS: Mhm.

LMC: ...than Silas was.

LS: What about the more recent? Just a few years ago when, you know, some people left High Bluff over the singing. Did your brother talk to you or do you have about that at all?

LMC: I don’t remember. There’s been so many things that’s been talked about and I said lots of it. I’ve always been one these kind... blab about say what I thought. And I was... we went to a funeral just the other day and somebody said something about it. Something about what happened. And I said, “To me, it’s stupidity.” I said, “If the brother can’t do quite what you can, if he doing the best he can, and all that, then I just don’t like it.” When they get confused, you know. And especially when the [unintelligible] and walk out and won’t come back, I don’t like it.

LS: Mhm.

LMC: I think that if everywhere, if anything is mislead, there’s a place, there’s a place to straighten it out, besides running into somebody. [01:21:02]

LS: Mhm.

LMC: You know.

LS: Right. I had understood that recently that they were thrown out of the church.

LMC: Well they were not.

LS: They weren't.

LMC: Uh uh. I know one of the of the ladies told me... she says "You all expelled us." I said "Now wait a minute." I said, "Didn't. you get up walk out." She said "Well..." I said "Didn't a committee go to see you?" She says, "Well..." I said "Didn't they give you three months to make up your mind whether you wanted to come back or not?" She was like, "Well..." That's all she ever said. And these others I've heard say they were thrown... They were not. They probably had something, unless there was something said spoken that didn't come up in the church.

LS: Mhm.

LMC: If it was... Unless if they were thrown out, it was... I think it was their wishes. They'd gotten [unintelligible] but I don't. I just don't believe that they were thrown out anywhere. Of course I haven't been everywhere all the time and I haven't been in all the discussions. I really don't know what happened.

LS: Mhm.

LMC: But I know one thing. They've... some of them now, they used to... when my husband's family was over here, they wouldn't went over there for anything. Those people wouldn't... lots of [unintelligible] [01:22:54]

LS: Right. Well there's definitely a split there, I mean.

LMC: Yeah [unintelligible] they wouldn't go. And now their big leaders in there, or think they are and... But I did hear... I heard from two ladies of the older ones of this church. One of them says, "I call them comers and goers." And another lady said, "She give them five or six years."

LS: You mean of old time members here at Mars Hill?

LMC: Uh huh. Of that denomination.

LS: Uh huh.

LMC: She says, "They're not, because they've gone in there and they've tried to take up the leadership of it." And that's, that's not good. [01:23:15]

LS: Mhm.

LMC: So there all in there, there ways. I married into it and I know my husband was one of them and I know those people. They're good people. They're all the way through. And that was their church choice and they stood with it all these times.

LS: Mhm.

LMC: So. I just wish that it wasn't like that. But it's part of us, our family too.

LS: Mhm.

LMC: On both sides. Like my sister-in-law told me, she says, "You all expelled us." And what happened, happened. That morning before I got to church, they had come and left before I got there.

LS: So you actually didn't witness what happened yourself.

LMC: Nu uh. It did happened between the... And I don't know what it was, but they left.

LS: Mhm.

LMC: So. And they brought it up, but see, I'm hard of hearing and I don't get it. I don't get what happens.

LS: Mhm.

LMC: So.

LS: But you still do have sings with your family. Your granddaughter would sing. You had one for your son's birthday here in this house in February.

LMC: Yeah. He come and he didn't know it and it was his birthday and it was their night to spend the night with us and his wife. I don't [unintelligible] wonder some of them. Anyhow, we

called the different [unintelligible] the young ones and I think maybe its why I have some little something and they come in and be just a few just stuffed around the table there. And we sing that night.

LS: Does that happen often or was that unusual?

LMC: Oh it happens. It used to happen all the time. But now everybody's moved off. They're just not here anymore. Silas was a good leader, but we lost him. Frank was a good leader [unintelligible]. And there were some of the other boys that... they're pretty good.:

But one of the nephews he's... he's got a pretty voice and he sings pretty, but he doesn't have a strong, loud voice, but he's kind of draggy. It doesn't, It doesn't quite reach it.

LS: So a good song leader has to have a strong voice and be able to...

LMC: Uh huh. They got to be... on time with everything. And the time is layed down there for them. Its all...

LS: Right. Have you been over to any of the sings they've had in the Hoboken school recently?

LMC: No. I haven't. Uh uh. No I haven't been. And so, they were having it at the school house and then they... I don't even know what happened there. But a part of them moved their time to another time and didn't go back, didn't never go back with us no more. And I didn't never come back anymore either. We went a few times and none of them was there and one of my nephews sang base and one of them sang treble and their wives was good singers and several of them and it just. And I really don't know what happened.

LS: That must've been a while ago, maybe ten years ago or eight or something. Five? [01:28:11]

LMC: Five or six.

LS: Right. So you haven't been back recently now since they started it back up?

LMC: Well now, I haven't been in since my husband died.

LS: Okay.

LMC: Because I don't...

LS: And you said that was ten years ago?

LMC: Yeah. That was ten years ago.

LS: So you wouldn't be over there for ten years, then. Yeah.

LMC: I just don't know and they kind of got separated there. Now we had a family reunion over at my nieces, and they sang and I sang with them then.

LS: Mhm.

LMC: And I went the next time.

LS: You mean the whole family and the...

LMC: Well, some of the family didn't, some of them backed off and didn't sing with them. I think because of this division, I don't know but I said, "You can't afford to divide the family."

[01:28:59]

LS: Uh huh. And when was that? How long ago was that?

LMC: It's been about at year.

LS: Okay. And at what nieces? Who's house was that at? You said one of your nieces had a...

LMC: Uh huh.

LS: What was her name?

LMC: What?

LS: Bacon County.

LMC: Arline.

LS: Arline.

LMC: It's at her home. Her daddy's home. Johnny's.

LS: Oh okay.

LMC: Uh huh. Johnny's.

LS: Okay. Johnny Lee.

LMC: Mhm.

LS: Okay. So you were over there for reunion.

LMC: Mhm.

LS: Mhm. She's the one that has the restaurant...

LMC: Yeah.

LS:...just down the street then. Okay. Arline Strictland.

LMC: Yeah.

LS: Yeah. Okay.

LMC: And she can sing.

LS: Mhm.

LMC: She has a beautiful voice.

LS: Yeah all those kids seem to be able to sing.

LMC But there's one thing; Have you ever seen her singing? []1:30:09]

LS: Yes.

LMC: [unintelligible] Most people open their mouths and sing but she has the prettiest voice.

LS: Uh huh.

LMC: She sings so pretty.

LS: Alright. What part did you sing when you were.

LMC: When I was young I sung treble.

LS: Uh huh.

LMC: Growing up. But I've gotten to where I can't hold it.

LS: Well you can be a base now.

LMC: That's true. [unintelligible] sing base too.

LS: There you go.

LMC: I really...

LS: You can be the first woman base in the history of Hoboken.

LMC: I kinda switched by the time to alto. Alto and base go pretty well together. [01:30:50]

LS: Well alto singing is newer though, isn't it. They didn't always have alto parts.

LMC: There's part of it that doesn't have an alto part in it.

LS: Mhm.

LMC: And I have to learn the alto. I can't just pick it up. Some people can look at the notes and go but I...

LS: Mhm.

LMC: I couldn't do it.

LS: But I understood, maybe when you were young, that they wouldn't, they would have only had three parts. Like when you went to school with Martin Dolly.

LMC: Mhm. Yeah.

LS: You didn't have an alto part then did you?

LMC: No. Uh uh.

LS: No. So that's a more recent

LMC: Mhm.

LS: A more recent thing. Yeah. But they always sung parts in the church now, in the meeting house.

LMC: Uh huh.

LS: Just like in the Sacred Harp.

LMC: Mhm. Oh yeah.

LS: People have always sung...

LMC: Mhm

LS:...the three parts...

LMC: uh huh

LS:... there too. It just used to be more notes...

LMC: Uh huh.

LS: ...in between.

LMC: Yeah.

LS: But still with parts?

LMC: Yeah.

LS: Harmony, right?

LMC: Mhm. And I've seen the preachers where they were up and get started and there's a

[unintelligible] discord, let's go back. [01:31:51]

LS: Oh. So they're listening too, huh?

LMC: Uh huh

LS: Yeah.

LMC: I've seen them do that.

LS: Uh huh. It was never you though, was it?

LMC: Well, if it was they didn't tell me about it. I usually wait till they start and get in. And then

I... And then there's lots of times I cannot get myself into it and I don't get into it when I can't

feel it.

LS: Oh so it's important for you to feel the singing. Yeah. Is that especially in the meeting house or...?

LMC: Anywhere.

LS: Anywhere.

LMC: Anywhere. If I can't get the sound and get myself into it, I stay out of it.

LS: Mhm.

LMC: It happens pretty often to me now then. My voice is not what it used to be. I've never had a strong voice. Now my sister had a much stronger voice than I had, and people just raved about how she could sing. [01:32:56]

LS: Which sister is that?

LMC: Ruby. She's... She's already passed on. But she like in the church, that you could hear her over the church where you couldn't hear me.

LS: Who had the... Where do you think she got her singing voice from? Was there... like your mother or someone in your family? Your... your...

LMC: I don't know.

LS: ...uncle Walter, you mentioned. Or...

LMC: I don't know. She... but she had a strong carrying voice. And she didn't mind using it either. She come out with it.

LS: She belt it out, huh?

LMC: Yeah, She belt out.

LS: Well I don't wanna... I stayed longer than I told myself I would cause I didn't want you to pull out those pills the second time I came down here. So is there anything else you want to add

before I turn off the tape or?

LMC: Nothing I can think of.

LS: Okay. Well I really appreciate it Mrs. Carter. You've got lots of interesting information for me here. And...

LMC: Well I hope it'll be some help to you.

LS: It definitely will.

LMC: And I hope everything I give to you is true and straight.

LS: Right. Was there anything that as we were talking that you remember that you wanted to...

LMC: Not right now.

LS: Okay. Would you like me to send you a copy of it? Would you be interested in a copy of the tape we made today?

LMC: Uh... Yeah, uh huh.

LS: Then you could...

TAPE ENDS at [1:34:50]