Georgia Harris. Tape 2; side 1. March 19, 1980. Rock Hill, SC.

Catawba\_Georgia-Harris-Mar-19-1980\_64kbs.mp3

GH [00:00:01:000] I remember, ah, we’d always have a big picnic, and, ah, John Brown used to live way up the river. Sometimes he’d have it at his house, you know. He was terrible to, ah—he loved to have picnics around where he was anyway sometimes.

GH [00:00:16:000] I remember going way up the river one time to a picnic up there, up the river, where he lived up the river, and we had a good time. They’d clean off a great big place, you know. I think they had a ball game. They used to have a picnic, then they’d have a ball game.

GH [00:00:33:000] The white boys from the outside would come in and play the Indians, and they’d have a big time! They’d play that morning, and play another game in the afternoon.

TB [00:00:44:000] And they would do this at John Brown’s house?

GH [00:00:47:000] Sometimes, uh huh.

TB [00:00:47:000] He liked to party?

GH [00:00:49:000] Yes, he loved a party.

TB [00:00:50:000] So he had a good side, too?

GH [00:00:52:000] Oh yeah! He was good. If you knew John Brown, you’d love to talk with him! He was a great talker. Yeah, he was a great talker. You would have enjoyed talking with him.

TB [00:01:05:000] I can imagine! He was probably—was he a lot like Roy?

GH [00:01:09:000] Some, uh huh.

TB [00:01:13:000] Least that was my impression.

GH [00:01:15:000] Yeah. Until he got mad.

TB [00:01:17:000] Oh, did he have a temper, too?

GH [00:01:18:000] Yeah.

TB [00:01:19:000] Oh my, I didn’t know that. I guess everybody’s got a temper.

GH [00:01:23:000] Yeah, everybody has a—but we’d have a good time at a picnic! And we’d have an all-day thing, you know? Take it in for the whole day.

TB [00:01:38:000] Fish?

GH [00:01:39:000] And soup. And all the fried chicken, cakes and pies, you know—everything that people would just cook.

TB [00:01:45:000] Would they ever have Indian dances at that time?

GH [00:01:48:000] No, not that I know of.

TB [00:01:53:000] When would they do that? Only for tourists, or—

GH [00:01:57:000] I guess. Because I don’t remember any Indian dances. Only what Chief Blue, you know, worked up around here. That’s the onliest one I know of with Indian dances. But, ah, I remember when they used to have square dances; we used to have square dances.

TB [00:02:13:000] Where would they have those?

GH [00:02:14:000] In the houses.

TB [00:02:16:000] Oh, really? Well tell me about that.

GH [00:02:16:000] Yeah, they’d open up their houses—

TB [00:02:19:000] Who?

GH [00:02:20:000] Well, whoever would. They’d have one here one night—if somebody would say, “Well, you can come to my house the next time. We’ll have one.” And that’s the way they have the square dances.

TB [00:02:29:000] Oh. And who would do the calling?

GH [00:02:33:000] Different ones that they know. Who knew how to call.

TB [00:02:36:00] Like who?

GH [00:02:37:000] Let’s see. Who used to do the calling? I’ve forgotten. Irvin Gordon used to call some.

TB [00:02:43:000] Is that right?

GH [00:02:44:000] I think Early Brown called some. Let’s see, who else? There was somebody who was real good about calling I used to love. When I was growing up, I used to go to square dances; we used to have them when I was growing up.

TB [00:03:00:000] For heaven’s sakes! And where did they get the music?

GH [00:03:04:000] They had one old colored fellow, and he’d pick the banjo, and they’d pass the hat to get the money to give him, to pay him. And that was the onliest way they paid him. Oh, he’d come—he enjoyed it! He’d get the biggest kick out of it, I think.

GH [00:03:17:000] He was a good old colored fellow, and he ain’t been long dead either. I think he just died here a couple—his name was Charlie Crawford. I never will forget him! But he would come certain places, and he’d play for us to dance.

TB [00:03:30:000] So if they were going to have a dance, they’d just go and get Charlie Crawford?

GH [00:03:33:000] Yeah. They’d let him know ahead of time if they were going to have a dance. If they were going to have one tonight, and they’d have one the next Saturday night, and they’d usually do it. It wasn’t on Sundays now; they had it on Saturdays until 12 o’clock.

TB [00:03:46:000] Right.

GH [00:03:50:000] But I never will forget--! I told you about Davis Ayers; he was an old fellow. And after his wife died, he was terrible to want to go to a dance! He always wanted to dance with the young girls! [All] of us would run, because if he got near you and you didn’t have a partner, he’d ask all the girls!

GH [00:04:09:000] And all of us knew that. We’d have a partner if we could, but, ah, but our parents always told us not to mistreat him. We were always taught if he asked us to dance with him, you know. We hated to dance with him because he was so old, and he’d stand right in the middle of the floor.

GH [00:04:27:000] And he wouldn’t hardly go around, but he’d pull on you, swing you! Swing you, you know, almost, you’d almost have to fight, you know, to get around with him.

GH [00:04:37:000] He always liked to dance. But we wouldn’t hurt his feelings, you know? But, ah, my husband said, he said one night Davis was there, and somebody called time, and he said “I’ll tell you what.” And I think he was the one that had the watch. And they said, “Ah, let’s set the watch back!”

GH [00:05:01:000] And he went and set it back. And my husband told me after we got married, he said, “You know, that man set the watch back.”

TB [00:05:06:000] Did he really? He liked it that much?

GH [00:05:08:000] He was that way.

TB [00:05:13:000] What were the—do you remember any of the songs they used to play on that banjo?

GH [00:05:18:000] No, I don’t.

TB [00:05:19:000] It was all bluegrass? It was all country?

GH [00:05:20:000] Yeah.

TB [00:05:22:000] All country music?

GH [00:05:23:000] All country music.

TB [00:05:23:000] And would you have something to eat?

GH [00:05:27:000] I think somebody brought something. Brought something to sell around a place. Like that, sometimes.

TB [00:05:33:000] Well how many people would crowd into a house like that?

GH [00:05:36:000] Oh, gosh, we used to have, oh, about a houseful! Everybody went, you know. We didn’t have no outlet to go out and go nowhere. We, we just made—

TB [00:05:44:000] You made your own fun?

GH [00:05:46:000] Yeah. Everybody would go; everybody would take part.

TB [00:05:49:000] Everyone on the reservation?

GH [00:05:50:000] Yeah, all of them that liked to do them things would, sure. A lot of them didn’t do anything. Just watched some of us, just sat around and watched and enjoyed that. Everybody’d have a good time and go home.

TB [00:06:04:000] But it was all square dancing?

GH [00:06:06:000] Square dancing.

TB [00:06:07:000] No lindy? Fox trot? None of that? It was all square dances?

GH [00:06:11:000] All square dances. Now, if anybody knew it they might get and dance a lindy, but—I used to be able to dance a little bit then. I used to fox trot and two-step and go over that waltz, too. But, I don’t know. I liked that when I was at school, though. But I could do all of that.

TB [00:06:31:000] What else would they do for recreation?

GH [00:06:34:000] That was the biggest thing, I guess, they did, I guess—have square dances. And ball games on Saturday, you know. Through the summer time.

TB [00:06:42:000] And then the picnics.

GH [00:06:43:000] And picnics.

TB [00:06:46:000] How about the movies?

GH [00:06:47:000] Nobody went to the movies very much, just once in a great while.

TB [00:06:53:000] Tell me about when you went to the movies the first time.

GH [00:06:56:000] Really I don’t know when I went to the movies for the first time. I don’t. But, you know, I went before the talking movies ever came on. Silent movies. But I don’t know, I guess I was a kid, a pretty good size, before I got to a movie.

TB [00:07:15:000] But you would have to come into Rock Hill?

GH [00:07:17:000] Uh huh. We went to the movies sometimes. I never was a moviegoer until after I got, until after I was married and took my grandkids to a movie. Used to, all the kids, ah, my kids, you know, a lot of children’s movies would come to town, and, ah, my oldest son, his kids wanted to go to the movies.

GH [00:07:43:000] And they’d berate me into going. I never did go with them and stay with them because they never would have no patience! I used to take them—they talk about it now; Billy talks about it. “Remember? I took you to see such-and-such a story, I believe.

GH [00:07:58:000] That *Old Yeller*. Do you remember that I took them to?” And they said, “Yeah, Grandma, we remember that.” And I went to the movies, mostly I guess I went to the movies more with Floyd than I did with my husband. My husband never did care for movies.

GH [00:08:14:000] He just never did care nothing about them, so we never did fool with movies. But Floyd, when he was growing up, he would want me to go with him to the show. And I went.

TB [00:08:23:000] How about the fair?

GH [00:08:25:000] Well used to be, everybody went to the fair! We’d go to the fairs. That’s something I haven’t been in in a long time.

TB [00:08:33:000] When you were a girl did you go to the fairs?

GH [00:08:35:000] Uh huh! We went—

TB [00:08:35:000] When you were a youngster?

GH [00:08:36:000] Yes.

TB [00:08:38:000] Do you remember any stories about the fair?

GH [00:08:41:000] Not too much. But I remember, let’s see. The first time I went to the fair, I thought my grandmother was along, and I believe she was, she was just about in everything! But that’s been so long ago.

TB [00:09:10:000] In the early days did they have pottery at the fairs?

GH [00:09:13:000] No.

TB [00:09:14:000] Just after you were married.

GH [00:09:18:000] Yeah. First I’ve known of, except the expositions in Columbia and Charleston. You know, things like that.

TB [00:09:27:000] Now, your grandmother didn’t go to the Corn Exposition?

GH [00:09:31:000] No, my granddaddy did.

TB [00:09:33:000] Oh, did he go?

GH [00:09:35:000] He went to the Columbia one, I know. I don’t know if he went to the Charleston one or not, but I know he went to the one in Columbia.

TB [00:09:40:000] That was the corn exposition. But she didn’t go along? Did he tell you about it?

GH [00:09:50:000] I remember him having on an Indian suit; I remember that. Seeing him dressed up, you know; that’s about all I saw. He had a picture of hisself taken, you know, taken down there. But I don’t know what my grandmother ever did with that picture!

GH [00:10:05:000] I know she had it, unless Furman got it. Furman stayed with her a long time. But I don’t know what became of that picture. But he went down there and stayed two or three days a week, I guess I don’t know which it was.

TB [00:10:32:000] It was a long time. I don’t remember. About 20 people went. I know that Doris went.

GH [00:10:40:000] Did Doris go?

TB [00:10:40:000] Yeah, she was only—

GH [00:10:42:000] She went with her mama and daddy, with Rosie?

TB [00:10:54:000] What was the nigger’s name?

GH [00:10:55:000] Hence Henbrick.

TB [00:11:00:000] And they found Hence Henbrick chopped up in the river?

GH [00:11:02:000] Yes, down at the bank of the river, cut to death. And she was—her hands and feet was tied behind her and throwed in the river, and I guess she just drowned.

TB [00:11:12:000] This happened in York County, not in—

GH [00:11:14:000] That was in Gaffney.

TB [00:11:15:000] That was up in Gaffney, up there on the Broad River. Do you know a name “Bolware?”

GH [00:11:27:000] Bolware?

TB [00:11:28:000] Yeah. Nellie Bolware.

GH [00:11:32:000] No.

TB [00:11:34:000] I found her mentioned in the school play, and I was wondering. Tell me what happened with the Ayers family, that whole episode with all those deaths. That must have been awful. The mother died—

GH [00:11:51:000] The mother died with pneumonia.

TB [00:11:55:000] Who was she?

GH [00:11:56:000] She was Aunt Sallie Gordon’s daughter. She was my, she was Irvin’s sister.

TB [00:12:04:000] And what was her name?

GH [00:12:05:00] Ruthie Gordon.

TB [00:12:07:000] Ruthie Gordon Ayers. And she married Johnny?

GH [00:12:10:000] She married Johnny Ayers. And she died and left Hazel, oh, five kids, I guess. There was Johnny, Ruthie, Mary—that was four children.

TB [00:12:27:000] There was four children.

GH [00:12:29:000] Ruthie was just six months old when she died.

TB [00:12:32:000] Nothing to do with influenza?

GH [00:12:34:000] No, she just up and had pneumonia and just died with it. You know, it seems strange. You hear a lot of people having pneumonia now, and—

TB [00:12:45:000] Nothing.

GH [00:12:45:000] Nothing. But now, back then it was fatal.

TB [00:12:49:000] Just like influenza. Now, you get the flu and you just go to bed, unless you have other problems.

GH [00:12:57:000] Yes. And Six months later, you see, he died.

TB [00:13:02:000] What did he die of?

GH [00:13:03:000] With pneumonia, too.

TB [00:13:05:000] Oh, really? Oh, wasn’t that a mess!

GH [00:13:09:000] It was.

TB [00:13:11:000] Oh! And what on earth happened? What did they do? Well what did they do? What did he do when she died?

GH [00:13:17:000] Well, I believe Aunt Sallie went up there and stayed with them. You see, that was her daughter, and she stayed with them.

TB [00:13:25:000] Tended the baby?

GH [00:13:26:000] Taking care of the baby. And then when he died, there they was.

TB [00:13:33:000] So she had them all.

GH [00:13:34:000] She had them all. And she wasn’t able, so Irvin, you see—

TB [00:13:38:000] She was old by this time.

GH [00:13:40:000] Yeah, she was old. And they brought them home there after the funeral. My sister had them, helped them up.

TB [00:13:49:000] So actually, Eliza Gordon raised—

GH [00:13:54:000] Helped to raise—

TB [00:13:54:000] Helped Sallie Gordon raise all these children.

GH [00:13:58:000] Yes. They all stayed there at the house.

TB [00:14:02:000] Oh my goodness! But no Social Security?

GH [00:14:06:000] No.

TB [00:14:07:000] Nothing?

GH [00:14:09:000] I think he had a little bit of insurance, but it didn’t last too long. A little, but it wasn’t too much.

TB [00:14:18:000] That was a tragedy.

GH [00:14:19:000] It was. It was a tragedy.

TB [00:14:22:000] She didn’t—there’s no obituary for the wife, but there is an obituary for him.

GH [00:14:28:000] Ruth Gordon?

TB [00:14:30:000] I don’t think so. But there was one for him, and it said he left four small children. But then, that didn’t explain exactly what happened. So Sallie Gordon and Eliza Gordon actually raised those children. So you were pretty close to them also. Did you help?

GH [00:14:57:000] Oh, I was over there from time to time. All them kids liked me. To this day, they all call me “aunt.”

TB [00:15:06:000] Fox does. He’s very fond of you, very.

GH [00:15:09:000] Yes, he does, too. And also Ruth. They all call me aunt.

TB [00:15:19:000] That must have been really rough at that time, when people had no—

GH [00:15:23:000] Yeah, no income or nothing.

TB [00:15:25:000] Of course, they had to turn to each other.

GH [00:15:28:000] Yes. Everybody helped them out a little bit here and a little bit there.

TB [00:15:37:000] Sallie Gordon must have been a very good person.

GH [00:15:39:000] She was, she was. Ah, now they said she was like John Brown. Now she had a temper when she was young, but when I knew her, she was just as humble an old woman you ever wanted to know!

GH [00:15:50:000] She thought a lot of me; she always treated me good, and I always liked her. I thought a lot of Aunt Sallie. I helped them take care of her when she died—right up there—and my sister took care of her, and I’d go over and help her with her.

GH [00:16:11:000] I sure did hate it when she died. She was a good old soul. Now talking about telling stories, she could tell you stories from way back! She could just sit and talk. Yeah, she could sit and tell you things; and I enjoyed talking to her.

GH [00:16:38:000] I was telling Billy, my grandson, the other day, “You want me tell you a story about your granddaddy, your great-granddaddy?” And he said, “What is that, grandma?” “Well, that was when your granddaddy had to wrestle with the devil one time.”

GH [00:16:54:000] He said, “What?” And I said, “Yeah, he went way up the river somewhere, but I don’t know whether he. . .” You know he played a fiddle?

TB [00:17:03:000] This was Epp?

GH [00:17:04:000] No, this was Billy’s granddaddy, Peter Harris. You heard them tell of Peter Harris?

TB [00:17:08:000] Yes. Okay.

GH [00:17:10:000] And I said, “He went off. He played over until Sunday morning.” But I believe he was playing for white people. But anyway—“It was somewhere way up the river, and he was coming home. And he said he met a man.

GH [00:17:26:000] And he said, ah, and the man said, ‘Let me see your fiddle.’ And he said he handed him the fiddle. And he said that he played it; he played the same thing that Peter Harris could play.

GH [00:17:44:000] It was ‘The Devil’s Dream,’ that’s what it was called, and he said that man played it just as good as he could! And then he said before he left, he said he grabbed him and said, ‘Let’s wrestle!’

GH [00:17:59:000] And he throwed him down, the man throwed him down, and he said, ‘I was a stout man,’ and he said, ‘I was a big man myself, and that man throwed me down!’ And he said, ‘When I got up, I looked at his feet, and he had one foot like a cow or a horse hoof and the other one was like a man!’

GH [00:18:21:000] And he said the man got up and left, and he went on home.”

TB [00:18:26:000] And this is Peter Harris?

GH [00:18:27:000] Yeah. And they always said it was the devil that he wrestled with.

TB [00:18:36:000] But he played? So a lot of people played music?

GH [00:18:38:000] Yeah. I told Bill it looks like he’d have some musical abilities about him.

TB [00:18:44:000] Your husband’s grandfather on that side of the family? Isn’t there a story about a watch, about a man that couldn’t tell time?

GH [00:19:01:000] That’s Davis Ayers.

TB [00:19:02:000] Yes.

GH [00:19:03:000] Well, he had a pocket watch, and he couldn’t tell time. And if anybody asked him, “What time is it?” he’d say, “See for yourself,” and he’d let you look at it. That’s the way he had to do you, because he couldn’t tell you!

TB [00:19:19:000] He didn’t want for you to know that he couldn’t tell time?

GH [00:19:21:000] Yes. He’d say, “See for yourself,” and pull that watch out, and then let you see it. But he carried that watch.

TB [00:19:27:000] Always had that watch with him?

GH [00:19:28:000] Yes.

TB [00:19:30:000] Do you remember Billy George?

GH [00:19:33:000] No. I was just talking to Billy, my grandson, about him the other day, and he was asking me, “Well, what was the people like?” And I said, “One thing, they were honest people.

GH [00:19:44:000] You didn’t have to lock your doors. And one thing I can tell him about Billy George—Landrum George’s—I said, “One time he got drunk, of course.” I said, “And he got so drunk! He was in a barroom somewhere, and this man couldn’t wake him up and couldn’t get him out the door.

GH [00:20:03:000] So they just locked him up and just left him in the barroom, you know, all alone. And he said sometime in the night or in the morning, Billy George woke up. And you know how people is—he had the, I guess, something like the DTs, you know.

GH [00:20:21:000] He was trembling and needing another drink. And he just sit there until that man come to open up, and all this whiskey around there, and he could have got it, but he didn’t bother a thing. And when he come in, he asked that man could he have a drink. And he said he looked at him.

GH [00:20:39:000] Now, this white man was the one that told him; Billy George didn’t tell. The white man told it. And he said, ‘Do you mean to tell me that you have been sitting here like this, and with all this whiskey around here, and you haven’t touched none?’

GH [00:20:51:000] He said, ‘No, sir. I was waiting for you to come in and so I could ask. I wasn’t bothering what you had unless you give it and let me have it.’ And he could have got it, you see. He was in there with it, but he wouldn’t touch a thing until he got. . .”

TB [00:21:06:000] I wonder—would you say that Mormonism has done the Catawbas a great service by stopping the drinking?

GH [00:21:15:000] Well, I think so.

TB [00:21:16:000] At least slowing it down.

GH [00:21:18:000] Oh yeah.

TB [00:21:19:000] It’s decreased.

GH [00:21:19:000] Oh yeah.

TB [00:21:21:000] Do you think it’s decreased?

GH [00:21:22:000] Oh yeah, I think it has. It’s helped people, I think.

TB [00:21:31:000] It’s helped with education too?

GH [00:21:33:000] Oh yeah. That’s one thing the church believes in: people get an education.

TB [00:21:42:000] Do you remember those early Mormon missionaries?

GH [00:21:44:000] No, I don’t. I guess that was before my time, before we were affiliated with the Mormon people; I don’t know too much about it. You know, my people belonged to another church, and they just stayed with what they had, you know, and didn’t go to another church.

TB [00:22:04:000] They didn’t pay any attention to the Mormons? Do you remember any weddings?

GH [00:22:11:000] Well, I remember some after I got up a good size, I guess. Going to church where they had them in church.

TB [00:22:21:000] Did people get married in the Baptist church out there?

GH [00:22:24:000] No. They had several down in the Mormon Church, the elders of it. Most people used to go to the courthouse and get married, you know. That’s where I was married; I got married in the courthouse.

TB [00:22:46:000] Oh! You didn’t get married in the church? Oh my! Well tell me about that. How did you meet Mr. Harris?

GH [00:22:52:000] Well, I grew up with him on the reservation. Knew him all my life. Didn’t know I was going to marry him someday though! Yeah, I knew him all my life; we grew up together, went to school together a lot.

GH [00:23:11:000] And then as he got older, he used to come around the house a lot. We always played together, and then, when he got older, he’d got up to where he’d come around to see me. They said that that was what he was after, so finally we, we went together a long time, maybe a year or two, before we got married.

GH [00:23:34:000] Off and on we’d go for a while. Then I started going with him again just a little while before my mother died. Then after she died—I guess that’s one reason why I got married, nothing to hang on to, and I was just by myself with my two brothers.

GH [00:24:01:000] And as long as she lived—I don’t know; I never thought about getting married. And probably I wouldn’t have married for a long time.

TB [00:24:09:000] Well, you had a position in the house there with your mother, security. So you just went to the courthouse?

GH [00:24:18:000] Yeah, we went to the courthouse; got married there in the courthouse.

TB [00:24:21:000] In York?

GH [00:24:23:000] Married in York courthouse. It was in 1927 on April the 23rd. I think I was married 35 years—

TB [00:24:40:000] Did you have a honeymoon?

GH [00:24:44:000] No, just come back and started keeping house. Of course, I was keeping house anyway. Just kept on keeping house. Back then, people didn’t have no money; kind of during the early Depression then.

TB [00:25:00:000] Did Depression time have an effect on the Catawbas, or were they already in a Depression?

GH [00:25:05:000] Well, I guess it was just a—I guess you could say it was already a Depression among them. But you know the people on the outside didn’t do any better than the Catawbas were living.

TB [00:25:22:000] It was the same everywhere.

GH [00:25:23:000] Yeah. It was the same; everybody was in the same boat.

TB [00:25:27:000] So, really, the Catawbas were no poorer than their neighbors?

GH [00:25:31:000] Than their white neighbors, no. In some ways, not as bad as some of them I seen.

TB [00:25:37:000] Well, like what did you see out—

GH [00:25:42:000] Well, you saw a lot of little kids who didn’t have any shoes to wear and little raggedy clothes. Well they was in worse shape than the Catawbas were.

TB [00:25:52:000] Of course the Catawbas had a home.

GH [00:25:54:000] Yeah, that was one thing. They had a place to stay. And, of course, you know, the government was giving them a little subsidy. It wasn’t much—about $.35 a head. Of course you could take that and buy clothes with it if you wanted to. Of course most of them did.

TB [00:26:08:000] That was what they did with that?

GH [00:26:09:000] They’d take it and buy clothes.

TB [00:26:12:000] Well, when did you get this money, this $35? Did you have to go to the court, or—

GH [00:26:17:000] It used to come about the first of the spring, along about April or May, somewhere along in there.

TB [00:26:26:000] So then they’d notify you?

GH [00:26:30:000] We had an agent, you know.

TB [00:26:32:000] Flowers?

GH [00:26:33:000] Yeah. Flowers and whatever agent; you know, we had so many. We had a lot of them. But anyway, the agent would, the money would come to him, and the state paid him to pay it out, don’t you see.

TB [00:26:50:000] So—okay. Your mother was a widow?

GH [00:26:54:000] Yes.

TB [00:26:56:000] How would she proceed? Now so much money was due to her, how would she proceed to get the money?

GH [00:27:04:000] She’d have to go up there, and let the man write her a check for it.

TB [00:27:08:000] And she would get a check for you and Jesse and Furman, and then she would do as she pleased with it, and usually she bought clothes?

GH [00:27:19:000] Yes, if that was needed. Now in the summer time we went bare-footed, and in the winter time she’d get us shoes to do us through the winter, don’t you see, to be sure we did have.

GH [00:27:32:000] Or if we needed a coat or something we bought something like that. But now, as far as our clothes, she usually made our—the girls’—the dresses. She had to buy, you know, pants and things for the boys.

TB [00:27:44:000] That’s right—there was the four of you! I keep forgetting Eliza.

GH [00:27:49:000] You see, that’s the way she did: she did all of the sewing for our clothes.

TB [00:27:55:000] She did all of the sewing?

GH [00:27:56:000] And she made her own clothes herself. Well that’s a saving, you know, because you could get material for 10 or 15 cents a yard, you see. Wasn’t no problem.

TB [00:28:08:000] So this $35—how much was it?

GH [00:28:12:000] Somewhere around $35. I think they raised it to $45 at the last, but that’s after my mama died. That’s been since me and my husband got—

TB [00:28:20:000] So that would be a good amount of money?

GH [00:28:23:000] Yeah.

TB [00:28:24:000] Kind of come out of nowhere, and that actually was a boost.

GH [00:28:29:000] Yes, that would help for—the reason they put it off in the spring time was because a lot of people farmed, and that helped them to get seed and fertilizer for their farm, don’t you see? They did that for the, to help the—

TB [00:28:42:000] Well this must have been a happy time around the house.

GH [00:28:45:000] Well, naturally it would. Everybody would go to town. Everybody going to town. “It’s drawing money day! Let’s go to town!” and “Here we go!” they would say. That’s true; it was kind of a boost.

TB [00:28:59:000] And, of course, white people weren’t getting this.

GH [00:29:01:000] No.

TB [00:29:02:000] I wonder if they were offended by that.

GH [00:29:05:000] I don’t know whether they knew we were getting it or not; back then, the papers didn’t put things in like they do now. Now they put everything in. A lot don’t need to be in there.

TB [00:29:17:000] That’s true. Well, of course the merchants would know.

GH [00:29:24:000] They was right there, ready to get everything.

TB [00:29:27:000] Well, where did you all shop?

GH [00:29:28:000] Uptown.

TB [00:29:29:000] In Rock Hill?

GH [00:29:30:000] Yes.

TB [00:29:31:000] You didn’t go to Van Wyck?

GH [00:29:32:000] Well, we did if there was something over there you wanted. Usually town was the closest.

TB [00:29:43:000] Tell me about going to West Virginia. You told me one time about that.

GH [00:29:47:000] Oh, that was during, must have been, 1926.

TB [00:29:51:000] After you finished school?

GH [00:29:55:000] That was getting to be a hard winter, and I knew, ah, this woman that lived up there that Ernest Sander knew when he was in the service—that was after his wife died. He got to know her.

GH [00:30:10:000] They was about to get married, and he got sent away and all; but she always wrote to him. And he told her about me, and she wrote to me. And they owned—she had married—they owned this store, and she always wanted me to come and see her.

GH [00:30:26:000] And she had wrote to me a long time, and it got to where she said that they needed somebody to come and work for them, and she wanted me to come up there and work for them. And I said, “Yeah, I’ll come up there and work.” So I went up there and worked.

TB [00:30:39:000] How’d you get up there?

GH [00:30:41:000] Rode the train. Took the train up there, and I stayed the winter up there. Come back the next spring.

TB [00:30:50:000] What was it like? Did you work in the store?

GH [00:30:53:000] Yeah, I worked in the store. It was a mining town. It was a little town. It was named Barnabus, West Virginia, and they had a big, ah, you know—they sold to these miners. Oh, you worked [?] when you stayed there.

GH [00:31:08:000] We worked sometimes until 10 o’clock at night. You see, them miners didn’t get paid off—let’s see, it was every two weeks, I believe—and when they got paid off, buddy, they’d come in and spend their money! And, you see, it was a general merchandise store.

TB [00:31:27:000] So they had clothes?

GH [00:31:28:000] They had clothes and they had food, groceries. You see, people would, well, you see, they’d stock up for two weeks or a month—however they got paid. And we worked until 10 o’clock at night. You couldn’t stop to eat supper! We’d just work, work, work!

GH [00:31:47:000] Just filling orders! They’d come in with orders that long, and you’d have to fill them! They delivered them, too, you see. And they had a delivery truck, and they’d go way up back in them mountains. There was some 20 or 30 miles from the store there.

TB [00:32:02:000] Those little hollows?

GH [00:32:03:000] Yeah. And see, we just kept those orders coming. We’d have a time!

TB [00:32:10:000] Sure.

GH [00:32:12:000] And I remember one night, I was so tired, I, and we, and they said, “Well go on in there and get whatever you want to eat.” And I used to like these—what you call them?—these little weenies in the can?

TB [00:32:27:000] Viennas?

GH [00:32:28:000] Viennas. I went and got me two cans of them. I could have got me lunch meat—they had it—but I’ve never been a person to eat lunch meat. I don’t know why. I smelled it so much, getting it out and selling it, I just didn’t want it.

GH [00:32:41:000] And I went in there and got me two cans of viennas, and, I guess I was so hungry, I ate those. And way in the night I woke—I didn’t know what was wrong with me! And I woke up.

GH [00:32:52:000] I was just so sick, and all at once I heard my stomach rolling. Lord, I had to jump and run! Oh!

TB [00:33:00:000] Isn’t that awful!

GH [00:33:01:000] Oh, I just vomited something terrible! And, you know, it took me a long time before I could ever eat a Vienna again! I didn’t want to even smell of them! I’m just now getting back to where I could eat them; but it took me a long time before I could even eat one.

TB [00:33:15:000] They were bad; they must have turned in the can.

GH [00:33:18:000] I just think we was tired. I believe that’s what did it. And we just eat and then hit the bed right on it—that was another thing. They just made me sick! But I never will forget that.

TB [00:33:32:000] What was the lady’s name that you worked for?

GH [00:33:34:000] Roby.

TB [00:33:37:000] That was her last name?

GH [00:33:38:000] Yes. Mr.—her name was, ah, uhmm . . . But Mr. and Mrs. Charles Roby. He was a Jew or something.

TB [00:33:59:000] Were they fair to the miners?

GH [00:34:01:000] Yes.

TB [00:34:02:000] I’ve heard tales about the miners, about the way they suffered from those stores.

GH [00:34:07:000] They were good. They done fair with them. I thought they done real good.

TB [00:34:13:000] The prices were comparable to Rock Hill? The same?

GH [00:34:15:000] Yeah.

TB [00:34:18:000] Who was the first Catawba to go to work in the cotton mills?

GH [00:34:21:000] I believe—Lewis Gordon, I believe. As far as I remember.

TB [00:34:25:000] Was that a long time ago?

GH [00:34:27:000] Wouldn’t have been too long ago. I believe it—19--? Is that little dog outdoors? I think they’re both in here. But anyway, I think Lewis Gordon was the first one in there.

TB [00:34:52:000] That would be Irvin Gordon’s father?

GH [00:34:59:000] Yes. He was the first one, if I remember right.

TB [00:35:03:000] And then other people started to work. Would you say that that’s the first real, steady money that came into the Catawbas?

GH [00:35:21:000] Lewis Gordon had moved to Rock Hill and got him a job up there. And then, I think, Irvin went to work too. You know, different ones, they seen that somebody needed to get a job, somebody else would try.

TB [00:35:39:000] I wonder why it took so long for the Catawbas to go to work in the cotton mills.

GH [00:35:43:000] Well, nobody wouldn’t hire them. They went, but they wouldn’t hire them. Thought theirself too good, I guess.

TB [00:35:52:000] They just didn’t think an Indian would work?

GH [00:35:54:000] Didn’t think he’d work, or didn’t want him around them, one. I don’t know. Could have been that, you know. And Indians have always been the type of people they wouldn’t push theirself off on nobody.

TB [00:36:08:000] Right.

GH [00:36:09:000] They won’t push theirself on nobody. Rather than knuckling down to somebody, they’d just stay away.

TB [00:36:18:000] So they just stayed away until Lewis Gordon came along?

GH [00:36:24:000] Yes.

TB [00:36:25:000] Well, that makes sense; that sounds natural. That might be the same problem with the Nesbit clay hole now.

GH [00:36:34:000] What’s that?

TB [00:36:35:000] Is that people think that Mr. Nesbit won’t let them use the clay, so rather than bother—

GH [00:36:42:000] I said, well, I was going. She can’t do but one thing, and that’s say, “Well, you can’t get it.” I ain’t afraid to ask her.

TB [00:36:53:000] You’ve never been like that?

GH [00:36:54:000] No.

TB [00:36:55:000] You’ll always—

GH [00:36:56:000] If I felt like people didn’t want to fool with me, I wouldn’t push myself on them. I would do that. Well, now, I would think, “Now, if you don’t want anything to do with me, I ain’t going to trouble you.”

TB [00:37:12:000] Do you think that’s the basic thing that separates the Indian from the white man?

GH [00:37:15:000] It has a lot to do with it; it’s the pride that the Indians have.

TB [00:37:20:000] They’re not pushy.

GH [00:37:21:000] No, they’re not pushy, and they’re too proud to ask.

TB [00:37:28:000] What else would separate the Indian from the white man?

GH [00:37:38:000] But I know, far back as I can remember, if you felt yourself better than them, I’m not going to push myself on them. I think myself as good, and I’ll just stay away too. So that’s really been the idea of a lot of them.

TB [00:37:57:000] There is that tendency to stand back and not, not—

GH [00:38:04:000] Yeah, and not go forward, because “he won’t want to fool with me; so rather than be pushed off, I’ll just stay away.”

TB [00:38:16:000] So they simply stayed on the reservation. What kind of work do you think Lewis Gordon did?

GH [00:38:25:000] I don’t know. He worked in the mill, but I don’t know what kind of work he did.

TB [00:38:29:000] What was he like?

GH [00:38:31:000] Oh, Lewis Gordon was a likeable fellow. I liked him. He was a great talker! You never seen nobody that talked more than Lewis!

GH [00:38:44:000] And he could just sit and talk and Irvin used to say, “Oh, you get and you see a bunch of women laughing, you know my daddy is somewhere close!” He could have them laughing!

GH [00:38:57:000] He was terrible to tell some joke or something, you know. He had them laughing, and they loved to stay around and talk to him. Irvin got to where he talked a lot after he got older. He didn’t for a long time.

GH [00:39:09:000] Very quiet. He didn’t; but before he died, he would talk quite a bit. But he used to fuss about his daddy talking so much: “Daddy talks so much!” And I liked Lewis Gordon. He was a little bit funny, but he was—

TB [00:39:25:000] What do you mean “a little bit funny”?

GH [00:39:27:000] Well, he had certain ideas about anything. He was, I don’t know—

TB [00:39:30:000] What were these ideas?

GH [00:39:33:000] Well, I just can’t describe him. Like, if he felt like—just like him and Old Man Sam Blue: they never did see eye to eye, they didn’t. He’d just tell you like it is. Lewis Gordon, he’d just tell you right flat; he didn’t dress it up, or try to—

TB [00:39:54:000] He didn’t like Sam Blue?

GH [00:39:55:000] Well, they didn’t fall out, I don’t think, or fight or nothing like that.

TB [00:40:00:000] They just weren’t friends?

GH [00:40:01:000] Their ideas just didn’t go together.

TB [00:40:03:000] Was that on religion?

GH [00:40:05:000] Yes, that too.

TB [00:40:09:000] Well, what was Lewis Gordon’s ideas about religion? Was he a real—?

GH [00:40:16:000] Well, he wasn’t a real religious fellow, I can tell you that! But he’d treat you good. I always liked Lewis Gordon; I don’t know why I always liked him. He was always good to me.

GH [00:40:32:000] I remember one time somebody was going to jump on me—he was an old man then, too. He got a stick, and he said, he said, “Walk in front of me.” He said, “As long as you walk in front of me, nobody is going to touch you!” And he was going to hit that thing too!

TB [00:40:52:000] Who was going to jump you?

GH [00:40:53:000] It was Cora Easter.

TB [00:40:55:000] Cora Easter!

GH [00:40:56:000] Cora, Cora George.

TB [00:40:59:000] Why was she going to jump on you?

GH [00:41:01:000] Oh, she got jealous. You see, that was Roy Brown’s, she was liking him. I think Roy was dating Cora, that’s what. He married Cora. Yeah, he was married to Cora.

TB [00:41:12:000] Oh, Cora, that Cora. I seen a picture. She was beautiful.

GH [00:41:18:000] She was a good-looking girl.

TB [00:41:19:000] Oh yeah.

GH [00:41:20:000] And, ah, we was going to the graveyard. She did, she jumped me! She grabbed me, and I tore her dress off of her. I grabbed it and snatched her, but somebody ran and caught us.

GH [00:41:31:000] I tried to keep her from doing it. I said, “Now Cora, quit! There’s a funeral going on! Let’s not start this.” She said, “Yeah? I heard so-and-so.”

GH [00:41:43:000] And I said, “Go on, Cora. I don’t want to fool with you.” And she run over there and grabbed me! And when she did, I reached over there and grabbed her.

TB [00:41:53:000] Her dress?

GH [00:41:56:000] Tore it all down the front.

TB [00:41:57:000] Oh my! I can’t imagine you doing that! That’s a different side of Mrs. Harris.

GH [00:42:03:000] That’s Mrs. Harris when she gets mad!

TB [00:42:07:000] A little John Brown there. Oh, my goodness!

GH [00:42:10:000] Oh me! And, ah, somebody stopped us, and that’s when—and Lewis heard it, he was out there at the cemetery, and he come on; he marched right out there and got me right there!

GH [00:42:21:000] There, in front of me he said, “Come on. There ain’t a soul that’s going to bother you!” And he marched me straight to his house, to the side of it, and he said, “Nobody is going to bother you. I’ll see to it.”

TB [00:42:31:000] Well what was she mad at you about?

GH [00:42:33:000] Roy. Because I was—

TB [00:42:34:000] Oh she was?

GH [00:42:36:000] --dating Roy.

TB [00:42:36:000] You were dating Roy?

GH [00:42:37:000] No, I wasn’t dating Roy. I never dated. But Roy always has liked me; I don’t know why—

TB [00:42:43:000] --he liked you so much?

GH [00:42:44:000] He always has liked me. And Roy ran up the side—we walked down the, we was going down to the graveyard, and he walked with me, talking to me. And she saw us, you know, and, ah, so she jumps on, I guess she jumps on me instead of jumping on Roy.

GH [00:43:01:000] But I never said anything to Roy, you know. Roy likes to tease, and we was just talking going down there, you know; there wasn’t nothing to it. And that’s what she got mad at!

TB [00:43:13:000] Well, so she was, was she--?

GH [00:43:17:000] Marvin’s half-sister. Marvin George and Queeley George’s half-sister. Easter.

TB [00:43:23:000] Who was her mama?

GH [00:43:25:000] Her name was Easter.

TB [00:43:27:000] Oh, Easter George. And who was her mama?

GH [00:43:31:000] Nan Harris.

TB [00:43:36:000] But now Cora was—

GH [00:43:39:000] Easter’s daughter.

TB [00:43:40:000] Almost all white.

GH [00:43:41:000] Yes, she was. Ah, I don’t know who Cora’s daddy was. He was a white man. She had Cora before she married Johnny George. And she already had Cora, and then she had these other three babies.

TB [00:43:58:000] She was, like, illegitimate, and then she had—

GH [00:43:59:000] Yes.

TB [00:44:00:000] --then she had several Indian children?

GH [00:44:03:000] Yes.

TB [00:44:06:000] Well, Cora had some Indian, and then she—

GH [00:44:07:000] Yeah, she had some.

TB [00:44:08:000] --but then she had some with more Indian?

GH [00:44:11:000] But me and Cora always got along, but, you see, we went to school at Cherokee together. Yeah, then she got mad at me. And then, after that, she got to be my friend again, and she was good to me.

TB [00:44:24:000] Whose funeral was it?

GH [00:44:26:000] I don’t remember. It was some small—I think it was some kid. As far as I remember, some child.

TB [00:44:35:000] This was at the old graveyard?

GH [00:44:36:000] Down at the old place.

TB [00:44:37:000] Down at the old place, ah. Why did they stop using that old cemetery?

GH [00:44:46:000] Well, because they didn’t have enough room, I guess. You know—

TB [00:44:50:000] Just got—

GH [00:44:52:000] Crowded.

TB [00:44:53:000] Do you remember when they used the cemetery across at the Nesbit farm?

GH [00:44:57:000] No. That was a long time ago.

TB [00:44:58:000] That was before your time?

GH [00:44:59:000] That was a long time ago! I’ve been to that place. You know, they say that they graded that place down. Now I didn’t know that.

TB [00:45:08:000] Right. That’s not nice.

GH [00:45:10:000] It ain’t nice.

TB [00:45:11:000] No.

TB [00:45:13:000] He said he didn’t know there was a graveyard in there, but—

GH [00:45:18:000] Sure he did!

TB [00:45:19:000] Everybody did.

GH [00:45:19:000] Everybody else did.

TB [00:45:22:000] Jesse told me about going over there and digging up, digging the graves— Looking for stuff.

GH [00:45:29:000] Well, they went over there and dug some. I went over there one time. I never will forget. Me and Guy Garcia’s brother, and Douglas.

TB [00:45:40:000] Douglas Garcia?

GH [00:45:41:000] No, my husband. And we heard somebody coming, talking. And I run and jumped in the grave, and it tickled old Guy Garcias! “Brother,” he said, “I always seen people put in their grave, but I never did see anybody jump in the grave!”

GH [00:45:03:000] Because I went and jumped in the grave! I was hiding, you know. I thought the Nesbits was coming, you know. What happened, it was some of the old, some of the Indians from across the river over here that had gotten over theres to just rambling around.

TB [00:46:15:000] So what—you actually dug a hole?

GH [00:46:17:000] Yeah. We had dug down in there, see. Guy’s brother wanted to see what they had, what they buried them—

TB [00:46:23:000] What was his name?

GH [00:46:24:000] Ben.

TB [00:46:25:000] This was Ben Garcia?

GH [00:46:26:000] Yeah, the one that married Rachel’s sister.

TB [00:46:30:000] Okay.

GH [00:46:33:000] He wanted to go see what they were, how they was buried. Ben wanted to. He was the one that give us the notion of going over there. I said, “I don’t want to go over there and fool with no dead people! You won’t find nothing; you won’t find a person there.” “We’ll find something.”

TB [00:46:59:000] Did you find anything?

GH [00:47:01:000] We found the bones and we found how they were buried.

TB [00:47:04:000] Oh, you did find bones?

GH [00:47:06:000] Yes. You know, they were all shredded up.

TB [00:47:10:000] All? No pottery?

GH [00:47:12:000] We just found pipes. No, we didn’t see no pipes. We did—I don’t think we dug but about one. They dug a vault, like, and I guess they wrapped you up in blankets—I don’t know what—and buried you. And then they’d take, they had a little wood, cut about that size, and that covered that whole grave. And it was lined.

TB [00:47:37:000] Oh, like saplings?

GH [00:47:39:000] Yeah, all over the hill, the top of it, you see; and then dirt was put over the top of that.

TB [00:47:45:000] And when you dug down and you found this old wood—

GH [00:47:47:000] Yeah.

TB [00:47:49:000] Oh, for goodness sakes! So they weren’t buried deep?

GH [00:47:53:000] Oh yeah, they were buried deep.

TB [00:47:54:000] They were deep?

GH [00:47:55:000] Yes.

TB [00:47:57:000] You must have worked!

GH [00:47:58:000] Oh, we did. It, I believe it was on a Saturday or a Sunday—I don’t know which it was.

TB [00:48:02:000] You dug all day?

GH [00:48:04:000] We were there digging.

TB [00:48:05:000] Oh my goodness. Well, did anybody find anything over there?

GH [00:48:08:000] No. We didn’t dig, but I think one or two graves—

TB [00:48:14:000] Well, did anyone ever find anything? Like Jesse, or anyone?

GH [00:48:17:000] No.

TB [00:48:19:000] I wonder if that was it. Stevens was buried over there?

GH [00:48:22:000] You mean Thomas Stevens? No, he is buried over here in the old graveyard.

TB [00:48:26:000] He is in the old graveyard?

GH [00:48:30:000] Didn’t you see that?

TB [00:48:32:000] I’ve been down there. Maybe we’ll go down there this week.

GH [00:48:35:000] Okay. He’s buried down there because I think he’s got a tombstone.

TB [00:48:40:000] He might.

GH [00:48:41:000] Thomas Stevens.

TB [00:48:42:000] I know Allan Austen, Allen Harris has a tombstone.

GH [00:48:45:000] You see, he was, ah, he froze to death the very year that I was born—1905.

TB [00:48:54:000] 1905. Tell me how that happened. You told me before.

GH [00:48:59:000] We were living down there at the ferry—that’s where my dad was—and he came down there. And my mother said they tried to get him to—she said it was drizzling rain, and she tried to get him to spend the night.

GH [00:49:11:000] And he was going to some white people’s house, friend’s of his that lived beyond where—from the river down there don’t you see.

TB [00:49:20:000] Over in Lancaster?

GH [00:49:21:000] Yes. And mama said she didn’t get him to eat supper, I believe, but he didn’t even want to eat, he said. He could make it, he said. And she said, “Well, it’s raining and it’s too bad for you to get out.”

GH [00:49:33:000] And it was cold, and she said that he said, “Oh, I’ll be over there before long, before it gets too dark. I’ll get over there.” And you know, he tried; and they said where he fell in the little ditch, it wasn’t no more than about that.

TB [00:49:52:000] Couple feet deep?

GH [00:49:53:000] Yes.

TB [00:49:54:000] One of those drainage [ditches] on the side of the road?

GH [00:49:56:000] I guess that’s what it was. And he couldn’t get out. I guess he was old, you know, and got cold, I imagine, you know, and he just froze to death. That was in 1905.

TB [00:50:16:000] Did your grandmother tell you anything about him?

GH [00:50:19:000] Well, I heard my mother talk about him a lot. You know he was never married; he was an old bachelor. They always said, I think, if he could catch them, he loved children. But they said when he would play with them—and he’d always pinch them and have them cry—he played too rough with them, you know.

GH [00:50:40:000] But he’d always love to play with the kids, my mother said. But before he’d get through, my mother said, he would have them crying. He just didn’t know how to play. But he would always want to fool with children.

TB [00:50:55:000] Who did he stay with?

GH [00:50:57:000] I don’t know who he stayed with. They said he stayed by hisself mainly. A lot of people don’t want to stay with nobody, but my mother always liked him. But I remember she said he’d get after Jesse and then make the little ones cry, and she’d say, “Now alright, Thomas Stevens!”

TB [00:51:17:000] Oh, really?

GH [00:51:18:000] Yeah. He’d play with the children until they’d cry, you know. And she said he was always fooling, because Uncle Thomas was like that. Wherever there was kids, he always wanted to fool with them, so I always figured he must have loved them, you know, but just didn’t know how to—

TB [00:51:33:000] He’d never had any of his own?

GH [00:51:34:000] Yeah.

TB [00:51:38:000] So you were born over there when your daddy was ferryman?

GH [00:51:41:000] Yeah, he was the ferryman.

TB [00:51:43:000] Tell me about that ferry.

GH [00:51:46:000] All I know, he was a ferryman there for--I don’t know how long he was down there.

TB [00:51:51:000] Was it by hand? Did he have to pull the boat by hand, or . . .?

GH [00:51:55:000] Yeah, I think they had a cable on it maybe, but they had to keep it level, you know, where it would go every night.

TB [00:52:06:000] One car at a time?

GH [00:52:07:000] No, they took two or three. I think it was either two or three. It wasn’t any cars then; it was mostly wagons, you know. People wanting to sell cotton from one place to another.

TB [00:52:20:000] Do you remember him doing that?

GH [00:52:22:000] No. I wasn’t but about—I was born there, you see. We left there when I was about, I was born in July, and we left there, I believe, on Christmas day. So I must have been four-and-a-half or five months old.

TB [00:52:35:000] Just still a baby when you left.

GH [00:52:36:000] Yes, just a baby. Yeah.

TB [00:52:38:000] He actually wasn’t ferryman for very long.

GH [00:52:40:000] I don’t know how long he stayed down there before I was born, but I know I was born there, not too far off the river there.

TB [00:52:50:000] Did your mother ever tell you about his wife Fannie?

GH [00:52:56:000] No, I don’t believe, now, if she knew too much about her or not, you know. My daddy was a lot older than my mother, he was a lot older. I think there must have been 20 years or more between them.

TB [00:53:10:000] Oh, really? Oh!

GH [00:53:12:000] Now he had, I think, a couple kids by Fannie, but they were stillborn, I think.

TB [00:53:18:000] Oh, isn’t that sad.

GH [00:53:26:000] And then she died.

TB [00:53:30:000] And then he married your mother. Now, your mother was Epp Harris’s only child.

GH [00:53:36:000] His only child.

TB [00:53:47:000] After he had the ferry who took it?

GH [00:53:51:000] I don’t know who got it.

TB [00:53:52:000] It was always Indian-operated, wasn’t it?

GH [00:53:54:000] Most of the time, I think. I don’t know who took it after my daddy.

TB [00:54:00:000] I think John Brown had it for a while.

GH [00:54:02:000] He had it for a long time; kept it for a while because I remember going down there. John Brown had a picnic down there one time—I told you how he liked to have picnics. He had a picnic, and we went down there.

GH [00:54:15:000] Everybody went on, you know, had a good time down there, stayed all day! But he always liked people to be around him.

TB [00:54:26:000] He [was] just the party!

GH [00:54:32:000] Yeah. Fish soup, and everybody’d carry a lunch. We had a conference at our church last Sunday, and we had a picnic.

TB [00:54:41:000] Oh really? I bet that was fun.

GH [00:54:46:000] We had a fun meeting in the morning, and then we got out and had lunch. Everybody carried a picnic basket that wanted to stay, you know. And then we had visitors from Charlotte, the Charlotte branch of the church up there. We had visitors come down here, so we had to feed them, too; and we had plenty to eat.

TB [00:55:10:000] Well, church has always been a center of social life for the Catawbas.

GH [00:55:14:000] Kind of a gathering place.

TB [00:55:16:000] It’s always been important.

GH [00:55:19:000] Yeah. If it wasn’t for the church, I don’t know what they would’ve—

TB [00:55:23:000] Who had the first car down there?

GH [00:55:27:000] Don’t ask me! John Brown?

TB [00:55:36:000] Did he have the first car?

GH [00:55:38:000] Yeah, John Brown.

TB [00:55:41:000] And do you remember it? Or remember him with it?

GH [00:55:45:000] Oh yeah, I remember. But he never did learn to drive it though!

TB [00:55:48:000] He didn’t?

GH [00:55:49:000] No, he didn’t!

TB [00:55:50:000] How come?

GH [00:55:51:000] I don’t know why he couldn’t learn to drive that car. Roy drove it all the time. We used to, I used to get right tickled when—ah, they lived down at the ferry—when Roy hit the lower end of the rez, he’d start blowing that horn and he blew it all up through the rez to go up there to where near Doris lives because he used to live near, right below, Doris’s house.

GH [00:56:19:000] And you’d hear it, and, well, everybody would say, “Well, John Brown’s in town.” They’d hear that horn blowing!

TB [00:56:28:000] What kind of car was it?

GH [00:56:30:000] It was, ah, one of those old, ah—it was a Ford, I know. Double seat—what you call them things?

TB [00:56:41:000] I don’t—sedan?

GH [00:56:43:000] No, it wasn’t a sedan because it had to have—put up curtains around it, you know? I know what you call them things and I can’t say it!

TB [00:56:53:000] Model T? No—

GH [00:56:55:000] Yeah! It had to have been a Model T!

TB [00:56:56:000] Model T? It must have been—well, that job down on the ferry was a good paying job evidently.

GH [00:57:03:000] When he was paying. I know it had went up, you know. But when my dad was on the ferry it wasn’t too much, I just imagine.

TB [00:57:13:000] That might have been the only job. Do you think at one time that was the only job available to a Catawba man?

GH [00:57:22:000] I don’t know whether it was or not.

TB [00:57:24:000] Do you remember the men cutting cord wood?

GH [00:57:27:000] Well, my husband used to do that, did that a lot. He used to go over there and cut—I was just telling Billy about that the other day. My husband, you know I told you he farmed? And in the winter time maybe he’d say, “Well, I got to have something else.”

GH [00:57:44:000] And, you know, he’d want a little more than what we got to eat. He’d always [say], “I think I’ll go see Dr. Jim, Dr. Furman, and see if I can get some wood to cut.” And he’d go over there. Dr. Jim always give him money; he could always get wood to cut.

TB [00:58:04:000] How much would he make?

GH [00:58:06:000] I knowed for my husband to make $10 a week! Nobody else ever done that.

TB [00:58:12:000] That was a lot of money?

GH [00:58:14:000] It was at that time, because I remember he used to go get groceries and he’d have four or five dollars left! And now, Roy went over there and cut with my husband, but nobody could—Landrum George is the onliest one could almost come up cutting wood even with my husband.

TB [00:58:33:000] What was this with? An ax?

GH [00:58:35:000] This was with an ax.

TB [00:58:36:000] Oh my!

GH [00:58:38:000] And my husband wasn’t no big man. He was tall and slim, but he could swing an ax.

TB [00:58:48:000] So he would make maybe $10 a week doing that?

GH [00:58:50:000] Yeah. And about every week he made $10.

TB [00:58:54:000] How much wood would he have to cut to make $10?

GH [00:58:57:000] Well, I said that’s what I was telling Billy the other day, you know. They’d make a cord of wood—depends on what kind of wood they were cutting.

GH [00:59:04:000] Sometimes they would cut what you call ‘stove wood,’ and you’d pin it, you know. And I believe you got to put, is it—ah, how many pins you got to have in a cord?—five, I believe. And then you cut the two foot—wood is, ah, 18 feet long by 2, and how many feet high?

GH [00:59:32:000] About [?] feet high. And maybe they did, I think they paid them for that 18 feet long—I believe that’s the 2 foot. I believe they got either a dollar and a half or two dollars a cord.

TB [00:59:49:000] Two dollars a cord.

GH [00:59:50:000] Now that’s a lot of cutting, you know?

TB [00:59:51:000] That’s a lot of work!

GH [00:59:53:000] It was.

TB [00:59:54:000] An awful lot of work! He must have worked very hard to do that.

GH [00:59:58:000] But he could do it, and he wouldn’t be as tired as some of the rest of them.

TB [01:00:04:00] Sure. Now, did he do this up until he went to work in the mill? Or he never worked in the mill?

NOTE [01:00:05:000] THIS PORTION OF THE INTERVIEW IS MISSING FROM THE AUDIO RECORDING.

GH [01:00:10:000] I believe the year—Dewey was born in ’36. And I don’t know where it was, how long he worked; but he had a friend that lived in Lancaster—I believe he used to play ball with him.

GH [01:00:28:000] And he went—he had been working off from home, and he wanted Douglas to go with him. Douglas didn’t go the first time he went. He kind of promised him and then he backed down.

GH [01:00:41:000] But the times was beginning to get kind of rough, so he told him next time. This boy asked him to go with him, and he went with him. And that’s how he got out in the public—

TB [01:00:55:000] That’s the first time he went out in the public except when he worked in the mill that one time before you were married?

GH [01:01:01:000] Yeah, and then worked on the WPA.

TB [01:01:04:000] What did they do on that?

GH [01:01:05:000] The WPA? Well, they dug ditches and set out trees, things like that. Pine trees and stuff. But he had to dig ditches for a while, I know he did. He said, “Well, I worked hard when I had to work on the WPA.

GH [01:01:23:000] A lot of people said that was a play job, but don’t tell me it was! It might have been in some places, but I didn’t play.” He said, “When I had to dig ditches,” he said, “you worked for that!”

TB [01:01:36:000] Yeah, that’s hard work any way you want to do it.

GH [01:01:37:000] Yeah, it is! Yes sir. Dig ditches. And that’s another thing my husband said; he said he put many a man out digging them ditches. He stayed right in there with them.

GH [01:01:53:000] But I said he’d always been used to working because his daddy worked him ever since he was a little boy on the farm. He always worked.

TB [01:02:01:000] What was his daddy like? Do you remember his daddy?

GH [01:02:03:000] Yeah, I remember his daddy. His daddy died, though, I guess about two years we were, my husband and I were married. Yeah, he was, his daddy was a hard worker.

GH [01:02:16:000] He worked hard. He always did work, that’s what my husband always said: “Well, my daddy didn’t teach me to like work, but he sure taught me how to do it!”

TB [01:02:30:000] What was his daddy’s name?

GH [01:02:32:000] David.

TB [01:02:34:000] The son of Peter Harris?

GH [01:02:35:000] Yeah. That’s the reason my husband said, well, he said he just farmed, you know, a while. Well, it was really—it kept us living during the Depression, I’ll tell you that!

GH [01:02:51:000] I said. I thought of many a times I thought we were having hard luck, but since then, since I’ve worked out and heard people [talk] about the Depression—they was in a lot worse shape than I was!

GH [01:03:04:000] See, we didn’t have no rent to pay, no light bills, and what we made we had. Yeah, we didn’t owe nobody. We had our living, and we raised—I canned a lot of stuff for us through the winter, you know.

GH [01:03:21:000] We’d have something to eat. We didn’t have no money—

TB [01:03:26:000] But you had food and you had a roof.

GH [01:03:27:000] Yeah. You had food, and we had a roof, and we had wood to keep us warm; we didn’t have to buy coal. I’ve heard of people talking of what a time they had during the Depression—

TB [01:03:37:000] Trying to buy coal?

GH [01:03:38:000] Yeah, buying coal, had kids to feed, and, ah, rent to pay and they wasn’t making anything, about $7, $8 a week. And I thought we was having hard times! I didn’t know other people was too. You know, it was that—

TB [01:03:55:000] Had it just as bad or worse.

GH [01:03:57:000] Yeah!

TB [01:03:59:000] A lot of people were evicted from their homes.

GH [01:04:01:000] That’s right. They even had bread lines. People stood in bread lines. I heard somebody talk the other day about, I believe, somewhere in Pennsylvania they was even in bread lines!

TB [01:04:12:000] But you never had to do that?

GH [01:04:13:000] No, never in my life.

TB [01:04:15:000] Well what would you do when the river came up and ruined your crop?

GH [01:04:19:000] Go back and start over.

TB [01:04:21:000] You could do that?

GH [01:04:22:000] Yeah. That was all you could do. But a lot of time it would come in the fall of the year, and took the corn, and it was gone.

TB [01:04:29:000] Then what would you do?

GH [01:04:31:000] You’d do the best [could], and if you had any left over from the last year, you’d try to make it last as long as you could. A lot of times we had some, you know, left over.

TB [01:04:39:000] Right. Did you ever lose everything that way?

GH [01:04:43:000] Well, ah, some of it you might, if the river didn’t stay on it too long, but a lot of times it would come along and just wipe the crop out. But you know, I remember one year my husband had planted, ah, Irish potatoes, and we had about fifty.

GH [01:05:02:000] Usually, you know Irish potatoes are easy to ruin [and] will get ruined if they get water on them. And he said, “Well, no need to go back and worry about those potatoes. They’re gone.”

TB [01:05:15:000] What year was this?

GH [01:05:16:000] Oh, it was up—Floyd was up, it must have been about 11 years old. I don’t know, because Floyd was big enough to plow.

TB [01:05:28:000] So this must have been 1950?

GH [01:05:29:000] Somewhere in there. And my husband went down and he said, “No need to worry about those potatoes now. That water done ruined them.” And we didn’t. And next spring he sent Floyd down there to turn that land.

GH [01:05:45:000] He turned out some of the biggest Irish potatoes! They was that big! That long! Just as smooth and as pretty as you could be!

TB [01:05:53:000] You could have been eating them all along?

GH [01:05:54:000] We could have been eating them all winter! And we thought it had ruined them! And now they had started, almost ready to sprout.

TB [01:06:03:000] So could you eat them?

GH [01:06:04:000] We could eat them, but they was sappy, like, you know, they was getting ready to sprout. We just had to plow them up, and throw them away.

TB [01:06:15:000] Well, did you have to do without that winter?

GH [01:06:18:000] Well, we did have, yeah, we didn’t have—we had to buy what we had.

TB [01:06:21:000] You had money to buy?

GH [01:06:23:000] Yeah, a little bit. We had to buy. We wouldn’t have had as much. You know, after I thought about that, he said, “You know, I never thought about that.

GH [01:06:34:000] That water didn’t stay on there long, and it’s in sandy land and it run off, don’t you see.” And he didn’t think.

TB [01:06:40:000] Never thought of that.

GH [01:06:41:000] Never thought of that running off. But usually, you know, we had some.

GH [01:06:46:000] One time, down there below our house, we had to put in, in ordinary land, you know—we had a lot of Irish potatoes in there and it, water got up on them, most of them, [and] we got some of them.

GH [01:06:58:000] He plowed them up, and we took them and washed them and sold them right quick, what we could. And got—we knew we couldn’t—

TB [01:07:05:000] You couldn’t store them.

GH [01:07:06:000] We couldn’t store them. And so he thought that was [what] would happen down there, but not thinking about that being in sand, so, you know, the water will run off it quick.

TB [01:07:18:000] How did you store Irish potatoes?

GH [01:07:20:000] Just put them in boxes.

TB [01:07:22:000] You didn’t put them in the ground?

GH [01:07:23:000] No. We used to, ah—sweet potatoes we used to put in the ground.

TB [01:07:30:000] You put those in the ground.

GH [01:07:32:000] Make a hack, you know? Hack them, as the old saying goes.

TB [01:07:35:000] How do you do that?

GH [01:07:36:000] You have to—you make a mound out here. You make a place about this high, about 2’ high. [?] Now as far around, as big as you are going to make your hack, and put a lot of corn stalks and stuff on there—shucks—and then you stack your potatoes there.

TB [01:07:55:000] On top of those shucks?

GH [01:07:57:000] On top of those shucks. And make a big pyramid. And you stack all your [potatoes]. And then you take you some corn stalks and go all the way around that thing, and—just as thick as you can get them—and take dirt and pile it up around and cover it.

GH [01:08:14:000] And top it off with a tin tub, and they’ll stay there all winter long.

TB [01:08:19:000] Now is that an Indian idea, or did everybody do that?

GH [01:08:21:000] Everybody did that.

TB [01:08:23:000] Everybody did it that way. How about rats?

GH [01:08:25:000] They didn’t have any trouble with them.

TB [01:08:27:000] A rat wouldn’t go in there?

GH [01:08:29:000] I guess they didn’t. Or we weren’t bothered with rats down there much.

TB [01:08:35:000] So if you needed some you’d just dig the dirt away?

GH [01:08:38:000] You’d just have a certain hole that you used, that you opened it, on the south side where the cold air wouldn’t come in. And they’d do it on clear days; they’d always say, “Go on a clear day.”

GH [01:08:50:000] And they would take out what they need and they’d close it back up and leave it there.

TB [01:08:56:000] Isn’t that interesting. And you call that hacking?

GH [01:08:59:000] Hacking.

TB [01:09:02:000] And what else would you store? Would you store other things that way?

GH [01:09:05:000] Just sweet potatoes.

TB [01:09:07:000] Just sweet potatoes?

GH [01:09:08:000] Yes.

TB [01:09:08:000] Carrots?

GH [01:09:10:000] I imagine you could have stored them the same way, but they didn’t try. Because, you know, sweet potatoes are easy to rot if they get cold, I think; and I guess the earth, the dirt, kept that, sealed that.

TB [01:09:30:000] How about food from the woods? Did you eat stuff that you gathered, you know, like berries?

GH [01:09:39:000] Oh yeah, we used to go out and pick blackberries. We always picked a lot of blackberries when they was in season.

TB [01:09:46:000] Yeah, and would you can those?

GH [01:09:47:000] Yes, we’d can them.

TB [01:09:49:000] You’d can them. Did the children do that, or the adults? Or everybody?

GH [01:09:53:000] Everybody picked berries.

TB [01:09:55:000] The whole family--

GH [01:09:56:000] Yes.

TB [01:09:57:000] --went out and did that?

GH [01:09:58:000] We used to pick them, me and my husband. You used to go out and pick them and can them. That helped out too, because they’d just grow wild, and you didn’t have to worry about it.

GH [01:10:11:000] If you found a good patch you could get great old big ones, and it didn’t take you long to have a lot of buckets full, and you could go home and can berries all at one time.

TB [01:10:19:000] Did you have trouble eating them, or did you have discipline?

GH [01:10:24:000] No, we didn’t have no trouble.

TB [01:10:26:000] Some people will eat one, pick one . . .

GH [01:10:30:000] I never did do that.

TB [01:10:32:000] I don’t either. When I’m picking, I’m worrying about filling my bucket.

GH [01:10:35:000] Yeah, that’s me. I never did eat berries when I was picking. It didn’t take to.

GH [01:10:40:000] Floyd, he used to do that; he’d run and pick some and then sit down and eat.

TB [01:10:43:000] Would he?

GH [01:10:46:000] He was small though. He’d pick a while and then he’d come back and sit down and go to eating.

TB [01:10:51:000] And your mama did the same?

GH [01:10:53:000] Yeah. Everybody—everybody!—picked and canned berries. That was a big thing.

GH [01:10:58:000] One, it helped out, you know, making pies and different things, you know. And it was free, too. And you didn’t, you know, have to buy—

TB [01:11:06:000] Yeah, sure.

GH [01:11:06:000] --them. I got some in my freezer right now! There is some right out there, and I went out there and picked them.

TB [01:11:14:000] Well, what did the pottery have to do with the economy? Now, if a man cut cord wood and made some money, and if he grew some crops down in the bottoms, and—how would the pottery fit in? Now, I know, like, Eliza Gordon made a lot of pots.

GH [01:11:38:000] She sure did. She fed her family.

TB [01:11:42:000] That’s how she fed them?

GH [01:11:43:000] Yeah. She had to feed them. Yeah, she made a lot more pottery than I ever did.

TB [01:11:54:000] Was that a necessity in her case?

GH [01:11:58:000] Well, I guess it was kind of. You know, Irvin never was too much of a man to work. He wasn’t as industrious as he should have been.

GH [01:12:10:000] He got more industrious in his old age than he did when he was younger. He was kind of lazy. I liked old Irvin, but he was lazy. And she always—

TB [01:12:23:000] So she had to take up the slack?

GH [01:12:25:000] Yeah, she always stayed in it.

TB [01:12:28:000] How did she sell her pots?

GH [01:12:31:000] Oh, he was good to take them off and sell them at that. He’d sell them.

TB [01:12:34:000] Oh, he would?

GH [01:12:35:000] Oh yeah.

TB [01:12:37:000] He just wouldn’t go out and cut cord wood?

GH [01:12:39:000] He’d cut some, but he wouldn’t hurt hisself. Yeah, he’d cut some, but he wouldn’t hurt hisself cutting too much.

GH [01:12:51:000] But he was good about—he’d burn pots. He was good about that with my sister. Oh, he’d burn them and everything. Get the wood for her. She had no trouble about that.

GH [01:13:04:000] And then they used to sell a lot of them right there at the house, you know, right there where Louise lives. Now you see, they lived right close.

TB [01:13:11:000] They lived right there?

GH [01:13:12:000] They used to have a sign out there, and people come in there and bought on Sundays.

TB [01:13:20:000] So, where Douglas Harris was bringing in extra money from ax handles, Eliza Gordon would get a bunch of pottery. Well, could they live on the same level that you did? But I know that she had extra children from the Ayers, though.

GH [01:13:44:000] Well—

TB [01:13:45:000] Or that was not her financial responsibility?

GH [01:13:47:000] No. Well, ah, Aunt Sallie would help to make pottery too. She’d make some, so it all went into the same household, you see.

TB [01:14:01:000] So it was really the two, three of them keeping things going.

GH [01:14:06:000] Yeah, keeping things going.

TB [01:14:10:000] Of course, they must have had a harder job of it than you did.

GH [01:14:14:000] They did!

TB [01:14:17:000] What was the difference between the two households?

GH [01:14:20:000] You know, we always, I said, when my husband—even when he farmed—we always had something to eat because, you know, he always provided for us.

GH [01:14:33:000] We raised hogs and killed them; for the winter we’d have meat. I remember many times Irvin would come over and eat with us, you know, at night, because, you know, he knew my husband had [?].

GH [01:14:46:000] He’d say, “Who’s hungry tonight?” And me and my sister used to say “We’re not hungry!” Because we knew he’d want us to cook, you know. But we’d laugh. My, my husband was terrible! He could cook cornbread.

GH [01:15:01:000] And he’d fix it and say, “Let’s cook some cornbread by the fire.” And we’d bring out that old skillet, you know, and put it—we’d draw out some coals of course, you know, because we’d have a big old fire in the fireplace.

GH [01:15:09:000] And we’d have a lot of oak coals—that’s what burns good—and they’d get out the skillet. And we’d have two of them; put canned meat in one of them, and the other with cornbread.

GH [01:15:19:000] And my husband drank coffee back then—I don’t know about Irvin; I think Irvin did—and he’d make coffee.

TB [01:15:27:000] Now, Irvin was a Mormon?

GH [01:15:28:000] Yes. Then, ah, they’d drink coffee, and when they’d get it done, we’d help them eat it. He’d say, “I thought you all weren’t hungry!”

TB [01:15:40:000] But now, he didn’t kill hogs? He didn’t raise hogs?

GH [01:15:44:000] No.

TB [01:15:45:000] So they didn’t have any of that?

GH [01:15:46:000] No. The only reason they had it was because he, I think, once in a while, he’d get a little old pig and try to raise it, you know. But it was very seldom.

GH [01:15:55:000] They usually had to buy feed for it, you know, or something. But my husband, you know, he raised.

GH [01:16:03:000] Sometimes he’d need a little extra feed, buy a little extra feed; buy them a little corn, you know. That makes hard meat, you know.

TB [01:16:14:000] That makes a good pork chop?

GH [01:16:16:000] Yeah, it makes good meat. Makes it firm. You wouldn’t have this old soft meat.

TB [01:16:22:000] So if you let them run in the woods and eat garbage, you’re going to get a different kind of meat?

GH [01:16:25:000] Yes. We always kept ours up. We didn’t let every one, of course. One time we had four, and we had one hog, we couldn’t keep it in the pen!

GH [01:16:34:000] That hog would get out and run all over the place! And we even had a pit dug, and you know, my husband put that thing in a pit—and that thing was as high as up to that door—and you know that thing come up out of that thing!

TB [01:16:46:000] He climbed up?

GH [01:16:47:000] He got out of there! And my husband felt sure that if he put him down there, that he’d stay.

GH [01:16:53:000] And sure he come up out of there and he done got up, and I guess weighed around 200 pounds. And I tell you, there’s only one thing to do with him; that’s kill him—

TB [01:17:03:000] It was time.

GH [01:17:06:000] --and we killed him.

TB [01:17:08:000] Well. Did you have to kill a pig at a certain time of year?

GH [01:17:11:000] Well, then we didn’t have refrigeration, and you had to kill them when it got cold enough to cure it out, you know. You had to have some cold weather on it to cure it. And so that’s why you always waited until it got—

TB [01:17:28:000] So when would you do that?

GH [01:17:29:000] Usually wait until around November.

TB [01:17:31:000] November. Then you kill—

GH [01:17:33:000] Back then the winters were a lot more severe than it is now. We don’t have cold weather like we used to. We used to have real cold, and, ah, then we would kill our hogs maybe around Thanksgiving or—

TB [01:17:46:000] And then what would you do with all the meat?

GH [01:17:49:000] Well, you can can the sausage, you know. We would can the sausage; and you can cure your other meat out, salt it down, put enough salt on it to cure it out.

TB [01:17:59:000] So the hams and, ah, ribs—

GH [01:18:01:000] Well, the shoulders and stuff. Well, we’d eat up the ribs in no time!

TB [01:18:05:000] You’d eat that right away? Fresh?

GH [01:18:06:000] Yeah. First your back bones and spare ribs won’t last long, you know. So we’d work on that. And hams and shoulders, you know.

GH [01:18:19:000] And then make lard out of some of it, you know. But we had our lard; we didn’t have to buy no lard, you know.

TB [01:18:25:000] What would you do with the head?

GH [01:18:28:000] Make souse meat!

TB [01:18:29:000] Oh. You did use the head for something?

GH [01:18:31:000] Yeah.

TB [01:18:33:000] The reason I ask, they had at, ah, at New Year’s in Washington, they sold the colored people thousands of pig heads! I went to the market, and there was just heads everywhere!

GH [01:18:45:000] Well here, you know, they believe in eating hog head and black-eyed peas for New Year’s.

TB [01:18:54:000] That’s what they did; that’s what they told me.

GH [01:18:56:000] Do they eat it up in Washington? I didn’t know that.

TB [01:18:58:000] But the Indians didn’t do that?

GH [01:19:00:000] Oh, yes they do!

TB [01:19:01:000] Oh, they do?

GH [01:19:02:000] They’d eat black-eyed peas! And I laughed at Nola—Nola used to stay with me—I said, “Nola, me and you got to get together for New Year’s.”

GH [01:19:10:000] And she said, “Well,” she said, “I got the collard greens.” And I said, “Okay.” And I think she brought them up here, and we had collard greens, black-eyed peas, and—I don’t think we had any hog head, but we had some fresh meat to go with it.

GH [01:19:28:000] And we eat dinner together; I think the last two years she and I have ate together.

TB [01:19:34:000] That’s nice. She’s a nice person; she really is. She’s a lot of fun. Was your husband like her?

GH [01:19:41:000] Some, yeah.

TB [01:19:44:000] That same playful?

GH [01:19:45:000] Yeah. He never did get old; he never was old.

TB [01:19:50:000] He never got old?

GH [01:19:50:000] No.

TB [01:19:54:000] Did he grow up in great poverty?

GH [01:19:58:000] Well, I guess, in a way. He come from a big family. His daddy always worked hard. He farmed.

GH [01:20:10:000] My husband always farmed; raised cotton, you know. There’s a lot of work to raising cotton. Of course, they got more for it than they do now.

GH [01:20:23:000] But back then, they would go to some man and say, “Well, I’ll give you a lien”—so much money—“for me to run my crop on, and you sell the crop and pay me.”

GH [01:20:40:000] And a lot of times, if it wasn’t a good crop year, you’d have to pay that man, and then you got nothing for yourself. That’s the way it went. And the man always paid his debt first. Most of them.

TB [01:20:56:000] So they had a hard time.

GH [01:20:57:000] Yeah. Back then, yeah.

TB [01:21:00:000] The reason I asked, it seems to me that I remember reading somewhere that Maggie Harris had pellagra.

GH [01:21:08:000] Yes, she did.

TB [01:21:09:000] She did have it?

GH [01:21:10:000] Yes.

TB [01:21:11:000] What was that like?

GH [01:21:13:000] Well, all that I seen, they said they’d get weak, and they’d get little old scaly things or your arm would break out.

TB [01:21:25:000] What would it come from?

GH [01:21:26:000] They said it’s from malnutrition.

TB [01:21:32:000] But she did have it?

GH [01:21:33:000] Yeah, she had it, but she didn’t have it bad. I remember when she had it; but she didn’t have it too bad.

TB [01:21:40:000] Well, was it something you could correct by diet, or—

GH [01:21:45:000] Yeah.

TB [01:21:45:000] You didn’t die from it?

GH [01:21:46:000] You would have if you didn’t get the right foods or the right vitamins!

GH [01:21:50:000] If you didn’t get some vitamins . . . You know, I was just reading here—maybe it was today, or yesterday, I don’t know; I pick up so many books to read—but anyway, it said that, ah, have you ever noticed that when, ah, you know, times get hard people die more?

GH [01:22:17:000] And that’s why: They don’t get the right foods!

TB [01:22:20:000] They don’t get the right food.

GH [01:22:21:000] And when they get something, they can’t throw it off.

TB [01:22:24:000] Well what did she die from?

GH [01:22:25:000] Maggie? She just died from old age.

TB [01:22:27:000] Just old age?

GH [01:22:29:000] Yeah. She was old.

TB [01:22:36:000] But that pellagra was very common?

GH [01:22:38:000] Yeah. White people had it, and everywhere else around here. I know more people. But the Indians didn’t.

TB [01:22:44:000] But the Indians didn’t?

GH [01:22:45:000] I didn’t remember any Indians having it, as I know of.

TB [01:22:48:000] The only people I’ve ever heard of having it would be Maggie Price, Dorothy Price, and Rhoda.

GH [01:23:00:000] Rhoda Harris?

TB [01:23:01:000] She had it.

GH [01:23:02:000] She did?

TB [01:23:03:000] But now, she was white.

GH [01:23:04:000] No she wasn’t; she was an Indian.

TB [01:23:08:000] I don’t know . . .

GH [01:23:10:000] You know, that’s what—I don’t know either.

TB [01:23:12:000] Keep talking.

GH [01:23:14:000] You know, I wondered about that. She could speak Catawba.

TB [01:23:18:000] Oh yeah, fluently. So what do you know? Then I’ll tell you what I know.

GH [01:23:28:000] Well, I heard one time somebody said that she was white.

TB [01:23:32:000] She had blue eyes.

GH [01:23:33:000] Yeah, she had blue eyes; I remember that. I remember her because I remember going up there. We used to go up to see her and up to Aunt Betsy’s. Did I ever tell you this? How scared I got one time?

TB [01:23:46:000] Tell right now.

GH [01:23:47:000] I heard Aunt Betsy and Aunt Rhoda, and they was talking Indian talk; and I had never heard it before!

TB [01:23:54:000] How old were you?

GH [01:23:55:000] Oh, I must have been about 6 or 7 years old. And, you know, that scared me! I wondered what was wrong with those people!

GH [01:24:04:000] And I didn’t say nothing about it. And I was a kid, you know, just like I said. And I went home and told my mama. I said, “Mama, I got scared to death!”

GH [01:24:13:000] And she said, “What of?” And I said, “I heard Aunt Betsy and Aunt Rhoda in there saying things”; and I said, “I didn’t know what they were saying!”

GH [01:24:22:000] And she told me they were talking Indian. I remembered that so good! That has lived with me all these years.

GH [01:24:35:000] I heard that she was white one time, and then again, I heard that she wasn’t; so I don’t know. What does Doris say about it?

TB [01:24:44:000] It’s not Doris; it’s Lula. You remember her? She died in 1918, around 1918.

GH [01:24:53:000] Yeah, I remember her because Doris was in Cherokee when she died. I was going to school, and I remember that. And I believe it was along in October or November when she died.

TB [01:25:02:000] Yeah. Right.

GH [01:25:04:000] You ask Doris about that.

TB [01:25:09:000] What was Betsy like? Do you remember any stories about her?

GH [01:25:13:000] Well, I heard a lot of them, but I don’t know . . . I don’t know—

TB [01:25:18:000] You don’t want to tell them?

GH [01:25:20:000] Don’t tell Doris. No, I don’t know nothing about Betsy. Although she said she was an old maid all her life, I don’t know.

GH [01:25:30:000] And, ah, she was all—everybody used to say they was scared of her. I don’t know. We all, you know, we all was kind of like family.

GH [01:25:43:000] My grandmother always went to see her, and she always treated us good as far as I know. I been going there all my life, you know, visiting. But they always said she was cranky because she was an old maid.

TB [01:25:59:000] Was she cranky?

GH [01:26:01:000] To me? I didn’t think she was.

TB [01:26:02:000] She wasn’t cranky to you?

GH [01:26:04:000] No.

TB [01:26:05:000] Do you remember anything that she did to you or she said to you?

GH [01:26:07:000] No. She was very—I never did see her—one thing I can say, I never did see her smile much, you know. I never did see her smile very much. She was a prim little woman.

TB [01:26:22:000] She was little?

GH [01:26:23:000] No, she wasn’t so little. She was—I always thought she was kind of a fancy little woman in her talking and everything, you know? And she was very clean; I know she was.

TB [01:26:38:000] Did she make pots?

GH [01:26:40:000] Now that I don’t know; but I think she did.

TB [01:26:42:000] She must have. How about Susannah?

GH [01:26:48:000] Now Susannah, I never knew much about her until I went to Cherokee and saw her. And that’s when I learned more about Susannah. Now, Susannah was kind of cranky!

TB [01:27:00:000] Yeah, she was a religious fanatic.

GH [01:27:02:000] Yeah.

TB [01:27:04:000] Do you know anything about that?

GH [01:27:06:000] Yeah.

TB [01:27:08:000] That you’re willing to tell?

GH [01:27:12:000] Yeah. She was a Baptist, and a very, very strict Baptist. She would get mad at Sampson Owl and give him a fit!

GH [01:27:27:000] He was, I don’t know, he was very—I don’t know whether, I don’t know what kind of man he was, but he never did say anything, and she would just [?] as long as she wanted to.

TB [01:27:40:000] What would she get mad at him about?

GH [01:27:42:000] I don’t know. Something come up, and she’d get mad. She’d just fuss! That was Aunt Sue.

GH [01:27:51:000] But that’s what I remember about her. Yeah, and she could sit in the rocking chair and she could sing Christian songs! She was terrible to sit and sing!

TB [01:28:06:000] Is that right? And would she sermon? Would she sermonize all the time?

GH [01:28:13:000] A good bit.

TB [01:28:14:000] Like, what were some of the things that she kept after you about?

GH [01:28:19:000] Well, she’d talk about the Bible, you know. I think she read it a lot. I think she read the Bible a good bit; but she was a real—what you say? A religious fanatic.

TB [01:28:38:000] She was crippled too?

GH [01:28:39:000] Yes. You know, I wondered about that. I’ve been intending to ask Doris. She’d been cripple ever since I knew her, and they said it was arthritis, and I wonder if it was.

GH [01:28:52:000] And every one of her daughters was like that, except Kamie. Kamie wasn’t like that. She had a daughter [?] the one called Ida was the same way.

TB [01:28:59:000] Oh, was crippled that way?

GH [01:29:00:000] She hopped whenever she walked, looked like one of the legs was shorter than the other.

TB [01:29:03:000] It must have been hereditary.

GH [01:29:06:000] It had to have been something. Somebody told me somewhere along the way that it was arthritis, but I don’t believe that now after I—

TB [01:29:14:000] It must have been hereditary.

GH [01:29:15:000] Because Ida walked just like Aunt Sue!

TB [01:29:20:000] Anybody else?

GH [01:29:22:000] Oh, those were the only two. Now Kamie didn’t, but I remember Ida walking just like Aunt Sue. They walked like one leg was shorter than the other.

TB [01:29:31:000] She was very good. She took in a lot of children. Her situation was similar to Eliza’s, wasn’t it? And Sallie Gordon’s? I think that Ida died and left a lot of children.

GH [01:29:47:000] Oh, no.

TB [01:29:49:000] Didn’t somebody die?

GH [01:29:51:000] Ida did die, but her husband lived a long time and took care of those kids. And the others was big enough to take care of themselves. And the school took care of them.

TB [01:30:01:000] Oh. They were at the boarding school?

GH [01:30:02:000] Yeah. She didn’t have to take care of them; she didn’t take care of those kids.

TB [01:30:08:000] How about Agnes?

GH [01:30:10:000] Agnes Owl?

TB [01:30:11:000] Yeah.

GH [01:30:12:000] Well, Agnes was grown.

TB [01:30:14:000] When she took her?

GH [01:30:15:000] She was a big girl.

TB [01:30:18:000] She was not a baby?

GH [01:30:18:000] Yeah. She was able to wait on Susannah when she got her.

TB [01:30:22:000] Oh, is that what she did?

GH [01:30:24:000] Yes, I think she—

TB [01:30:26:000] She was more or less a servant?

GH [01:30:27:000] No, I don’t reckon a servant. She just took her in, helped her, and let her help her, you know.

TB [01:30:34:000] She helped the girl by taking her in, and Agnes helped her.

GH [01:30:38:000] Yes. I think she kept Agnes. The onliest time Agnes was there was during vacation because she was at boarding school all the time.

TB [01:30:48:000] She was up at Carlisle, and then, I think, went to Hampton.

GH [01:30:54:000] Who was that? Agnes?

TB [01:30:55:000] Agnes, yeah. Then I think she went to Haskell or something. She skipped all over.

GH [01:31:03:000] I don’t remember about that. Of course, I knew Agnes was a good-looking girl. She was a pretty thing! She was smart, too; she was an RN.

TB [01:31:18:000] That was a case of just being thrown away? She was given?

GH [01:31:22:000] Yes.

TB [01:31:23:000] And Susannah took her. She had a lot of brothers and sisters.

GH [01:31:28:000] I never did know who they were.

TB [01:31:30:000] There’s a lot of people in Cherokee who are her brothers and sisters.

GH [01:31:34:000] Who claim her now. Is Agnes dead or is she living?

TB [01:31:38:000] She’s dead.

GH [01:31:39:000] She is?

TB [01:31:40:000] I think so.

GH [01:31:41:000] I can’t believe it. She had the cutest little old kids! I know one of them was named Joseph, the oldest one.

TB [01:31:49:000] She married a white man, or what?

GH [01:31:52:000] Married an Indian.

TB [01:31:53:000] She married an Indian?

GH [01:31:54:000] I think he was an Indian.

TB [01:31:55:000] And she was in the Indian Service? You don’t know who—

GH [01:32:01:000] I never did see her husband. She came back to Cherokee, I know that.

TB [01:32:05:000] Did you know his name?

GH [01:32:07:000] Yeah, I did know his name. I think his name was Joseph, but I done forgot his last name. Oh, I knew Agnes; Agnes was a pretty thing.

TB [01:32:26:000] Okay. Now, what were you going to say?

GH [01:32:28:000] Oh. I raised a boy; he was a white boy. And, ah, and I got him—we got him when he was about 8 years old.

GH [01:32:36:000] And if he’d do anything I’d always get him in and talk to him, and we’d punish him sometimes and make him stay in, you know. And he’d say, “Well why? Why is that?” He’d always want to know why.

GH [01:32:53:000] “Because it’s wrong!” But you know, he couldn’t see the wrong part of it, what he did, you know? And I said, “Well why did you do it? That’s what I’d like to know.” “I don’t know. But why do you ask me ‘why’?”

GH [01:33:08:000] And I said, “Everything that you do,” I said, “there’s a reason.” And I said, “When you do something, you do it for a reason. And I would like to know why would you do something like that. And you’ve been taught better. That, that was wrong.”

GH [01:33:26:000] “Well, I don’t see why. What’s ‘reason’?” But he never could understand it. But I bet he does now.

TB [01:33:32:000] Was he from a tragedy? How did you come about—

GH [01:33:37:000] Well, the—when we found him, he was over here at my son’s wife’s people. They kept him. This man had remarried, and his wife had children by him, by his daddy. And she mistreated little—

TB [01:33:57:000] What was his name?

GH [01:33:59:000] Burges. William Burges.

TB [01:34:01:000] Yes.

GH [01:34:02:000] And we always called him Sonny; that’s all he ever got was Sonny. But his name was William.

GH [01:34:07:000] And they had him over there, and these people had a big family themselves. And she said she wasn’t able to take him and keep him like because she children—

TB [01:34:17:000] She just didn’t want to be bothered?

GH [01:34:19:000] He was a good little boy. She said he didn’t give them any trouble, but that it was another hand to feed and take care of and she had a big family. So she told us, she said—one, my husband said, “I would love to have him.”

GH [01:34:36:000] And she said, “Well, talk to him. He might give him to you.” And so, ah, she said he can’t keep him at home because his wife won’t let him, or she would mistreat him; so he’d take him and board him out with somebody else, you know.

GH [01:34:51:000] And so one day my husband saw this man and asked him about him. He said, “No, I don’t want to give him away.” He said, “He’s my little old boy!” he said. “And I just don’t!” I couldn’t blame the man.

GH [01:35:06:000] He was his flesh and blood, and he wanted to keep him. So my husband let him alone. But when we’d go to town, when we finally went to the [?] over here and took him home. And every once in a while, when we’d go to town, my husband would say, “Let’s go by and see Sonny.”

GH [01:35:24:000] And we’d go by and give him maybe a bag of candy, you know, something to carry to him. And we’d go by to see him, and he kept after Mr. Burgess. “I’d like to have that little boy,” he said. “I know it, but I want to keep him.”

GH [01:35:38:000] So we had bothered him, and he said, “I’m going to quit bothering Mr. Burgess about his little boy because,” he said, “I know he wants to keep him.” So it was a long time before we went down there.

GH [01:35:48:000] And so one day, we went to town again, and he said, “Let’s go by and see Sonny today.” And I said, “Okay.”

GH [01:35:54:000] And he got something and went down to see Sonny, and—I never will forget it—Sonny’s daddy was laying out there under a car—he was a mechanic and he was working on cars—and he was laying out under the car, and, ah, my husband went over to the car where he was and was talking to him.

GH [01:36:11:000] I didn’t see Sonny anywhere, but he was in the house. And, ah, all at once I saw him. And my husband came over back towards the car, and the old man went in the house.

GH [01:36:22:000] And then he come, and when my husband got to the car he says, “Ah, we’re going to get Sonny.” I said, “You don’t mean that!” And he said that he and his wife were having trouble, you know, about Sonny.

GH [01:36:37:000] And he told Mr. Burgess then, “Now you can come see him anytime you want to.” He said, “We won’t keep you from seeing him [when] you want.” And he said, “You can see him when you get ready.”

GH [01:36:49:000] So when he came back, he had a little pack of clothes. I bet they wasn’t any more than that big! And that’s all he brought.

TB [01:36:56:000] Really?

GH [01:36:59:000] Just a handful. And, ah, it was in the, along about, I guess it might have been about the last of August—it wasn’t long before school got started, you know. So we brought him on home.

GH [01:37:13:000] And after that I went to town, you know, and bought him a lot of clothes so he could go to school. Dressed him up real good, and, ah, he loved his clothes.

GH [01:37:28:000] And you know, we bought that little boy underwear, and he never knowed—he didn’t want to put them on because he never, he didn’t know what underwear was! And I tried to talk to him.

GH [01:37:46:000] I tried to tell him. And I’d tell him how my husband wore them. And you know, he said, “Well, when I get big, I’ll wear them too.” Poor little thing. I felt sorry for him.

GH [01:38:01:000] And he had never made a grade because, you know, he’d been picked up and took from place to place, and never made a grade in school. And I took that little boy and put him up in Northside School, right up here on the hill over here, and, ah, he didn’t want to go to school!

GH [01:38:24:000] He cried! He hung on to me! That day, I carried him to school, but I knew that if I brought him back, the next day would be the same thing. And I stayed with him and I pleaded with him, and he cried.

GH [01:38:34:000] He didn’t want to go to school! And I said, “Well, you must go today and see how it is.” And he said, “Well, take me home, and we’ll come back tomorrow!” And I said, “No, tomorrow is another day, and you’ll tell me that tomorrow.”

GH [01:38:47:000] And I said, “Let’s stay today and see how it is.” That’s all I had to do. After the first day, I didn’t have no more trouble with him, and I got him through school. Of course, it was a hard struggle.

GH [01:39:01:000] I got him to high school, and I think he quit after he got older, you know. You see, he was already old, for as—

TB [01:39:08:000] He had already set a pattern before you got him?

GH [01:39:11:000] Yeah.

TB [01:39:13:000] He wasn’t foster? You didn’t adopt him?

GH [01:39:15:000] No, we just—

TB [01:39:17:000] He wasn’t foster? The man never gave you anything for him?

GH [01:39:21:000] No.

TB [01:39:23:000] Isn’t that nice. Well what is he doing now?

GH [01:39:28:000] He’s a—I think he works up here by Carowinds somewhere.

TB [01:39:32:000] Do you ever see him?

GH [01:39:33:000] I see him once in a while, but not too recent. Well, when he went with one of the Wesley Harris’s brother’s daughters, I saw him a good bit because I used to come into—he lived at Charlotte for a long time.

GH [01:39:46:000] I think he lived up here in Ft. Mills now. But when I used to come to Charlotte, I used to call him up all the time. And all the time if I come into Charlotte, if I fly to Charlotte, he always come and met me and brought me home.

GH [01:40:02:000] And I saw a lot of him then. But I haven’t seen him since he married this other woman.

TB [01:40:06:000] So he’s not married to the Catawba any more?

GH [01:40:08:000] No, they got separated, and he’s remarried. And I haven’t seen him since then.

TB [01:40:15:000] Does he have children?

GH [01:40:17:000] They say he has one, and I would love to see it, I’d like to see it; but I guess he’s just busy. I saw him a good bit when he was married to the—

TB [01:40:28:000] Well how long—you had him a good, what? Seven or eight years?

GH [01:40:31:000] Oh yeah.

TB [01:40:33:000] That was really nice. That was an experience.

GH [01:40:36:000] But I never will forget. His daddy drank a lot, and when—somebody jumped on him and beat him, and he died. And they left him out in the cold, and he took pneumonia and died from it.

GH [01:40:50:000] Of course, let’s see—my husband died in ’66, and his real daddy died in the following, I believe, in January or February.

GH [01:41:03:000] And I never will forget, he brought me home one day, and—I don’t know how he got to talking about my husband—and he said, “Well, I can say one thing: I got one daddy in heaven and I got one in hell.”

GH [01:41:20:000] I said, “Sonny Bergers don’t say that! That was your papa! Don’t say that.” And he said, “Well mama, you know good and well, mama, that my real daddy went to hell because of the way he done me.”

GH [01:41:34:000] He said, “You know, he never did one thing with hisself .”

TB [01:41:38:000] It’s sad to have to carry that burden.

GH [01:41:41:000] Yeah. He knew the life his daddy had lived. He drank all his life. And he said that to me, but I got after him! “Sonny, don’t say that!” And he said, “You know mama, my real daddy [?] . . .

TB [01:42:00:000] That’s incredible; it really is. So you really taught him everything.

GH [01:42:06:000] Just about.

TB [01:42:06:000] His manners. And he was just like a little wild animal when you got him?

GH [01:42:07:000] Yes.

TB [01:42:12:000] Was he good?

GH [01:42:14:000] Well, he was kinda—I guess he was the type of person that always felt that he had to fight for hisself, and you can imagine—

TB [01:42:28:000] He did until you got him.

GH [01:42:29:000] But he still had that attitude at times, you know, that he felt like that he had to take up for hisself. You see, he had done that when he was—

TB [01:42:38:000] They had set that pattern when he was very little.

GH [01:42:39:000] Yes.

TB [01:42:41:000] Well how long had he been tossed around between the, his mother—

GH [01:42:47:000] I’m going to tell you the real truth of it: This man, this boy was an illegitimate child. It was during the war, and he met this woman, and he had this child.

GH [01:43:00:000] And they said she came from Spartanburg, SC. I’ve got her name somewhere though. But anyway, she came from Spartanburg, and her husband was in the service.

GH [01:43:10:000] Sonny’s daddy got going with her, don’t you see, and finally she got pregnant with this little boy. And she was going to leave it here in the hospital and let them give it away. And he wouldn’t hear of it. And you know, he took that baby.

GH [01:43:28:000] She left him, and he took it and he said, “Well, I’ll take it if she don’t want it.” And she didn’t want her husband to know that she had the child.

GH [01:43:35:000] And she goes back to Spartanburg so she could, you know, move back with her husband when he come out of the service. So he takes this child as a baby and raised it.

TB [01:43:46:000] So he wasn’t all bad.

GH [01:43:48:000] He had a good streak in him.

TB [01:43:49:000] He had a good streak in him.

GH [01:43:49:000] You know, they say in every person, regardless of how bad they are, there’s always a good—there’s some good about everybody.

TB [01:43:58:000] Well does this boy know this?

GH [01:44:01:000] No.

TB [01:44:02:000] Has he ever seen his mother?

GH [01:44:04:000] No.

TB [01:44:06:000] I don’t reckon she’d want to see him.

GH [01:44:08:000] I don’t reckon she’d claim him, you see, because she just left him.

TB [01:44:13:000] And the husband never knew a thing?

GH [01:44:14:000] No.

TB [01:44:15:000] I guess that happens a lot. That’s incredible. So you got him—in what year did you get him?

GH [01:44:24:000] Let’s see. He was 8 years old; he was born in ‘42. ‘50-something.

TB [01:44:39:000] Around 1950. You were up here? You didn’t raise him down on the rez?

GH [01:44:47:000] We were up here.

TB [01:44:55:000] Tell me about the Barris family. You mentioned that they used to live where Lula Beck lives.

GH [01:45:03:000] Well, they were missionaries, you know, of the church. And I think they taught.

TB [01:45:10:000] Mormons?

GH [01:45:11:000] Yes. I think they taught school here for a while. That was a—little, I was small. I don’t remember too much about them, but I remember them being here.

TB [01:45:19:000] Well. . . Did they build that house?

GH [01:45:24:000] I wouldn’t know whether they built it, or how that house came about. But it was built for them, I think. Maybe the Indians had it built for them, and that’s where they lived.

TB [01:45:42:000] How come you never mentioned having turkey on a holiday?

GH [01:45:47:000] Well, you know, sometimes we did if we raised any. If we raised some of our own, we had them.

TB [01:45:53:000] Well, did people have turkey back when you were a child at Christmas?

GH [01:45:57:000] Well, if somebody raised any, you know.

TB [01:46:02:000] But usually they had either ham or—

GH [01:46:04:000] Chicken, because they usually raised chickens. Because it’s hard to raise turkeys and chickens together, you know.

TB [01:46:09:000] Why is that?

GH [01:46:10:000] I don’t know why, but they always say it’s hard to raise them two together.

TB [01:46:14:000] They’ll fuss?

GH [01:46:15:000] I guess. I think that’s it. I know that, if they raised them, they didn’t raise them together.

TB [01:46:24:000] Now, you mentioned yesterday about your china dolls. How did you take care of those dolls? How did you treat your toys, you and Eliza?

GH [01:46:33:000] Well, we always made doll clothes for them, you know. They didn’t come, most of the time, they didn’t come dressed, you know. They just had the little stuffed bodies.

GH [01:46:44:000] The legs would be china, the little arms up to the elbows out would be china, and the rest of it would be stuffed body—cloth, and stuffed. And the little head was china. We took—I remember keeping mine for ages.

GH [01:47:04:000] They would break, yeah. Because we knew that was all we’d get until the next Christmas, you know. And we’d always take real good care of them.

TB [01:47:12:000] Those were the only toys you had?

GH [01:47:14:000] That was the main thing—the dolls—when we was real small. I remember, because we loved to play with dolls.

TB [01:47:22:000] Well these were tiny.

GH [01:47:24:000] Oh, they’d be about that high.

TB [01:47:46:000] Oh. They were big, like babies.

GH [01:47:28:000] Yeah. They’d be about 12” high.

TB [01:47:31:000] But you took care of those things. Well, what other toys did you have?

GH [01:47:36:000] As far as I can remember that was the biggest thing we got, was a doll every Christmas.

TB [01:47:41:000] One time did you mention that your Grandpa Epp used to make you things?

GH [01:47:46:000] Oh yeah, he used to make little pine bark wagons with little wheels, you know. He’d make them out of pine bark and run a little stick through them. We used to pull those.

GH [01:47:57:000] I remember him making those for us. But other than that. . . We’d take them down to the bank where they would roll, you know.

TB [01:48:05:000] Did you ever play in the clay?

GH [01:48:08:000] We did, I guess, after I got up around 7 or 8 years old. You know something? They wouldn’t let us mess with clay because we would put trash in—dirt, you know—and they didn’t, my mama and my grandma neither one, didn’t like no dirty clay! It was dirt, but no dirt in it!

TB [01:48:28:000] They wanted clean clay?

GH [01:48:29:000] Yeah.

TB [01:48:31:000] So you couldn’t make little toys?

GH [01:48:33:000] No. We did after we got up a little bigger. I got up 7 or 8 years old, I made little old things like that. You know, I remember I made a little cat one time. I thought that was the cutest little thing!

GH [01:48:43:000] I can see that little cat yet! You know how a cat will lay with its little arms folded like this? I made that little cat, and its tail was curled around its feet, you know, around here.

GH [01:48:54:000] I made that little cat and I rubbed it, and it burnt solid red! Yeah, it was solid red! You know you’ve seen these cats that’s red, you know? And it looked just like one of those!

GH [01:49:07:000] I kept that thing for a long, long time. I don’t know what ever happened to it. But I did keep that a long time you know.

GH [01:49:13:000] We used to play with little old things like that. But I thought that was the prettiest thing!

TB [01:49:20:000] You should make another one.

GH [01:49:21:000] I thought about it sometimes. But I can see that cat yet that I made!

TB [01:49:25:000] Make me one.

GH [01:49:27:000] And it wasn’t no more than about that long.

TB [01:49:29:000] Just a little tiny thing!

GH [01:49:30:000] Just a little tiny thing.

TB [01:49:31:000] Yeah.

GH [01:49:32:000] Then we used to make little old chickens, little old ducks, you know, and we played with them after we burned them, you know.

TB [01:49:40:000] So they didn’t sell them?

GH [01:49:41:000] No.

TB [01:49:43:000] Did you decorate it?

GH [01:49:45:000] No, we didn’t. They never—we was too small to fool with anything like that then. They wouldn’t let us fool with their tools like that. Afraid we would leave them out and lose them.

GH [01:49:54:000] They had a set of tools, and you didn’t play with them like kids do now with things. Kids play with things that I wouldn’t let mine play with. But they wouldn’t let us play with that.

TB [01:50:06:000] Of course. That was serious business.

GH [01:50:08:000] Yeah, because that was something that, if they lost them or threw them away, they’d have to make new ones or, you know, something like that.

TB [01:50:17:000] Well how about rubbing rocks? Is it hard to find? Well yours are from where?

GH [01:50:23:000] Off the Catawba River, down here and around.

TB [01:50:26:000] Have you ever found your own down there?

GH [01:50:29:000] Yeah. May Blue’s got one of mine I found on the river, and I’ve got to get it from her. I loaned it to her. I’ll never get it back if I don’t go over there and get it.

GH [01:50:38:000] She’ll forget about it. She keeps telling me, “I still got your rock!” And if I don’t get it, I’ll die and forget about it! It came from off the Catawba River, and that’s where mostly my grandmother and them picked theirs up—on the river.

GH [01:50:53:000] Now, I got a few I got in California when I was out there, and I got some I got in Cherokee But they’s not right slick yet, you know; I’m just using them.

TB [01:51:03:000] They’re not as good as the old ones?

GH [01:51:04:000] Well they will be, in time, if I use them a lot. They’re getting slick now.

TB [01:51:09:000] Well when Martha Jane Harris died what happened with her tools?

GH [01:51:14:000] Me and my sister divided them. See, we were the only girls.

TB [01:51:19:000] How about your mother’s tools?

GH [01:51:20:000] Well we did the same with hers—we divided them.

TB [01:51:24:000] That’s right. Your mother died first, so you divided hers, and then when Martha Jane—

GH [01:51:30:000] We divided hers. I wish I had her—I don’t know what ever her husband ever done with them, her daughter’s husband. You see, Gladys had them after Eliza died, and I never tried taking them because that was her mama’s, you know, and she wanted to keep them.

GH [01:51:50:000] And then, when Gladys died, her husband—he’s a sot, and I don’t know what he’s done with them—probably done throwed them away.

TB [01:51:57:000] Did Gladys make pottery?

GH [01:51:58:] She mostly rubbed. She didn’t make any. She used to rub for her mother. She could rub real good! Oh, she might have made a few little things, but, you know, nothing big or unusual.

TB [01:52:15:000] Tell me about your mother’s last sickness before she died. Was she sick a long time?

GH [01:52:21:000] She was sick about six weeks, I think, before she died. I was up—I was 20 years old when she died, and I took care of her until she died. And I just stayed there, right in the house, and kept house for the two boys.

GH [01:52:44:000] Furman was, ah, I think he was 14 that year, and, of course, Jesse was a lot older. He was six years older than I am! He must have been about 27 years old then.

GH [01:53:02:000] But he was, let’s see—he was working in town, I believe. He went to work right after she died.

TB [01:53:08:000] In the mill?

GH [01:53:09:000] Yeah. He had worked there before.

TB [01:53:10:000] Well what happened to her? What was wrong with her?

GH [01:53:14:000] She had kidney trouble. You know, back then, a lot of things they couldn’t cure, and she died with it.

TB [01:53:24:000] And so her kidneys just failed?

GH [01:53:25:000] Just about.

TB [01:53:26:000] Yes. Is she buried down in the old cemetery?

GH [01:53:29:000] Yes.

TB [01:53:32:000] Is there anything to tell about her funeral?

GH [01:53:34:000] No, I don’t—I did have the obituary column for her; I guess I got it here somewhere. I kept it for a long time, and I think I still have it somewhere.

TB [01:53:51:000] What was she like? Can you tell me any stories about her? You have told me a little bit about her—how she must have struggled in 1912. . .

GH [01:53:59:000] Oh yeah. Well she was a hard worker, I’ll tell you that! Because she—after her husband died, she worked hard.

GH [01:54:11:000] Like I told you, she worked on the farm, rented the farm out for half to get a, to take care of, so she could raise her family. And she did that.

GH [01:54:23:000] And, of course, I think she’d make pottery during, some after she’d get through the crop, you know. And then she’d make a few pieces. But she worked real hard; she was a hard worker.

GH [01:54:35:000] She worked awfully hard! And she wasn’t an old woman! She was in her 30s. But she always said she’d never marry again and put nobody over her children.

GH [01:54:46:000] And she never did. But she was young when she died; she wasn’t but 47 years old.

TB [01:54:54:000] Why did she say that, I wonder?

GH [01:54:57:000] Well, you know, most men don’t treat step-children good, and she just felt like no man would be a father to them like their own father would, you know.

TB [01:55:09:000] Had she seen something like that?

GH [01:55:12:000] Well, I imagine she had over the years, you know. A lot of that happens, and I guess she did somewhere along her lifetime.

TB [01:55:20:000] Where children are mistreated?

GH [01:55:23:000] By stepfathers, stepmothers. And she always said, “I’ll never put nobody over my children.” And she raised us alone, by herself.

TB [01:55:38:000] Did you ever work in the cotton?

GH [01:55:42:000] You mean—?

TB [01:55:42:000] Your mother’s cotton.

GH [01:55:44:000] Yeah. I helped to pick it. I picked cotton many a time! And I picked after, well, after mama quit, you know. The kids all got up big.

GH [01:55:58:000] I got up a big girl, 16-17 years old; my sister had married; and Jesse was working out, you know. And there wasn’t nobody home but me and Furman, you know, farming.

GH [01:56:09:000] And then working as hard as she did, [?] ease up then. Well, whenever—just like Easter or Fourth of July—I’d go on and want a new dress.

GH [01:56:21:000] I used to go out and hoe cotton and pick cotton; get paid for it, you know. Do it for somebody else. And they’d pay me enough money, and I’d go to the store and buy me enough cloth to make a new dress, something like that.

GH [01:56:32:000] That’s how I always got something new for a special occasion: I’d go out and work for it.

TB [01:56:41:000] For maybe a day or a week?

GH [01:56:42:000] Oh, for however long it took. . .

TB [01:56:45:000] Well who did you work for?

GH [01:56:46:000] I used to pick cotton for Joe Sanders, I remember that. Joe Sanders used to, you know, raise cotton too.

TB [01:56:54:000] He had a pretty good farm?

GH [01:56:56:000] Not too good. It was a little—

TB [01:56:59:000] He was a better carpenter?

GH [01:57:01:000] Yeah. Never was a farmer, but he always tried, you know.

TB [01:57:05:000] Did you ever see him build a house? Are there any houses down there that he built?

GH [01:57:10:000] No, he always worked off the reservation, you know, for other people. I guess he built that one he lived in probably. I don’t know whether he—

TB [01:57:22:000] But it’s gone.

GH [01:57:23:000] Yes. No. I won’t say it’s gone either! Edith Brown lives in it, I think. I think that’s part of where Joe lived. Some of it has been redone over.

TB [01:57:34:000] I can ask Frances.

GH [01:57:38:000] Yeah, I think that’s part of the house.

TB [01:57:40:000] That might be it.

GH [01:57:41:000] Yes. It’s been worked over some, you know; but I remember that’s where Joe lived, right up in there.

TB [01:57:50:000] That’s a pretty house site.

GH [01:57:51:000] It is; it’s pretty.

TB [01:57:52:000] That’s a nice house site. It’s nice, the way you come up there, and it’s on that little hill.

GH [01:57:56:000] It is.

TB [01:57:59:000] That’s a very pretty house site.

GH [01:58:01:000] I used to work like that a lot. Anything—if I wanted something new, I’d get out and hoe cotton and pick cotton.

GH [01:58:10:000] And I used to pick for my uncle, Toad Harris—we called him ‘Toad’ Harris; you know, David Harris. I don’t know why they called him Uncle Toad. Because he was short and fat, I think.

GH [01:58:23:000] Some of our kids named him when he was small—called him Toad. And they always called him Uncle Toad. And I worked for him, picked cotton for him.

TB [01:58:34:000] Was he a good farmer?

GH [01:58:36:000] He was pretty good.

TB [01:58:38:000] Well how much—after they divided up the farms, how much land—

GH [01:58:43:000] They didn’t divide them up. You just went out and cleared what you wanted. And if you could use it, that’s the way it was done. They didn’t put no special—if you went and cleared up a place, it was yours. You worked it.

TB [01:58:57:000] It depended on the energy of the man?

GH [01:59:00:000] Yeah. That’s what it depended on.

TB [01:59:02:000] Your daddy’s place—how many acres do you reckon your daddy farmed?

GH [01:59:07:000] I wish I could take you down there some time and let you see.

TB [01:59:09:000] We’ll have to go down.

GH [01:59:11:000] Well, we can almost get there in the car, we can. We’d have to walk.

TB [01:59:15:000] Maybe we should do that Sunday.

GH [01:59:17:000] Okay. I went down there with my son, Baby Boy, when he was here at Christmas. He took me down there.

GH [01:59:25:000] I hadn’t been down there in a long time, and he wanted to go down there. And we went down there and rambled around—he had to pull me up the hill up from where we used to carry water from—and fooled around by the branch.

GH [01:59:37:000] And he said, “Mama, this [?].” He said, “I’ll help you.” He got me up halfway, and he said, “Now rest a while; don’t try to go it all at one time, alright?”

GH [01:59:47:000] I did pretty good though. It’s pretty back in there, but that was always a pretty place down in there where we used to live.

GH [01:59:56:000] There used to be some big old trees. I remember where that house stood, where my dad built that house. There was, let’s see, there was one, two, three, four great big oak trees.

GH [02:00:07:000] You couldn’t reach around them; two people couldn’t reach around them! One of them is still standing there now. Big oaks!

TB [02:00:14:000] Oh, now isn’t that funny! I’ve read so many times that there wasn’t enough firewood down there to build a decent fire. Why would they write those things in *The Evening Herald*?

GH [02:00:28:000] Who wrote it?

TB [02:00:29:000] Different people.

GH [02:00:31:000] It wasn’t Indians! Well where we lived there was plenty of wood. We had a lot, and we didn’t have to go no distance to get our wood.

TB [02:00:40:000] You had plenty of firewood.

GH [02:00:42:000] Yeah, all the firewood we wanted, because back over in there, nobody wanted to live in that place. It’s off from the road and it’s kind of, “Oh, we don’t want to live over there!”

GH [02:00:53:000] But I loved it over there! And we finally—and I give Nola, Raymond the house place after they got married. I give Nola a house place down over there; that’s the reason Nola lived down there close to where I was.

TB [02:01:10:000] You let her have part of your yard?

GH [02:01:13:000] It was kind of a good ways off. About as far as from here to the chemical place. Couple hundred yards from where we lived. I give them a house place, and they built them a house.

TB [02:01:25:000] Raymond built it?

GH [02:01:26:000] Yeah. He built a log house first.

TB [02:01:28:000] Is that right.

GH [02:01:29:000] Yes. Built a log—cut enough logs off and built him a log house, and later he built him a frame house.

TB [02:01:37:000] What was the log house like?

GH [02:01:40:000] Well, I believe it was one room, but I believe there wasn’t nobody but him and one child in there. Just Nola and the one child, Debbie, then that’s the oldest.

GH [02:01:51:000] But I give them that land. So [he] built him a log house and lived in it until he built the other house.