Lula Beck

Lula Beck Interview, August 11, 1982 Tape 1

Catawba\_Lula-Samuel-Henrietta-Beck-Aug-11-1982\_64kbs.mp3

TB [00:00:00:000] You chopped his fingers off. Just why did you do that Mrs. Beck [Laughs] ?

LB [00:00:07:000] Well we were out doors playing.

TB [00:00:08:000] Uh-huh [yes].

LB [00:00:09:000] My daddy and them had cut some of the big old trees down.

TB [00:00:11:000] Uh-huh [yes].

LB [00:00:12:000] And just a big old stump was left there and we was just out there playin. We had the old ax out there, and I was doing the cutting and, he was showing me where to cut laying his fingers on the block.

LB [00:00:24:000] I kept hitting on the block, and he’d jack his fingers back, but I wasn’t at his fingers. He was just showing me where to cut, and this time I didn’t wait for him to move his fingers.

LB [00:00:34:000] I just came on down and cut them off and that’s all. We were just out there playing and left one of the fingers laying on the block on the chopping block. The other one was just hanging there and that’s all I know about it.

TB [00:00:51:000] Did you get, I bet you got—.

LB [00:00:54:000] A whipping for it.

TB [00:00:55:000] A whipping good.

LB [00:00:56:000] They said I did. They said my daddy really tore me up. Momma didn’t whip me I don’t think, but she said my daddy tore, but now I don’t remember about that.

TB [00:01:03:000] Uh-huh [yes]. He must of bled something terrible?

LB [00:01:06:000] Did I guess. See we had this old doctor from down here at Catawba, and he traveled in a buggy. My daddy went after him.

LB [00:01:13:000] I don’t think he carried Leroy down there. He brought him up there. The finger was just hanging there. The doctor pushed it back to it’s place and taped it up.

LB [00:01:25:000] And when he come back one the fingers was mostly rotted. The doctor had to take it all off. I don’t see why he didn’t cut it all off.

TB [00:01:34:000] Oh, it wouldn’t stay?

LB [00:01:35:000] No it didn’t, wouldn’t—.

TB [00:01:36:000] Aw.

LB [00:01:36:000] Take back, but I guess the doctor thought it would, you know. It wouldn’t grow back. But Leroy, did Leroy say I was mad, the reason I cut his fingers off?

TB [00:01:44:000] No. He said you were playing a game and putting a stick and—.

LB [00:01:48:000] He might of been showing me where to cut at on the stick, maybe.

TB [00:01:51:000] On the stick.

LB [00:01:53:000] Well he might of been doing that.

TB [00:01:54:000] Uh-huh [yes].

LB [00:01:54:000] But I remember, well I was chopping on the block, and he was showin me where to cut, but he told it a different way one time. Said that my grandma and a bunch of us was going fishing And I wanted to go, and momma and them wouldn’t let me go.

LB [00:02:10:000] Said I got mad and cut his fingers off. He told it at one time, but that wasn’t the way, I mean he was out there playing after they had gone fishing, and he might of been laying the stick up there for me to cut but I know. I was cutting edge of the big old stump—.

TB [00:02:27:000] Uh-huh, uh-huh [yes, yes].

LB [00:02:28:000] They must of just sawed it off level there, and I was cutting away, and I didn’t give it time. [Laughs]. Yeah or something. Well the one that got shot, his finger, one of them was cut off too. Harvey.

TB [00:02:42:000] Now how did that happen?

LB [00:02:43:000] Jack Brown cut it off but, I don’t know how he did that.

TB [00:02:47:000] Leroy said they were playing the same game.

LB [00:02:49:000] Well I don’t remember that.

TB [00:02:51:000] Evidently boys played that game.

LB [00:02:53:000] Just one finger. I don’t remember, we were playing together. I just thought me and Leroy were out there playin, and he might have had a stick, showing me whereabouts to cut on the stick.

LB [00:03:00:000] Maybe, I don’t know, but I remember I was doing the cutting, and he was showing me where to cut on the stump. I cut his fingers off. [Laughs].

TB [00:03:10:000] [Laughs]. Last time you said something about Ben Harris in the church and it got lost in static. Can you remember what you where talking about with Ben Harris. Was he a minister in the church?

LB [00:03:22:000] Oh he had had a heart attack or stroke or something. His mind wasn’t right. He would start talking, and he’d forget you know, like his mind would leave him.

TB [00:03:34:000] Yeah. Well, did he help your daddy when he was able?

LB [00:03:41:000] Yeah. He did years and years before he had the stroke. They was the only two ministers here for years.

TB [00:03:47:000] That’s what you were talking about.

LB [00:03:48:000] Well they were the only two and there’s a lot of the people that had, seems like, more faith in my daddy than they did in him. I don’t know why, one wasn’t any better than the other, but you know how it is.

TB [00:04:01:000] Sure, sure.

LB [00:04:02:000] When anybody gets sick they would always send for my daddy instead of him. But most the time with daddy, if he could get to him, he’d have him come and go with him.

LB [00:04:14:000] They was ministers, but they worked in the church for years and years. He was coming from town one day and he, well he must of had a stroke cause he fell out of the buggy up there on the road and passed out. He got over it, but his mind was, you know, just like, times he’d—.

TB [00:04:32:000] He wasn’t right after that.

LB [00:04:33:000] No, he never was right like after that, but he was a good preacher. He could preach real good.

TB [00:04:39:000] Could he preach a good sermon?

LB [00:04:40:000] Yeah, because he could read and see my daddy couldn’t read; and he used to come over there to the old church at night and read to my daddy.

LB [00:04:47:000] They’d exchange their scriptures talking about it, explaining it to each other. That’s where my daddy learned a lot.

TB [00:04:56:000] He learned a lot from him?

LB [00:04:57:000] From him, um-hm [yes].

TB [00:04:59:000] Did your daddy used to make you read to him?

LB [00:05:01:000] That was my older sister not me. Lily.

TB [00:05:04:000] Oh, Lily. Is the one, she read to him?

TB [00:05:07:000] All the time.

LB [00:05:08:000] Yeah. They have that blessing on the sacrament. It’s in the book of Mormon.

LB [00:05:11:000] She’d read it to him till he learned it all by heart. Yeah, it was her that did the reading.

TB [00:05:16:000] You never read for him?

LB [00:05:19:000] Well, when he’d write anybody, I always wrote his letters for him; but just sitting down reading, I never did read anything for him.

TB [00:05:31:000] Can you tell me what kind of home remedies your momma used, if you got sick, or cut, or burned or anything like that?

LB [00:05:44:000] No, granny always made some kind of old salve out of this liquor, but how she made it I don’t know. And she used the stuff that my grandma made.

TB [00:05:54:000] Oh, is that right?

LB [00:05:55:000] Uh-huh [yes]. We got one old thing out there now. It’s called a liquor root. The kids keep it torn up. My daddy told me never do away with it.

LB [00:06:02:000] If it grew up, it would be pretty. I was going to move it from out there because the kids play around it.

LB [00:06:07:000] He said it was good medicine, never do away with it. And uh, that’s what my grandma made salve out of.

TB [00:06:17:000] And it’s called liquor root?

LB [00:06:19:000] Lucky root, it was called lucky root.

TB [00:06:21:000] Oh, lucky. You don’t know how she made it?

LB [00:06:24:000] No, I—.

TB [00:06:25:000] No.

LB [00:06:25:000] Me and Alfred were talking about that one day and about what people used to use, you know. Way years ago, all they’d ever give kids, working medicine, be castor oil, you know.

TB [00:06:39:000] Um-hm [yes].

LB [00:06:40:000] And uh, momma and my aunty, their back would hurt them; they’d say it was kidney trouble they were having. They’d go to the woods and get this old wood that’s called fire wood.

LB [00:06:51:000] Fire weed it was. And they’d make a tea out of that and they’d drink it.

TB [00:06:55:000] Yeah.

LB [00:06:56:000] And when the little babies were sick, they said they had the colic, we’d go down there on the creek and get, I can’t think about that tea. We used catnip tea too, and allstag(?). We’d make tea out of that and give it to them.

TB [00:07:12:000] And that would, that would—.

LB [00:07:14:000] Break the hives out of them, momma always said. And that’s about all I can imagine we ever used.

TB [00:07:22:000] You managed without. Really. Yeah, you just tried to stay healthy.

LB [00:07:26:000] Yeah.

TB [00:07:30:000] Can you tell me about your daddy breaking his leg? That’s another one that got lost in the static.

LB [00:07:36:000] I don’t, I don’t remember to much about that. I guess she told it too, but I just don’t remember. Leroy didn’t know anything about that?

TB [00:07:47:000] Yeah he told me the story. You had told me before too, but on that last tape, but it was all spoiled by static. And I couldn’t listen to it.

TB [00:07:57:000] Something about him being in the woods cutting wood or something and a log fell on him.

LB [00:08:01:000] Yeah they was cutting wood I guess or at a saw mill one. I don’t know. They must of been cutting for a saw mill, because I think he said his leg was caught between two logs, and that’s how it got broken.

TB [00:08:16:000] Yeah, and he broke it a second time or the doctor wanted to cut it off?

LB [00:08:19:000] Yeah it was broken a second, said he got up and started church about three weeks or two weeks on some crutches and he stuck the crutch down in a hole or something and fell and rebroke it over.

LB [00:08:32:000] But I don’t know how old he was. That’s was before him and momma got married. That was him and his first wife.

TB [00:08:41:000] Very long ago.

LB [00:08:44:000] Yeah. So that’s why I didn’t know much. Only just, you know what I heard him tell.

TB [00:08:51:000] Yeah. Mr. Beck told a really interesting story that I, that I lost. Something about him going down on the river and the bottom falling out of the boat or something, and I –

LB [00:09:01:000] Um-hm [yes]. He can retell you that by his self I guess. Him and [unclear] they went fishing. He’ll tell you about that. Is pawpaw out there?

CHILD [00:09:09:000] Yeah.

LB [00:09:10:000] I don’t see him. [Laughs].

LB [00:09:17:000] Where? Well you tell it, he’ll tell you about that. I’ll tell him what you want, and then he’ll tell you about that.

LB [00:09:25:000] You want to come in and tell him about that time the boat, the bottom come out of the boat? Um-hm [yes].

CHILD [00:09:34:000] Whose is that.

LB [00:09:35:000] That’s his. Major, where he’s putting your bicycle at.

CHILD [00:09:40:000] Yeah.

LB [00:09:41:000] You had your bath?

TB [00:09:46:000] He looks nice and clean doesn’t he?

LB [00:09:49:000] [Laughs]. Tell him you don’t stay that way, now do you?

TB [00:09:51:000] Yeah. Didn’t Major Beck build that block church that was across the street? Did he basically build that?

LB [00:09:57:000] He helped. Him and another.

TB [00:09:59:000] He helped that Bell.

LB [00:10:01:000] Uh-huh [yes]. Major, come in here a little bit. Major. Can’t [unclear] Come in here.