

A BOARDHOUSE WITH A TIN TOP

Life at Ayavalla - Personal Histories from
The Plantation.

Prepared for

The City of Tallahassee's
Elinor Klapp-Phipps Park

The Northwest Florida Water Management District

The Phipps Foundation

By Sharyn Thompson
1997

**A Board House With a Tin Top: Life at Ayavalla -
Personal Histories from the Plantation**

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What happens to the history of a people not accustomed to writing things down? To whom poverty and illiteracy make wills, diaries, and letters superfluous? Birth and death certificates, tax receipts - these occasional records punctuate but do not describe everyday life.

Theodore Rosengarten -
All God's Dangers: The Life of Nate
Shaw

INTRODUCTION

In preparation for historical interpretation and education programs at the City of Tallahassee's Elinor Klapp-Phipps Park, the Phipps Foundation and the Northwest Florida Water Management District contracted with Sharyn Thompson, consulting historian, to begin the development of a comprehensive history of Ayavalla Plantation. The proposed study was divided into two components: Phase I is the preliminary study which concentrates on oral interviews to acquire first-person information about the tenant farm system at Ayavalla. For Phase II of the project it was suggested that the investigation should involve multiple interviews with informants, in-depth archival research to compile a history of Ayavalla, and video-taping of selected interviews for use in future interpretive programs. The second phase is such that it can involve students from Florida State University and Florida A and M University (history, cultural geography, anthropology, architecture, etc.) who are in study courses that require internships.

Phase I of the study concentrated on identifying persons who had resided on Ayavalla as members of tenant farm

families, determining who would have appropriate information for this phase of the study, and conducting interviews with those who were selected. While the project focused on tenant farmers, it also included persons who represent other points of view from within the Plantation's socio-economic hierarchy. A secondary purpose of Phase I was to discover what human activities had an impact upon the landscape of the "South Davis" parcel (the site of the Elinor Klapp-Phipps Park) and areas immediately surrounding it. The results of this investigation, and the transcripts of oral history interviews, are provided in this report, *A Board House with a Tin Top: Life on Ayavalla - Personal Histories from the Plantation*.

Although the scope of work for this phase of the study did not include researching the history of Ayavalla Plantation, a brief historical summary is included to provide appropriate context for the oral histories. This summary was developed from readily available secondary sources, and is in no way complete. The summary concerning land use on the South Davis parcel was developed from both primary and secondary sources.

In addition to the personal histories collected for this study, Jeffrey Phipps contributed his research notes from interviews that he conducted in the late 1980's with several long-term tenants or employees of Ayavalla. This material is particularly important because some of the informants have died and his notes are the only known written record of their memories. The transcribed notes, and a list of sites significant to the history of the plantation, are included in the appendix of this report. Clifton Paisly, author of *From Cotton to Quail*, and *The Red Hills of Florida, 1528-1875*, loaned his research notes from an earlier study he had conducted for Colin Phipps. His material was very useful in understanding the developmental history of Ayavalla Plantation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project could not have been completed without the assistance and support of many people. I would like to thank Colin Phipps for his interest, help and good humor throughout the project; Chuck Goodheart, Park Management Specialist, Elinor Klapp-Phipps Park, for his enthusiastic

support; and Kevin McGorty, Director of the Red Hills Conservation Program, Tall Timbers Research, Inc., for his advice regarding tenant farming practices in the Red Hills region. Robin Huck of the Florida Park Service offered documents related to the history of Lake Overstreet property. Jeffrey Phipps provided notes from interviews he conducted with African American persons associated with Ayavalla. Clifton Paisley graciously contributed his research notes about the lands that make up the Plantation. A special thank you to the people of Ayavalla - those who granted interviews and those who chose not to - for the patience and trust they extended. I would also like to acknowledge my research associate, Althemese Barnes, for his assistance in locating members of the plantation families. It is because of her diligence and insight that much of this information was obtained.

Sharyn Thompson
November 1997

HISTORICAL SUMMARY

Ayavalla Plantation:

As with other hunting plantations located in Florida's Red Hills Region, Ayavalla Plantation was cobbled together from properties that were originally ante-bellum plantations and farmsteads. It grew to eventually encompass more than 10,600 acres, and surrounded much of the Lake Jackson Shoreline. Ayavalla's main house is situated on land that once belonged to Richard Keith Call, one of Florida's territorial governors (Paisley 1981:90: Historic Tallahassee Preservation Board (HTPB) plantation survey files, 1984: n. pag.).

Ayavalla was established in 1936, when John H. Phipps purchased 439 acres of an ante-bellum plantation once owned by John S. Shepard of North Carolina. Shepard owned plantation land along the Lake Jackson shoreline which included present-day Rollins and Brill Points, as well as tracts that stretched about a mile north of the lake. He utilized early soil conservation practices, planting the crops in "circular horizontal rows", to retard erosion. In 1850 his crop produced 310 bales of cotton. That same year he sold the plantation to Frederick Cotten (unpub. Ms., C. Paisely's Ayavalla Research Notes, n.d.:11)

Mr. Cotten arrived in Florida from North Carolina in 1841. He was a successful landowner and planter, with holdings along the south shore of Lake Iamonia and along five miles of the eastern Lake Jackson shoreline. In 1860, Mr. Cotten and Joseph John Williams, produced, between them, one-eighth of Leon County's cotton. In that year, Mr. Cotten owned real estate valued at \$100,000, and 274 slaves valued at \$164,000. His plantation produced 825 bales of cotton, 13,000 bushels of corn, 75 tons of hay, 4,000 bushels of sweet potatoes, 2,000 bushels of peas and beans and some 30 bushels of Irish potatoes. The property was eventually inherited by one of Mr. Cotten's heirs, Major F. C. Elliott (Paisley, 1981:8; 73; unpub. Ms., C. Paisley's Ayavalla research notes., n.d.:11).

Another plantation which eventually made up a part of Ayavalla was once owned by his son-in-law, Alexander Hawkings. In June 1883, H. D. McCulloch, of Stevens Point, Wisconsin, purchased this 2,340 acre tract, which was

situated between Meridian Road and the eastern shore of Lake Jackson. The property was subsequently purchased by John H. Phipps (Paisley 1981:73, 83; Thompson 1985:n.pag.).

Mossview Plantation also became part of Ayavalla. During the ante-bellum period it was owned by the Whitehead family. In 1915 Sadie Rawls Moran and Kenneth Moran sold its 2,263 acres to Arthur B. Lapsley, of Pomfret Center Connecticut. Mr. Lapsley renamed the property Meridian Plantation. It, too, was situated between Lake Jackson and the Meridian Road. Additional acquisitions increased the size of the plantation to 4,640 acres by 1930. Meridian Plantation was sold to Dwight F. Davis in 1933. Davis served as Secretary of War under President Coolidge, was governor-general of the Phillipines (1929-1932) and founder of the Davis Cup in tennis (Paisley 1981:9, 83; HTPB plantation survey files, 1984: n.pag).

After Davis' death in 1945 his property was acquired by Griscom Bettle. Bettle had several land holdings in Leon County, but sold them within a relatively short time. Meridian Plantation was acquired by John H. Phipps in December of 1947 for \$163,000. John S. Phipps, father of John H. Phipps, also acquired plantation land in northern Leon County. He purchased Orchard Pond Plantation from Dwight Davis in 1940. Mr. Davis had acquired the property in 1930 from Harold B. Fowler (HTPB plantation survey files, 1984:n pag.).

Following the death of John S. Phipps in 1958, Orchard Pond was inherited by his son John H. Phipps, who divided Meridian Plantation between his sons, John Eugene and Colin. Colin Phipps received the western portion of the property and eventually named it Meridian Meadows. (The "South Davis" parcel, where Elinor Klapp-Phipps Park is located, is part of Meridian Meadows, and the primary focus of this study) (Paisley 1981;90; HTPB plantation survey files, 1984:n.pag).

In an unpublished manuscript, Clifton Paisley summarized the prior land ownership of properties belonging to Colin Phipps, stating that, "his lands at Meridian Park were in the hands of at least three game planters before becoming the property of the Phipps family: Arthur B. Lapsley of Connecticut, bought what came to be called Meridian Plantation in 1915, and Dwight F. Davis, bought Meridian in

1933. It remained in Davis' hands until his death in 1945, after which it was acquired by Griscom Bettle, a nephew of Lloyd S. Griscom. Shortly, the land was acquired by the Phipps family (unpub.ms., C. Paisley's Ayavalla research notes, n.d.,: 13).

The Tenant Farm System:

Following the Civil War there was a twenty percent decline in improved farm acreage in Leon County. The slavery system was gradually replaced by a tenant or "sharecrop" system, although land use patterns were basically the same as before the war. Cotton and corn remained the cash crops, with the county's cotton crop reaching its postwar peak of 9,562 bales in 1880. In the rural areas, almost all people of African descent were tenant farmers, growing corn and cotton to pay their rent, and growing their food and raising some animals. In an 1885 newspaper series entitled "*His Letters From Tallahassee*" one writer stated that, "most generally the owners of the larger tracts live in the towns and the lands are let to the Negro tenants who pay a rental of from 450 to 1,000 pounds of lint or ginned cotton delivered in a baled and marketable condition at the depot, for so much land as an ox or a little mule can cultivate, ranging from 20 to 40 acres" (Brubaker 1956:45; unpub.ms., C Paisley's Ayavalla research notes, n.d.:12).

Ninety percent of the tenant farmers in Leon County between the years 1900 and 1950 were African American. Of those, 85 to 90% lived on the hunting plantations. There were 1,7775 tenant farms in Leon County in 1900, but only 360 farms in 1950 - or, put another way, nearly three out of every four farmers in 1900 were tenants, but by 1950 less than one of three farmers was a tenant. The sharpest decline was during the decade of World War II, when the number of farms worked by tenants fell from 812 in 1940 to 360 farms in 1950.

In 1930, just six years prior to John J. Phipps purchasing the first Ayavalla property, black tenant farmers worked fifty-one percent of all harvested land in Leon County. Through the Depression, conditions became extremely difficult for many of them. Reports of the County Agriculture Agent during the 1930's illustrate that it was not only the depressed economy that was causing their suffering, but also the agriculture methods and crops they were using (Brubaker 1956:109, 115-116).

The tenant farms existed on the various Ayavalla properties that eventually came to be the present-day plantation. Some of the informants for this study were born and grew up on these tracts and usually mentioned the geographic locations in association with the names of previous

landowners. For instance, Mattie and Clipper Charlton, who both worked for the Phipps family for nearly 50 years, stated that they once lived "on Dr. Gwynn's plantation." Agnes Charlton, "was born on the Phipps Plantation, the Phipps didn't own it, but they bought the place after I was born... Mr. Fowler owned it before Mr. Phipps bought it."

Jack Pons, who became the manager of Ayavalla in 1950, states that,

When I arrived most of the tenants were at least in their 50s or 60s. They had a diminishing amount of land that they would farm each year because of their age. During the decade of the 50's I saw the number of tenants diminish from 55 or 56 to almost none. The only ones left were tenants that had been there all their lives and that had worked and lived on the plantation, and Mr. Phipps allowed them to stay.

At Ayavalla, the tenant system under John H. Phipps appears to have been more relaxed than it was prior to his arrival in 1936. However, Mr. Phipps required a formal contract with the farmers until at least the early 1950s. Mr. Pons states that when he began work at Ayavalla in 1950,

One of my first experiences that first winter... was going around to sign up the tenants to their annual contract. We had actual written contracts that they signed, which were based on the number of acres they would farm, an average of maybe between 20 and 30 acres, which they could handle reasonably well with one mule... We would fill in - it was a blank, two or three pages as I recall - rental agreement. "I, Junius Hill, will rent thirty acres and the house and I agree 90 bushels of corn, to be delivered to the owner's crib by the first of December, 1951" or something to effect. It would have a list of things also on that agreement that he would sign that were more or less rules for the tenants. Not to light any wood fires, not to keep cats on the property - because they would eat the quail. It was a very primary type, basic rules that they had to abide by. They weren't to hunt or trap any quail on the property, or turkeys, or any game, unless they had written permission from me.

Mainor Poppell, Jr., an Ayavalla employee from 1936 to the present relates that,

Then, all of the land here, most of it, was tenant farmers.. They's farm a little bit and, of course, they were supposed to pay a little rent, most of them. But nobody asked them for the rent, if they paid it, all right, if they didn't it was all right. Just let it go. The plantation was interested in that little thing anyway. They maintained for quail. Of course, the tenant farmers, with little patches all around, it was for the quail.

Johnny Cofields memory of his parent's situation as Ayavalla tenants, confirms Mr. Poppel's statement regarding the benevolent attitude of the Phipps family towards the farmers. The tenants who lived on the plantation farmed and sometimes worked for Mr. Phipps. They also had the latitude to work jobs away from the plantation.

Mr. Cofield relates that Mr. Phipps gave Albert and Mary Cofield "a place to stay...if you kept it clean and farmed it, you could stay there for free. Sometimes you would have to help him (Mr. Phipps) gather his crop. " He also recalls that his father "worked out, when he'd get all the crop together, then he went to work for ... the WPA. That was doing the streets around town."

SOUTH DAVIS

Elinor Klapp-Phipps Park is located on what was once the Meridian Plantation area of Ayavalla Plantation. Part of the Meridian Plantation became the property of Colin S. Phipps when he traced property in South Florida with his father, John H. Phipps. Colin renamed this tract "Meridian Meadows". The Elinor Klapp-Phipps Park is part of this. It is sometimes called the "South Davis" parcel, a designation that refers to the prior land owner, Dwight Davis. South Davis was purchased by John H. Phipps for quail hunting. Colin Phipps notes that it "added a one-day shoot or course to what he had already bought to the north". A number of other activities also occurred on the parcel.

According to Jack Pons, the manager of the Ayavalla Plantation from 1950 to 1984, the South Davis parcel was one of the least intensively managed parts of the entire plantation. He recalls that when he started working for John H. Phipps in 1950, South Davis was primarily unimproved pasture. He describes it as having a "very high bluff overlooking the lake, a beautiful area. That was probably one of the least intensively managed portions of the plantation from our point of view....We had some pasture on the lake bottom at the bottom of the hill. We had a fence across the side of the hill. We had about 125-140 steers that we ran down there on the lake bottom in the summer time when the lake was low. In the winter time we'd turn them loose in the woods and they would keep the bushes knocked down." In the summer, when the water level in Lake Jackson was low, the area provided pasture for about 125-140 head of steers (this was prior to when Mr. Phipps began breeding purebred Charlois stock). Mainor Poppell, who has worked at Ayavalla since 1936, remembers that, "on South Davis we ran cattle on the western part in the winter.

An extensive tung grove was one on the property, spreading over the area where the City baseball fields, the farm, the horse stables, are now located. It was probably under Dwight Davis' ownership that the tung grove was planted. Paisley, in *From Cotton to Quail*, states that, "It was not until the 1930s when Dwight F. Davis planted an orchard and the Leon Tung

Orchards Co. planted some 1,500 acres east of Tallahassee along now Highway 27, that tung production really began. By 1949, there were 42 farms and 266,597 bearing trees (Paisley, 1981:120).

Ayavalla had about 450 acres of bearing tung trees and another 50-100 acres in immature trees. Mr. Pons states that, "the present site of Meridian Meadows Horse Farm...the major part of that was a big tung grove." He stated that when he arrived at the plantation, the groves were not intensively cultivated, but were still producing. The tung nut harvest at Ayavalla is described in the Pons interview.

Prior to the mid 1930's, all tung oil was imported. China produced nearly 100% of the world's supply, which was used to manufacture paints, varnishes, insulation for electrical wiring, and linoleum. In the late 1930's, northern business who had acquired large acreages in the south began experimenting with new crops, including the tung tree. The oil was produced in several southern states; in Florida, Leon County was the second largest producer. However, by the mid 1960's the industry was in sharp decline due to a variety of forces, including market competition from synthetic materials (*Tallahassee Democrat*, September 6, 1976: Archeological Consultants, Inc. 1992: n.pag.).

At Ayavalla, the tung groves were bulldozed in the late 1950s, when it became apparent that the production of the oil would no longer be profitable. According to Jack Pons, "In the late 50s we started replacing the tung trees.. just pushing them down, bulldozing them down and burning them."

Much of the former grove areas were planted in corn. Mr. Pons relates that after the tung groves were destroyed, "we converted many of the fields to corn fields that we utilized for the corn base...We anticipated the corn base coming in...it paid farmers not to grow corn on their property, so the larger the base, the bigger the check from Uncle Sam...All this time we were in a transition from a tenant farming thing to a corn farming thing. We had a corn farming operation. We farmed over a thousand acres of corn

for ourselves." Clifton Paisley's book, *From Cotton to Quail: An Agriculture Chronicle of Leon County, Florida, 1860 to 1967*, states that "one of the largest corn acreages in the county, 1,200 acres, was growing on the Phipps plantation, but in four or five acre patches (Paisley 1985:106).

An egg farm was located where today Colin Phipps' office and horse stables are situated. Paisley writes that "Until March , 1966, John H. Phipps had the county's largest egg enterprise, with twenty thousand layers at the peak of operation...producing 9,000 or more eggs a day. The business, called Leon Eggs, was sold and the operation moved to western Leon County" (Paisley 1981:106). Colin Phipps describes the egg-laying operation having "a number of very long open sheds, with at least three double caged rows in each shed." His current office is situated in what was once the office for Leon Eggs, which "included an air conditioned room for holding the eggs until they were shipped out."

When Colin Phipps returned from Columbia in the 1970s he became interested in using Paso Finos as plantation shooting horses. He and a partner "designed and built the present fields and paddock area and imported some 80 mares and a couple of stallions from Columbia, South America...at one time we had close to 170 horses on the property." The vacant hen houses were converted to stables.

From 1954 until 1980, Mainor and Wilma Poppel operated a 10-12 acre hog farm where the soccer fields are now located. They sometimes turned the animals into the corn fields to forage. A hay operation was also located at this site. The soccer fields, near the main entrance to the Park, were established prior to 1980, when Colin Phipps became involved with the Tallahassee Soccer League.

Other parts of the South Davis parcel continued to be "casually" used for hunting. Mr. Phipps reports that, "there were a few years in the '80s that I rented most of the shooting rights to my cousin, Guy de la Valdene". Some timbering was also done on the parcel. Reforestation was attempted on a portion of the acreage by row-planting pine, but natural regeneration

was also promoted. "The property was managed by controlled burns, similar to Ayavalla and other plantations in the area."

Fletcher Braswell leased a small acreage and planted it in corn. Colin Phipps notes that "Mr. Braswell took very good care of the property. He was the only person who rented land for farming that really took care of (it) ... fertilizing correctly, etc." (Phipps interview, 1996).

Jack Pons states that John H. Phipps engaged in some selective timbering during his lifetime. "He was very much a naturalist. He didn't want the oaks destroyed, the hardwoods. He wanted the woodlands left pretty much like they were. He did do some cleaning and clearing to facilitate hunting." In 1983, after Mr. Phipps' death, the previous year, Ayavalla's swamp areas were clear cut (HTPB plantation survey files, 1984, no pag.).

Within the memory of those interviewed, two tenants were associated with the land that comprises the Klapp-Phipps Park. They were Walter Walker, who lived at a place known as Chimney Field on the South Davis parcel, and Albert and Mary Cofield and their fifteen children, who lived at two sites on the plantation. The first was near the lake next to John Austin, and the second was "in back of" Poplar Springs Church.

Mr. Walker was an elderly man who, at the time Colin Phipps knew him, did not farm but continued to live in an old tenant house on the property. According to Mainor Poppell, "Walter Walker was the only one who lived over in there... He was kind of a happy-go-lucky kind of fellow, he'd work a day or two here and a day or two yonder." Mr. Poppell also noted that Mr. Walker was residing at that location from before 1936 (when John H Phipps created Ayavalla) until the time of his death, sometime in the late 1970s.

The Albert Cofield family's life at Ayavalla Plantation is vividly described in the interviews with their son, Johnny Cofield, and with Mainor and Wilma Poppell.

Jack Pons also recalls that "there were two tenant houses n the back side of the same tung grove (that once grew at Meridian Meadows). One of them was the Thompsons, who owned land in the middle of the lake (Jackson)." These house sites were apparently outside the boundaries of the Klapp-Phipps Park.

When Colin Phipps acquired the South Davis Property, John Austin owned a 50-75 acre parcel on Lake Jackson that might best be described as an "in-holding". Mr. Phipps purchased the Austin property, "in two phases...the first was most of the land; the second, the house." A portion of the Austin farm is located within Klapp-Phipps Park, near the western boundary.

Other informants for the study also mentioned John Austin. Johnny Cofield remembered that when he was a small boy, John Austin's house was near the Cofield's house close to the Lake Jackson shore. Mr. Cofield states, "Down there by our house, old man John Austin used to be down there.....he was down at the store there, near Lake Jackson. He owned some property down there."

When Willie Gardner, Jr., was a child, living on his family's property at the present-day Gardner Road, and North Meridian Road, he and other members of his family would sometimes ride to town with John Austin. Mr. Austin "ran a dairy and he used to take us. In fact, he's pick up milk and cream (from the Gardners) and we'd ride a lot with him. "

AYAVALLA INFORMANTS

Twelve people were interviewed for the *Life at Ayavalla* study. The African American informants were born on the land that became Ayavalla plantation or on other nearby plantations. These informants are the children of tenant farmers, born during the 1910s - 1930s, who grew up on the land. With the collapse of the tenant system in the 1950's, they often left the plantation for other opportunities. Some of the individuals' "extended memories" date to the 1860's, because they recall what their great-grandparents told them about their lives when they were slaves. Burt Hadley remembers his great-grandfather's stories of living in slavery on a cotton plantation, and Willie Mae Carter remembers her great-grandfather, John Proctor, a free man of color who was sold into slavery.

The African American informants are: Burt Hadley, who lived on Ayavalla from c 1945 to 1957; Clipper Charlton and Mattie Charlton, sisters born on the Gwynn property and who worked as cook and maid for the Phipps family for 48 years and 49 years respectively; Agnes Charlton, born on the Fowler property, whose husband, Ephraim Charlton, worked for the Phipps family for 50 years; Matthew Carter, a dog trainer at Ayavalla from 1942 until 1948, and his wife, Willie Mae Rollins Carter, who lived on the Gwynn property when she was a child; Johnny Cofield, whose parents Mary and Albert Cofield, Sr., were tenant farmers on Ayavalla; and Willie J. Garnder, Jr., whose family owned a country store near Ayavalla. Other informants are Wilma and Mainor Poppell, Jr., who have worked for the Phipps family since 1936; Jack Pons, the manager of the plantation from 1950 to 1984; and Colin Phipps.

Formal questionnaires were not completed while the interviews were being conducted. Avoiding the use of questionnaires allowed the interviews to be more "open ended", with the informants feeling free to talk about whatever they felt was pertinent, rather than concentrating on a set of questions they felt obligated to provide answers for. However, a set of standard questions were asked of the informants throughout the interview sessions, in an effort to have uniformity in the material compiled. Standardized questions also allowed the researchers to cross-check and corroborate the information received from each person. In almost every instance, the facts and details given by one informant were substantiated by other informants involved in the study, thus assuring a high degree of credibility for the material that has been compiled.

The questions asked of the informants covered a variety of topics --- descriptions of the houses and outbuildings on the farms, the types of gardens and crops that were grown, how food was prepared and preserved, various amenities that were (or were not) available, agricultural practices, education of the children, religious and social institutions in the community, methods of transportation, and the type of each relationship each person had with the Phipps family. While it is this kind of information that is important to historians investigating and interpreting hunting plantation life in quantitative detail, it was apparent that some of the informants were interested in expressing their feelings and views about the forces that have shaped their lives. The sharing of this type of information was encouraged. Therefore, some interviews including discussions of race relations, memories of a specific individual and personal attitudes towards religion.

The transcribed interviews are edited and abridged. Material is organized by topic so that the information is not scattered throughout an interview. Material that did not directly pertain to the project was sometimes excluded. The format of each interview is generally the same; however, some are framed in a "question-answer" style while others are a "monologue". No effort was made to replicate the actual speech of the informants in the transcriptions, although grammar and speech patterns are preserved. An occasional "stray" comma should not be interpreted as a

punctuation mark, but rather as a pause in the speaker's thoughts. Copies of the unedited tapes are housed at the City of Tallahassee's Parks and Recreation Department.

Over the past three decades a number of excellent studies based upon oral histories have been produced about the African American experience in the South. Among these are *Hearth and Home: Preserving a People's Culture* by George McDaniel, *Living In, Living Out: African American Domesticity and the Great Migration* by Elizabeth Clark-Lewis, and *African Americans at Mars Bluff, South Carolina* by Amelia Wallace Vernon. Theodore Rosengarten's seminal work, *All God's Dangers: The Life of Nate Shaw*, published in 1974, is the personal narration of a tenant farmer in Alabama during the early decades of the 20th century. Mr. Shaw told of a much harsher life than is described by Ayavalla informants. This may be because the Ayavalla informants are the children of the tenant farmers and they do not have recollections of an earlier time period, or perhaps the living conditions in North Florida were easier than those imposed upon African American tenant farmers in Alabama. It must be noted, however, that Burt Hadley and Johnny Cofield hint that there are many stories left untold.

The histories recounted here are not the stories of Ayavalla's tenant farmers, but their stories as told by their children. Those children, most now in the 70s and 80s, grew up on the hunting plantations, went to school and church nearby, and worked along with their families to provide their living - but they were not the farmers - their lives are now much different than the lives their parents had.

As Jack Pons pointed out, by the end of the 1950s, Ayavalla's tenant farm system was over, although people who had been living on the land were allowed to remain in their small houses. As the tenant system began to decline, the men and women often found employment on Ayavalla (or during the Depression, worked in government sponsored programs). Those who worked full-time at Ayavalla were sometimes provided with newer, more substantial houses.

At the same time the tenant families who worked at full or part-time jobs on the plantation, they usually continued to farm small acreages, which, according to Jack Pons, was encouraged because it led to a viable quail population. "Basically, the tenant farming was beneficial to the

interspersed of cover because the tenants would farm little patches of corn and other products that, by using what we call the bottom land, the little depressions for their corn, which was richer, more moist ground, that would allow the crops to produce better. It wasn't unusual to see a cornfield a half acre in size. That was perfect for quail."

Mr. Pons stated that the tenants not only farmed the land, but, "sometimes they would work for wages...we'd hire some of the tenants, particularly the tenant women, to hand hoe the benne (giant benne was planted on Ayavalla to attached doves)... They did jobs like that, and then sometimes when we were expanded our pastures we'd hire some of the tenants to build fences, and we'd pay them wages. Some of them we hired full time, some of the younger ones converted from tenants to tractor drivers for us. They had a little bit of mechanical aptitude, so we'd hire them as tractor drivers. Some of them worked there until they died, I guess."

AYAVALLA INFORMANTS

Jack Pons was manager of Ayavalla Plantation from 1950 to 1984. Because of his position, he is familiar with land use on the South Davis parcel. He recalls the final years of the plantation's tenant farm system. Mr. Pon's descriptions of annual contracts with the tenants, and the autumn harvest of tung nuts, provide facts that were not touched upon by the other informants interviewed for this project. His explanation of the agricultural practices of the farms, and the rules against hunting and keeping dogs and cats, emphasizes the importance placed on managing the land for the Northern Bobwhite Quail.

Matthew Carter and Willie Mae Rollins Carter lived at Ayavalla from 1942 (when they married) until 1947 or 1948. Four of their children were born on the plantation. Mr. Carter was a dog handler and horse trainer. The house they lived in at Ayavalla was located close to the kennel.

Matthew Carter's parents, Willie and Ellen Carter, and his father's mother, Julia Herring, were tenants on land that eventually was purchased for Ayavalla. Mr. Carter grew up on the property but left in 1937 or 1938 to work at the "CC Camp".

Willie Mae Rollins Carter, born in 1921, is the granddaughter of Julia Proctor and John Rollins and the great-granddaughter of John Proctor. The Proctor family is a well-known part of Tallahassee's history. The patriarch, Antonio Proctor, was a free person of color who served as an interpreter for the territorial government during the Seminole Wars. His son, George, was a master carpenter; the houses he built (still standing on Calhoun Street and Park Avenue Historic Districts) are significant contributions to the City's architectural heritage. John Proctor, George's son, along with his mother and siblings, were sold into slavery after his father moved to California. Mrs. Carter remembers that her great-grandfather when he worked as a brick mason on buildings at the Florida A and M College Campus; he also served in Florida's reconstruction legislature and as a deputy inspector of customs at the port of St. Marks. When she was a child, Mrs. Carter lived with her mother's grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Williams. The land was originally owned by Dr. Gwynn, but when it was acquired as

part of Ayavalla, it was the "Phipps plantation that joined the Rollins plantation."

Willie J. Garnder, Jr. was born in 1917 at his family's property on North Meridian Road. His grandmother sold 120 acres of her land to John H. Phipps. Eventually, additional property was traced with Mr. Phipps for land that runs along Meridian Road. This property is still owned by the Gardner family.

The family also retains the "homeplace", a 40 acre tract on Meridian and Garnder Roads, where Madison George Gardner and Annie Mariah Floyd Gardner (Willie Gardner Jr.'s grandparents) raised their family. Madison Gardner had a commissary on the property, right in front of the family home. Their son, Willie Gardner, Sr., later operated the store, which he called the Meridian Grocery. (This building was demolished in the Spring of 1996). The informant's mother, Georgia Thompson Gardner, was a teacher and principal of Shepherd School.

Burt Hadley was born in 1911 at the Hayward Hall plantation in northern Leon County. His parents, and his mother's grandparents, were tenants there. Mr. Hadley's parents, Robert Hadley and Josie Carr Hadley, remained on the land until their deaths. Through his great-grandfather, Mr. Hadley's extended memory" reaches to the days of slavery. Steve Ford told his great grandson that when he was a slave he sometimes escaped a beating by hiding rocks in his gathering basket so that the cotton he picked would appear to weigh the required amount.

Mr. Hadley lived at Ayavalla plantation for about 12 years (c1945 to 1957) before moving his family to property he bought east of Thomasville Road, where he and several of his adult children continue to live. When he lived at Ayavalla, "I was a handyman, I was driving mules, fixing fences, you name it, I done it."

Mr. Hadley's wife Eva McGriff (deceased) was born and grew up in a settlement know locally as Bakertown, near Kirksey School and Church. This was on land that at one time was owned by Dwight Davis. She was the mother of eight children.

Johnny Cofield is the son of Mary "Chippie" Murray Cofield and Albert Cofield, Sr. One of fifteen children, Mr.

Cofield grew up on Ayavalla plantation. The family lived first in a house near John Austin, close to Lake Jackson, and later moved to a house by Poplar Springs Church. When a child, he attended Cotton School and Macon School, and was graduated from Tallahassee's Lincoln High School in 1957. During this time, he also worked for Clyde Miller at his boat landing on Lake Jackson.

Mr. Cofield's parents were tenants on Ayavalla, working a "little one-horse farm", where they grew most of their food and some cotton. Besides working the acreage and doing seasonal work for John H. Phipps, Albert Cofield also worked for the W.P.A., "doing the streets around town." Mary Cofield did housework and cooking for Clyde Miller and Mr. And Mrs. Poppell, as well as taking care of her family.

Clipper Charlton and Mattie Charlton are daughters of Locke and Florence Dickey Charlton. The Charlton family lived on the Gwynn property, which was later incorporated into Ayavalla. Mattie Charlton stated that her father was a superintendent on the Gwynn plantation. At least four of the twelve Charlton children worked for Mr. And Mrs. John H. Phipps. Mattie Charlton worked as a maid at the Ayavalla house for 49 years and Clipper Charlton was the cook there for 48 years. Their brothers, Lloyd and Ephraim Charlton, also worked at Ayavalla.

While on the Gwynn property, the Charlton family had a farm and lived in "a board house with a tin top". The house had four rooms, with a detached kitchen. There was no indoor plumbing; water was drawn from a well. When they were children, Mattie and Clipper both worked on the farm, "chopping cotton and hoeing corn, feeding the hogs, and pulling weeds....tying cows out on the plantation." Both attended the school that was conducted at St. Paul's Missionary Baptist Church.

Agnes Golden Charlton was born and grew up on the Fowler property, which was incorporated into Ayavalla. She attended Kirksey School and later worked for the John H. Phipps family for "a little while...maybe two or three years. Just maid work. I cooked sometimes when the other cook wanted to be off". Mrs. Charlton's husband, Ephraim (deceased) worked at Ayavalla for nearly 50 years, first as a farm hand, then, for many years, as a gardener, and then as a butler.

Mainor S. Poppel, Jr., and his wife, Wilma Poppel, lived adjacent to the Klapp-Phipps Park just south of the main entrance. Mrs. Poppel explained that "This residence was part of the plantation. This was Colin's place. When he sold the part out here to the City (for the Park), this was reserved out. This is ours until our dying day. A lifetime estate.

Mainor Poppell has lived almost all of his life near, or on, Ayavalla Plantation. He was born in 1916 at Blockers Settlement. In 1920, his father established a general store/blacksmith shop/grist mill at the intersection of Meridian and Miller's landing roads. Both sites are close to where he now lives. The store (still extant), where he spent his childhood, is only one-half mile north of his current residence. Mr. Poppell began working for John H. Phipps in 1936, the year the first acreage of Ayavalla was purchased. He describes his work there as "general everything. General handyman, I guess you would call it." Sixty-one years later, although officially retired, he continues to work "a couple of days a week" on the plantation.

Wilma Poppell was born in Gadsden County. She and Mainor, Jr., were married in 1938 and the couple lived "in different houses on the plantation" until they moved to their present home in 1948. Mrs. Poppell worked for Joyce and Colin Phipps when their children were young, and was later employed at Maclay Gardens (then called Killearn Gardens).

Colin Phipps, the son of Elinor Klapp-Phipps and John H. Phipps, inherited a portion of Meridian Plantation. He acquired the South Davis parcel from his father, who traded it for property Colin Phipps owned in South Florida. In his interviews, Mr. Phipps describes being away from Ayavalla for a number of years before returning in the 1970's. His recollections of the plantation's tenant farmers are primarily from childhood.

SUMMARY OF INTERVIEWS

With the exception of Burt Hadley, the African American informants for this project were born and grew up on the lands that are now part of Ayavalla Plantation. (as used in this report "Ayavalla Plantation" includes Meridian Plantation and Meridian Meadows). They are the children and grandchildren of tenant farmers. cursory genealogical investigations indicate that they are all the direct descendents of slaves - many of whom probably resided on these same lands. However, one two informants remember ancestors they know for certain were once held in bondage.

When children, the informants worked with their parents and grandparents on their farms, doing chores typically associated with rural life - milking cows, hoeing crops and gardens, feeding hogs, carrying water, etc. They lived in small frame houses, with unglazed windows, that were not finished on the interiors. Toilet facilities were outdoor privies; water was obtained from running streams, and later, from stand pipes in the yards. A very few had wells.

Certain of these conditions, i.e. outdoor toilets, use of kerosene lamps, limited plumbing, were typical of most rural areas throughout the nation, especially prior to World War II. The extension of electricity to rural areas undoubtedly improved the lives of everyone living in "the country". It is not known when, or if electric lines were run to Ayavalla's tenant farms.

Through the 1950s, many African Americans who lived on Ayavalla Plantation continued to use horses and mules for transportation and to work their fields. With the exception of the Old Bainbridge and Meridian Roads, none of the roads in the area paved. Some families had cars and trucks. They were often relied upon for transportation to town and other gathering places by those who did not own vehicles.

There were a number of schools and churches in the Ayavalla neighborhood. The earlier established schools were conducted in the church buildings, and these took the same names as the religious institutions (such as St. Paul's

School, which was housed in St. Paul's Missionary Baptist Church).

Many of the informants attended Shepherd School, located not far from Klapp-Phipps Park. Shepherd School was also in a church. It later became Cotton School and Cotton Church (some informants used the names interchangeably). Other schools associated with churches were Kirksey School and (Elizabeth) Poplar Springs Church. Cotton School was closed about 1952 and African American children in the neighborhood then went to Macon School.

The educational experiences of the informants are somewhat varied because of their ages; some started school in the mid 1920's, while others started during the mid 1940's. (Burt Hadley, born in 1911, attended school at Bradfordville even earlier). However, all said that the first schools they attended held classes for all grade levels in one or two rooms. Depending upon the time period, informants report attending school terms as short as three months and as long as eight months.

In later years, Rosenwald School was built on Old Bainbridge Road and on Thomasville Road (Lake McBride School, just east of the Thomasville and Bradfordville Roads intersection). The Rosenwald Fund was developed by Julius Rosenwald, a Chicago philanthropist, in 1917. The Fund's primary purpose was to encourage and improve the education of Negro children by constructing adequate school buildings and equipping them with the necessary furniture and supplies.

Most children carried their lunches to school until the free lunch program was initiated by the Federal government. The teachers were responsible for preparing the food. Willie Mae Carter recalls that her teacher, Mrs. Georgia Gardner, did not have an oven at school so she took the flour to her home and baked biscuits for the students. Other food that was provided included corned beef, peanut butter and jelly, and fruit such as apples and raisins.

Rural schools had only elementary grades, so if students wanted further education they attended Lincoln High School in Tallahassee. White children living in the rural areas rode buses to school every day, but this service was not provided for black children. Students attending Lincoln

had to stay in town, where they usually boarded with relatives.

There were a number of churches in the Ayavalla neighborhood. Some of these congregations remain active today. Those religious institutions mentioned by informants include Kirksey Church, Shepherd Church - Cotton Church, St. Paul's Missionary Baptist Church, St. Matthew's Primitive Baptist Church, and Poplar Springs Church. Baptisms were done in Lake Jackson, near the Rollins property, and also (perhaps at a later date) at Archipond (Orchard Pond).

Informants mentioned several cemeteries established on plantation land. Few markers remain at these sites. Because of property lines and fences, family members and descendents of the people buried there regard the cemeteries as being inaccessible to them. None of the informants were familiar with Florida Statute 704.08, which states that:

The relatives and descendents of any person buried in a cemetery shall have an easement for ingress and egress for the purpose of visiting the cemetery at reasonable times, and in a reasonable manner. If the cemetery is abandoned or otherwise not being maintained, such relatives and descendents may request the owner to provide for reasonable maintenance of the cemetery, and, if the owner refuses or fails to maintain the cemetery, the relatives and descendents shall have the right to maintain the cemetery.

During the 1920's and 1930's there were few commercial concerns in the neighborhood surrounding Ayavalla. In the 1910's Mainor Poppell's father, Mainor Poppell, Sr., established a blacksmith shop and cotton gin at Blockers (Mainor Poppell, Jr. was born there in 1916). Jeffrey Phipps' notes (see Appendix) refer to an explosion at the Poppell cotton gin, which killed four men and injured others. After moving his family to Tallahassee for a few years, Mr. Poppell, Sr., returned to the neighborhood in 1920. He established a store and mill at the intersection of Meridian and Miller's Landing Roads. The location is

about one half mile north of the entrance to the Elinor Klapp-Phipps Park.

Mr. Poppell, Jr., described it as "a little old country store" which sold basic food stuffs such as "lard, sugar, coffee, salt and pepper." At this same location was the blacksmith shop. Local farmers brought their plows and tools there to be repaired. In addition, Mr. Poppell, Sr., had a grist mill (1920 to 1940's) and saw mill operation (during the 1930's). According to Mr. Poppell, Jr., "Every Saturday was grinding day. They'd (neighboring farmers) all bring their corn and get it ground for meal and the next week's grits."

Willie Mae Carter recalled that, "You carried corn to the mill and grind it... (it was) over there on Meridian Road where Poppell's is.....that two story building.....Meridian Road and Miller's Landing Road. That house right there at the intersection. An you see a little building there. I don't think its used any more, but that's where they used to grind corn."

She also recalls Store George, which was located on the east side of Meridian Road, south of the Poppell store and mills. (Store George is mentioned in Jeffrey Phipps' notes). Although Mrs. Carter stated that Store George was "the only store that were out there", she does remember Mr. Poppell's store.

Mrs. Carter was the only informant to talk about the "rolling stores", which followed a weekly route. In the Ayavalla area they "come around every Wednesday". The rolling store would even stop at the school houses. "They had practically everything you would want...buy you some candy and cookies.....Get the eggs and chickens and sell them, and get your candy....salt franks, soda water, Nehi."

Johnny Cofield stated that his father took corn to a mill on Thomasville Road (this may have been after Mr. Poppell, Sr., sold his grist mill). "We took the corn to the mill over on Thomasville Road. Martin Mill, where you'd grind your corn and make meal. Old man Martin. My daddy used to take it over there in the wagon and they'd grind it for him and make meal and (he would) bring it back to the house. Sometimes he'd (Mr. Martin) would take some of it for the cost for the man who did the grinding."

DWELLINGS :

In plantation areas, the buildings that had once sheltered slaves continued to be utilized by African American tenant farmers through the first decades of the 20th century. Tenant houses built after the Civil War followed the earlier examples, and were no different than those that were constructed prior to 1865 (Merritt 1984: 16; Thompson and Bowers 1987: 119-121). It may be possible that some of the houses described by the Ayavalla informants were first occupied by slaves. Additional research may provide more conclusive information about this topic. This is suggested because the authors, working on a similar project at Welaunee Plantation, discovered that the children of the tenant farmers remember the "old slave houses" where their elderly relatives lived (Center for Historic Cemeteries Preservation, 1997:n. pag.).

Doran and Marrinan's report, *Rural Resources of Leon County, Florida 1821-1950*, notes that an archeological investigation of several tenant structures (conducted by Charles Orser at Millwood Plantation in South Carolina) suggested that there was a "clear continuity between the antebellum and postbellum periods," and in fact, "little had really changed on a day-to-day basis" for the individuals who occupied the plantation lands as slaves and tenants" (Doran and Marrinan 1992:54).

Carole Merritt, in her book *Historic Black Resources: A Handbook for the Identification, Documentation, and Evaluation of Historic African-American properties in Georgia*, describes houses built for black tenants in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as:

Typically two or three room buildings with steep gable roofs. A partition often divided the tenant house into two rooms --- a living room that served also as a bedroom, and a kitchen/dining room that was used for sleeping, too. Some houses had a third room in the rear, which was used as a kitchen.....Weatherboards was

usually of oak or pine. Board and batten, an exterior covering of vertical planks, sealed with narrower strips, was also common. Roofs were usually of split pine shingles which were later often replaced with galvanized metal. Houses rested on piers, which were made either of brick or of wood blocks set on lime mortar footings. Brick and stone chimneys became common, reducing the fire hazards of wood chimneys; many fireplaces were later closed off as stoves came into use. A tenant's house had few windows. They were generally closed with board shutters, glazed windows having been a later development. As late as the 1930's, just over half of the black tenant houses in the Black Belt had ceilings. Most apparently had unplastered board walls. Lining the walls with newspaper served not only to decorate but also to insulate (Merritt 1984:16-17).

Culture of the Eastern United States, writes that on the (typical) farm of the Deep South,

(Is) probably a one-story, two-room house with two front doors and a chimney in the center or on one end...was evolved from cabins in the mountains and on the Coast: They were carried south and westward into the Deep South.... The two-room single chimney types were particularly common in the Southern Tidewater where several serve on the same farm as quarters, or where they are lined up in unpainted rows in the Negro sections of the small towns (Classie 1968: 101-02).

Geographer Fred B. Kniffen theorized that the saddle bag plan may have developed as

.....a widely used method of extending the size of the house by adding another room, its gable set up to the chimney end of the original structure, producing a central-chimney house. The saddlebag house may be built originally as such or it may represent an addition. It may have one story or two, it may have one, two, or three front doors. The one constant feature is its central chimney (Kniffen 1978: 182, 188).

Jack Pons described the appearance of the Ayavalla's tenant farms when he began work as its manager in 1950:

The average tenant house was made of rough lumber with some form of metal roof. They were gray looking. There were not too many buildings around each one, probably a sweet potato bin under the ground with a little roof over it, and possibly a corn crib. Basically that was it. Quite interesting to me is that all around the houses (it was) very clean, very bare.....there was no grass.....small barns to keep a mule in, or a mule lot.....I was appalled at the condition of the houses. They were just rough pine timber. Some had windows, some didn't. They weren't finished on the inside, it was just the outside frame, and usually they would have newspaper tacked up on the inside to help with the insulation in the winter time. I don't recall any of them, or very few of them, having screens in the summer....

Mainor Poppell's description of Ayavalla's tenant houses is similar:

"Well, they were mostly just rough houses then. Maybe two or three, or about three or four room houses, just roughed in more or less. Didn't have any ceiling or anything, no plumbing, no nothing back then. None of them had it back then."

Several of the Ayavalla informants remember Walter Walker, who lived on the South Davis parcel from before 1936 until his death sometime in the late 1970's. Colin Phipps describes the house, situated in "Chimney Field" as, "an old tin-roofed tenant house. I don't think it had more than two rooms, but it had the traditional front porch."

A portion of the property owned by John Austin near Lake Jackson is included within the Klapp-Phipps Park. Mr. Phipps remembers the Austin house as, "tin-roofed...It was more or less tongue-and-groove, drop-siding. Of a lighter color, painted."

The Albert Cofield, Sr. family lived in two different houses at Ayavalla. One was at Lake Jackson, near the house of John Austin, and the other was "in back of Poplar Springs Church". Johnny Cofield, who was born in the first house, stated:

.....it had about three rooms. All the kids sleep in the same room and you had a kitchen in the middle with an

iron stove, where you cooked. And mamma and daddy, and some of the kids slept in the other (room) there was so many of them at that time....It was a board house...a board window, where you close it at night, shut it and latch it from the inside. No screen. You just open it in the day time and let the light come in."

A photograph of Albert Cofield, taken in the yard of the second house the family lived in on Ayavalla Plantation, shows that the frame house had a shed-roofed porch. Johnny Cofield's describes it as,

A little old house, three rooms-----you could make anything out of them. Then you had little section for a kitchen, right in the middle, you'd come in there and go to the kitchen. Around here a fireplace, back there a fireplace....Everything was in one. It wasn't like it is now. Everybody's got a room now. (Then), everybody was just sleeping together.

Mainor Poppell's description of the (second) Cofield house confirms that it had a saddlebag plan. It was two rooms, with a chimney in the middle of the house. Mr. Poppel explained it was "what we called a stacked chimney. You would have a fireplace on each side, have a fireplace in two rooms."

Wilma Poppell recalled that the Cofield house was, "just a quaint little house. She (Mrs. Mary Cofield) got in there and papered it. She could have that much fire in the fireplace and it stayed warm as toast." Mrs. Poppell remembered that "one room was her kitchen and dining room, another room was her living room and bedroom." Mary Cofield used the fireplaces for heating her house, but cooked on a wood stove.

When she was a child, Willie Mae Rollins Carter lived with her great-grandparents, Mr. And Mrs. Lawrence Williams, on property that had once been owned by Mr. Fowler. Their house was located near land her grandfather, John Rollins, owned. Mrs. Carter states that, "I think it was two rooms and a kitchen, outdoor toilet. The kitchen was attached to it. Our house always had a kitchen attached to it." She did point out that the house where her husband, Matthew Carter, was born, "the kitchen wasn't attached to the house. A lot of people had houses like that."

When the Carters were married they moved from Tallahassee to work for Mr. John H. Phipps. For the first five or six months they were at Ayavalla they resided in the house where Mrs. Carter had lived with her great-grandparents. They "we moved in a house over there by Mr. Phipps and it had two rooms and a kitchen and it had lights. Didn't have running water in the house, they had a spigot out there in front of the house. They had an outdoor toilet and a porch."

Willie J. Gardner, Jr., described a house that was located on his grandparents' property at present day Bannerman and Meridian Roads. He believes that the house was there before his grandparents acquired the property, or that his grandfather might have built it.

It had a room on the south side and a room on the north side. We had a hall running from the west side toward the front. We had a kitchen.....was attached. We had a double fireplace, we had one in the center, with a fireplace on each side. I'm trying to think whether there was a third room, bedroom, I mean. This was the first house.....when I was a child, they tore that house down and built the one that is there now, on the same site.

Burt Hadley described the house he lived in with his parents, on the Hall Plantation, during the 1910's and 1920's:

It was an old house, wooden doors, wooden windows. Hinges on the windows that long, you'd open the windows and you'd hear them windows crying from here to that road out there. Never would grease them. The windows were solid boards but they had those old bighinges on them...(the house) looked like a barn. Old barn, too. And there weren't nothing but thin on the top, nail on a piece of sheeting. All that cold off that tin, coming down on you. Didn't ceil things up..... A kitchen and two bedrooms. A double chimney, the parents on that side and the children on this side.

OUTBUILDINGS:

"There was not too many buildings around each one (tenant house), probably a sweet potato bin under the ground with a little roof over it, and possibly a corn crib. Basically, that was it.....small barns to keep a mule in, or a mule lot" (Jack Pons).

Detached kitchens:

".....our house always had a our kitchen attached to it, but when (Matthew Carter) was a child, where he was born in, the kitchen wasn't attached to the house. A lot people had houses like that...." (Willie Mae Carter).

Smokehouses:

"They had a smoke house (made of) boards. Had a smoke house for the meat. You killed your hogs, at the same time you smoked that meat. That meat would hang in the smokehouse". (Willie Mae Carter).

"We had a smoke house of meat. We had a lot meat. My dad would kill hogs and cure the meat, smoke it" (Willie Gardner, Jr.,).

"We had a smoke house. After they'd kill the hogs, you'd pack them down in salt, let them stay until a certain time.....and they had a smokehouse to hang it up. You'd build a fire under there and make mostly smoke, didn't let it blaze up. Just mostly smoke. (It was) just a little house. Boards, mostly out of boards.....the roof on it..... (about 10 feet high)." (Clipper Charlton).

Cribs:

"We had a crib. That's where you kept the corn and all the little stuff. Feed the mule and the horse. That's about the only thing. It's not as big as a barn, a barn is the big one (building). We had a crib. We kept corn and stuff out there. Like when it dried up, instead of throwing that stuff away, we'd keep that stuff and feed it to the horses year around.....We had cribs both places (where the family lived on Ayavalla). (Johnny Cofield).

"The tenants had corn cribs.....Corn cribs were a fairly common thing." (Colin Phipps).

Stables:

"We had a place out there called the stable, where the horses go in and eat. They'd get out of the weather in that little stable. They had little stalls. Each one of those horses knew their staff". (Johnny Cofield).

Coops:

"When the hens would start settin' and have little biddies, then we'd put her in a coop". (Clipper Charlton).

Privies

:

"(At Ayavalla.....close to the dog kennels) we had an outdoor toilet." (Willie Mae Carter).

"(In) this picture.....there is a toilet back there.....in the yard" (Johnny Cofield).

LIVING CONDITIONS:

"Mr. Phipps would give you, he wasn't hard. You could make a living with him because you were allowed to catch fish. I don't know if you was allowed to sell them, but they did sell them. You could grow the food that you ate.....we ate meat within the season. We bought a little. You could kill your hogs, you'd make cracklings, and the grease from that, you used that grease. The lard. The syrup. We'd have to buy a little sugar. A lot of things we didn't have to buy." (Willie Mae Carter).

"I was completely ignorant of the tenant farm system. I guess that my impression was that I was appalled at the condition of the houses. They were just rough pine timber. Some had windows, some didn't.....(the tenants) would have newspaper tacked up on the inside to help with the insulation in the winter time. I guess it helped in the summer, also. I don't recall any of them, or very few of them, having screens in the summer, so the customary thing was to leave the windows open and, I guess, to let the mosquitoes eat". One of the things that struck me.....was that you'd drive around late in the evening, about sundown in the summer time, and you'd see the families sitting on the front porch with a big tomato can - a smudge pot, we called it.....they had a little fire in there and the smoke settling around would tend to run the insects off." (Jack Pons)

"Things were very, very primitive. On the plantation itself there were no paved roads in those early days (early 1950's). The only paved road I can recall was Meridian Road, that went through part of the plantation, and Old Bainbridge Road which bordered the plantation on the west side. Miller's Landing Road was a country road that was unpaved completely." (Jack Pons).

".....we moved in a house over by Mr. Phipps and it had two rooms and a kitchen and it had lights. Didn't have running water in the house, they had a spigot out there in the front of the house. They had an outdoor toilet." (Willie Mae Carter).

".....you didn't have freezers. You had refrigerators, or ice boxes, you called it. They used to sell ice." (Willie Mae Carter)

"When I got married, you could see the moon shining through the top of the house." (Burt Hadley)

"No, aint had a glass to drink water out of, let alone a glass window. We'd drink it out of them tin cups. If a hole was in it, you stopped it up and drank right on".
(Burt Hadley).

"Back in them days, them people building houses for you to stay in, they didn't fix nothing decent for you. As long as you paid the rent, that's all they wanted." (Burt Hadley).

"There was no refrigerator, it was an icebox, where the iceman come by and leave ice. We put that butter in the ice box and it'd keep. Before we had an icebox, I remember the iceman coming by. My dad had a hole out there in the yard, on the side of the yard, and he'd get sawdust and put that ice and that sawdust (in the hole) and cover it up and it'd keep. That's where we kept the stuff, with the ice. Regular sawdust." (Johnny Cofield).

"I remember one time it started raining and we were sitting in the house and all of a sudden the water started running in. We had to get buckets and set them in the middle of the floor and gather the water. Sometimes we drank the water, the rain water. Because if you catch just water, you won't have to go down to what you called the running water, which is a branch, is what we called it. Tote water back to the house and take baths. We'd wash with that water. No plumping. We had an outdoor toilet. It sit off from the house, it looked like a little box." (Johnny Cofield).

"(My mother) washed with a tube and a wash board. You'd boil your clothes in a black pot. And when you'd boil them, you'd put your dirty clothes in there and she'd build up a fire up under a big old black pot. So what she'd do is wash them clothes until they get clean and then she'd rinse them out in some water. You had to have clean water. Then we'd wring them clothes and put them in the sun to dry. A clothes line". (Johnny Cofield)

"We didn't have too many clothes. You had about three pants and three shirts. If you want to wear something clean that next day, you have to wash it that evening, before the sun goes down, and you might be able to wear it..." (Johnny Cofield)

"I know a long time ago, when I was real small, some of these women's clubs around Tallahassee --- Tallahassee was

real small then --- they got all upset about these people (tenant families) getting water out of a creek and getting water out of a spring and all that. Impure water, they called it. So they came around and got samples and had it analyzed and it analyzed purer than the City water did at the time. A good running creek, unless there's something pouring into it to pollute it, ain't no purer water you can get than that. Running water purifies itself every few feet, anyway....(Did people have wells?). No. There was one or two wells. James Landers, there was a well at his house."

"But as far as living, most people lived, as far as eating, they just about always had plenty to eat. Just nobody had no money, didn't have maybe very good clothes to wear and didn't have no money. Cotton didn't bring 'bout three or four cents a pound, three, four, five cents a pound. By the time they made a bale of cotton, a bale of cotton would bring twenty-five or thirty dollars, if that much. A couple of bales of cotton, by the time they bought everybody an outfit of clothes, that money was gone." (Mainor Poppell)

"Tenants obviously did not have electricity and water was drawn from well. Many of the tenants still carried water jugs on their heads in transporting it to their houses." (Colin Phipps).

"Zeta Mae, she did not live on this piece of property, but she did live on the place and she'd get her water out of a pipe in the ground. Then, everybody literally carried water jugs and everything on their heads." (Colin Phipps).

YARDS:

An important part of the tenant house is the yard surrounding it. The yard, used as any extended living space, greatly expanded the size of a small house. Many of the domestic chores were performed in the yard, including cooking and food preservation, laundry, and seasonal work such as butchering.

The use of the yard for certain work is typical of farm life. However, the extension of the yard (as well as the house porches) as living space is viewed as traditional in African and African-descent societies. Also, the "swept" yard (one cleared of all vegetation and routinely swept

with brush brooms) is viewed by some scholars as an African cultural tradition. Richard Westmacott, writing in *African American Gardens and Yards in the Rural South*, states that, "the practice of sweeping the yard is one that probably owes its origins to West Africa. Although it was used by white families, it is not characteristic of cool temperate climates of Northern Europe". (Westmacott 1992: 103).

Scholarly research about the gardens and yards of New World African-derived slave and tenant societies is relatively recent. Westmacott's study of contemporary yards and gardens in rural areas of South Carolina, Georgia and Alabama, viewed within an historical framework, has drawn close attention to this important subject matter. He notes that "Slave cabins and the kitchen yard and midden have been studied by historical archaeologists, and yard art. However, the outdoor spaces of the African-American rural homestead - the gardens of African Americans - have been largely ignored by landscape architects and garden historians". (Westmacott 1992:1).

Other studies on the use of yard space in African American and African Caribbean cultures include Sidney Mintz's *Caribbean Transformations* and Lydia Pulsipher's "They Have Saturday and Sundays to Feed Themselves: Slave Gardens in the Caribbean". LaVerne Wells-Bowie, a professor with the School of Architecture at Florida A and M University, joined with Pulsipher for a research paper, "The Domestic Spaces of Daufuskie and Montserrat," a comparative study between African-derived cultures of a sea island off the coast of South Carolina and the island of Montserrat in the eastern Caribbean.

The types of farm and domestic work performed in the yards of the tenant houses at Ayavalla is not directly described by the informants. Because certain types of activities were "naturally" done outside the house, the task completed in the yards is often implied, rather than directly addressed.

Swept Yards:

"All around the houses (the yard was) very clean, very bare. I say clean, there was no grass. Of course, when we got into the annual burning to enhance thequail habitat, I saw the reason. Because when the fires came, we didn't

have to worry about the tenant houses or their cribs or their potato bins...." (Jack Pons)

"Mr. Walker just lived in an old tin-roofed tenant house.....the ground around it was swept clean, like all tenant houses were in those days. I am not quite sure why that was done, possibly so one could see snakes." (Colin Phipps)

Ornamental/Spiritual Vegetation:

" (Yards of) Tenant houses, other than being swept clean, they all seemed to have china berry trees planted around them. I was told it was to keep witches away...." (Colin Phipps).

Food Trees:

"Everybody had fig trees, plum trees, apple trees, and we also had orange trees and pear trees. All kinds of pears. Chestnut trees. And pecan trees" (Willie Mae Carter).

Laundry:

"(My mother) washed with a tub and a wash board. You'd boil your clothes in a black pot. And when you'd boil them, you'd put your dirty clothes in there and she's build a fire up under a big old black pot. She'd keep a stick and keep jiggling, you'd be surprised how clean they got in that boiling water. Then she'd take them out of there and put them in a big old wash tub. Then she'd get a rub board. So what she'd do is wash them clothes until they get clean and then she'd rinse them out in some water. You had to have clean water. Then we'd wring them clothes out and put them in the sun to dry. A clothes line. (Johnny Cofield).

Butchering:

"You killed your hogs at the same time you smoke that meat....first when they killed the hog they would salt it down and lay it down in the pine straw. And they'd let it stay there for so many days and then would take it up and wash it. And put red pepper or syrup or whatever they want to put on it....." (Willie Mae Carter).

"Once a year my dad killed hogs and we had pork. My dad took care of that part.....he hit them in the head, stabbed them, cut their throats". (Johnny Cofield)

GARDENS :

"We'd plant in the winter time, we'd plant collards and carrots, rutabagas and turnips. And we also could plant the early June peas, you call them. You could plant radish. Watermelon, sweet potatoes. That would be in the Spring of the year when we'd plant the watermelon, cucumbers and things like that. Corn. But the winter time, that's when you plant mostly greens...we didn't plant rice...my great-grandmother said they used to plant rice here...but I never seen any grow" (Matthew and Willie Mae Carter).

"We had a large garden when I was coming up. All kinds of vegetables...we had okra, collard greens, mustard greens, turnips, butterbeans, peas. We also would grow watermelons but not in the garden. That's mostly what we had. Peas, butterbeans, okra, tomatoes". (Willie J. Gardner, Jr.)

"During that time there wasn't no 'garden'. There was a place where you just planted stuff and gathered it. A garden is a real small place, but we had this one-horse farm and we had everything on it. We ate off that farm." (Johnny Cofield).

"We had a nice garden. Beans, peas, onions, collard greens, turnip greens, and rutabagas, mostly. Ice potatoes and squash. White potatoes, but we used to call them ice potatoes.....They (family members) didn't sell so many (vegetables) but we had a garden and these family people were mostly in the same community. We'd give them some and they'd give us some. Whater you have, you give me some of yours, I'll give you some of mine. Peanuts and potatoes". (Clipper Charlton).

"Yes, we had a garden.....we mostly just canned them or ate them (vegetables). We had some of everything. Greens, peas, butter beans, okra, you name it, they had it." (Agnes Charlton)

"They all had a garden. That was necessity then, a garden.....Of course, they'd all grow a little patch of cane, make a little syrup. A potato patch, grow some potatoes. They'd plant peas and butterbeans, save them, eat a few in

the winter, dried beans. Really the same thin you go to town now and buy, dried beans and dried peas, the same thing". (Mainor Poppell).

DIET: COOKING AND FOOD PRESERVATION

"You could catch as many fish as you'd want...There was also duck hunting, coot hunting --- that was in the winter time. I still eat coot and ducks and turtles and things, we call them cooters.....everybody ate them. That was the spring meat...we killed deer, rabbits and squirrels and coons and opossum" (Willie Mae and Matthew Carter).

"I made jellies and preserves. I canned string beans and corn, tomatoes. I make figs, I made peaches, blackberries, plums. We had mayhaws at the time, I'd make jelly out of mayhaws. Applies. They'd grow in your yard or there in the woods that you could get them. Everybody had fig trees, plum trees, apple trees and we also had orange trees and pear trees. All kinds of pears. Chestnut trees. And pecan trees. You had your pecans, you had your peanuts and you would take those peanuts and dry them out and keep them almost until peanuts get ripe again, and same thing you would do with your pecans." (Willie Mae Carter).

"My mother used to can. She had a pressure cooker and she used to can." (Willie J. Gardner, Jr.).

"They had peanuts. Cane, ground cane and made syrup. Them old horses would pull that sugar mill. We'd kill us four or five hogs, (have) two or three cans of lard. You had to raise what you ate, else you died." (Burt Hadley).

"We made butter out of milk. The way you make butter, you put some sweet milk in a container, then you set it up and let it get sour and cream comes to the top. My mom had an old beater and keep beating the cream and mild together and after awhile the butter comes to the top. That's how we did butter. This was a daily thing. Milk don't sit around. When it gets sour, it gets sour." (Johnny Cofield)

"(The kinds of food we had) mostly it was neck bones, back and biscuits - sandwiches. We didn't have no white bread back then. Just all the biscuits that mama cooked. The breakfast was probably neck bones, pig feet, sometimes we

ate that for breakfast. We didn't have no grits then. Grits, that was expensive, you couldn't have that. There'd be just bacon and cornbread. Milk and bread...Mama'd cook some hoe cakes - some corn bread - and then you'd have milk, we'd use the cow milk, for milk and bread. And the sweet milk, Mama used it for making utter. Milk and bread, that's what you'd have for breakfast. Sometimes for dinner, too." (Johnny Cofield).

"(For breakfast we had) mostly a little fried meat and syrup. Bread." (Clipper Charlton).

FARM ANIMALS:

"He (John H. Phipps) had a pit dog named Demon.....And if your hogs get out, he would go out and get the hogs and the cows. Everybody could have a cow. We had hogs, and you could plant anything you wanted to plant. You could raise chickens there. If your pigs got out, then Demon would bite the ears off. There were many pigs walking around there with no ears. He wouldn't kill them, but he would bite the ears off." (Willie Mae Carter).

"We had a lot of meat. My dad would kill hogs and cure the meat, smoke it. We had chickens, turkeys. My mother sold the turkeys. We'd eat the chickens. That was her little cash crop, the turkeys. Thanksgiving and Christmas. She'd sell them live." (Willie J. Gardner, Jr.)

"We had hogs, cows, we had horses. Milk cow, the cow was named Daisy. Just a regular cow. She was white with black spots. She give a lot of milk. Sometimes it was my job (to milk), sometimes my mom. We had to feed the cows every evening. I think at one point we had four or five cows. We had to go get them in the evening time, you can't come home until you get them up, if it takes until 10 o'clock at night. We used them for milk cows. You didn't have no beef back then. Pork. Hogs to kill. It was too expensive - beef - during that time." (Johnny Cofield).

"We had cows, horses, and once upon a time we had goats. And cats. We had practically everything we needed. The horses, that's what they used for plowing corn, cotton, and stuff." (Clipper Charlton).

RECOMMENDATIONS :

Phase I of the *Life at Ayavalla* project involved interviews with twelve individuals who were associated with the Plantation. The information provided in the oral histories covers a span of four decades, and gives a vivid picture of the daily life at Ayavalla from the 1920s through the 1950s. As proposed in 1995, Phase II of the project should involve multiple interviews of selected informants, extensive archival research to develop a history of the property, and video-taping of informants for use in future interpretive programs. The following recommendations are offered in support of these goals:

1) This study identified additional informants who may contribute information about life within the tenant farm system at Ayavalla. These are:

Luberta Smith, who worked in the main house, and whose husband, Jack, worked as the butler in the Phipps household for a number of years. Mrs. Smith declined to give an interview when she was approached, saying that she did not want to offend Mrs. Phipps in any way. However, if Mrs. Smith is assured that members of the Phipps family would

like her to recount the details of her family's life at Ayavalla, she may consent to an interview.

Mrs. Eluster Richardson, whose husband worked at Ayavalla as a foreman for several decades. Mr. Richardson was lost in a boating accident on Lake Jackson several years ago. Mrs. Richardson lives with her adult children in Tallahassee. She, and members of the immediate family, including artist Eluster Richardson, Jr., may provide much information about Ayavalla.

Family members of some of the people interviewed are potential subjects for interviews. Both Willie Gardner, Jr., and Johnny Cofield suggested that several of their sisters and brothers might provide additional information because they are "older" and will remember things that happened at Ayavalla during earlier years. Mr. Gardner noted that his sisters will have other types of information to contribute because they spent more time with their mother, doing work that was typically done by the women in the family. Willie Mae Rollins Carter and Matthew Carter also have sisters, brothers, and cousins who can relate their plantation experiences. Approaching new informants may be most productive if persons who have already been interviewed speak to them about the research and ask if they will participate in the project.

It is suggested that if additional interviews are conducted, an African American historian, familiar with Tallahassee and well-acquainted with its African American community, be included as part of the research team. During this phase of the project the assistance of Althemese Barnes was very helpful for securing interviews and establishing trust between the researchers and some of the persons who were interviewed.

2) Developing topics for further research through oral interviews depends primarily on how the staff at Klapp-Phipps Park choose to interpret the site. For museum interpretive exhibits of African American Tenant Farms and/or "living history" programs, subjects that may be pursued include midwifery and folk medicine, quilt making, funeral customs, food ways, agricultural methods/equipment, country stores, and religious life. Each of these topics will give rise to a number of sub-topics. For instance, research on religious life might focus on baptism

ceremonies at Lake Jackson and Orchard Pon; funeral customs on burial societies; quilt making on favored patterns.

Research should view the subject matter within an African American context, when possible, and place the Ayavalla tenant farm families within the larger context of the tenant farm system throughout a geographic or cultural region.

3) Portions of some of the interviews conducted during Phase I of the project were video-taped. All of the narratives provide important contributions to the project; however, some people were more comfortable than others with the tape recorder and video camera. Burt Hadley, Willie Mae Carter, Johnny Cofield, Colin Phipps, Mainor and Wilma Poppell, and Jack Pons are very articulate. Mr. Hadley, Mrs. Carter, and Mr. Cofield will undoubtedly respond well to the camera. (Mr. Pons, Mr. Phipps and Mr. And Mrs. Poppell were not video-taped.)

Matthew Carter is confined to a wheelchair, and because of an apparent stroke, has some difficulty speaking clearly. However, his enthusiasm and smiling, happy face suggest that carefully selected questions, and patience on the part of the interviewer, will produce a unique interview.

Mattie and Clipper Charlton were shy during the interview, although they did allow the video camera to be turned on. Agnes Charlton was shy and somewhat reticent during her interview, although she allowed the video camera to be used.

If additional interviews are conducted with the informants, it will be important to discuss the taping with them prior to beginning the project, and to pre-determine, or "script" the material that is wanted for the video. A time, and setting, for the taping should be determined well in advance, to allow the subjects to look their best and to choose surroundings they are comfortable with. Unfortunately, because video-taping was not part of the scope of work for Phase I of the project, this important courtesy was sometimes overlooked. Usually, permission to use the camera was asked after arriving at the person's home. Catching some people unprepared may have contributed to their reticence.

4) Mr. Mainor Poppell, Jr., stated that Walter Walker was the only tenant who lived on the South Davis parcel. However, several tenant farm sites are closely associated with this area. This include the John Austin property, part of which is now included within the Klapp-Phipps Park boundary; the first house site of The Albert Cofield, Sr. family, located next to Mr. Austin near the short of Lake Jackson; and the second house site of the Cofield family, situated near the Poplar Springs Church and the home of Mr. And Mrs. Poppell. Jack Pons noted that there were also two tenant houses - one belonging to the Thompson family - on the back side of the tung grove.

For future interpretation and understanding of the cultural landscape, additional research should be conducted on the sites. Although the buildings are no longer standing, there is the potential for historical archeology at each of the farmsteads.

5) Mr. Jeffrey Phipps compiled a map, with the assistance of Buff Snead, Jack Ford, and Ephraim Charlton. At the time of the study, the map was unavailable for copying, but Mr. Phipps did include a list of identified sites with his research notes. The map legend includes a large number of tenant house sites, as well as churches, landmark trees, corrals, school house sites, dams, fields, etc. Completion of this map is important not only to this project and to Ayavalla's history, but also to the historical and genealogical records of Leon County. Efforts should be made to obtain copies of this map and place them with research institutions so the information will be accessible to interested persons.

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JACK PONS: Manager of Ayavalla Plantation: 1950-1984.

Personal Associations:

I first became interested in agriculture and farming and wildlife management in the early 40s when I used to hunt and fish, etc. When I came out of the service for World War II, I went to the University of Florida with the idea of going through to be a veterinarian. When I discovered I had an allergy to Formaldehyde, I changed my major to wildlife management and animal husbandry. After I graduated I was working in New England and writing letters, trying to get a job in Florida where I was more acclimated. I happened to meet someone who knew Mr. Phipps. I wrote him a letter and he asked me to meet him in New York, where he hired me for the job. That was in 1950. I immediately came down here and went to work and found out that I was to be the plantation manager, not an assistant manager. (1:1:053). I had a very decent background and education, but he (Mr. Phipps) taught me all the practical aspects of wildlife management and the running of the plantation. He said, "I'm going to train you in my image, the way I want you to be." I received excellent training, for probably ten to twelve years, from him. I was really in a training state for the first ten years, but I was actually managing the plantation.

When I first went to work for Mr. Phipps back in the 50's, the first Christmas he gave me a branding iron with my own brand. He said, "What I'm going to give you is the opportunity to build yourself a herd of cattle." I still have that branding iron. He said, "Every year I'm going to let you have the third pick of the heifers that we retain for your own use." I said, "Where am I going to keep them?" He said, "You keep them right with the other calves, they'll just have your brand on them." I said, "What if they get too many?" He said, "Well, you'll sell them off as you want to." Then we got into the purebred business and he carried that right on. I had the third pick of the purebred cattle every year. Then we got into the Full-French business, and we had cattle worth \$40,000 and \$50,000 a piece. I had the third pick of every year that was produced. In the late 60's and 70's I sent all my children to college on my cattle. When Mr. Phipps got rather ill back in the late 70's, he told me that it wasn't going to be acceptable any longer for me to keep my cattle

on the plantation, I had about 60 head then. He said, "You can either move them or sell them back to the plantation." So, in the late 70's, the prices had declined tremendously, but they were still quite valuable. At one time he had also told me that if my herd got too big to manage that he'd cut out a piece of land and let me run my cattle on his land, but it would be my pasture, but that never consummated.

Anyhow, I had to seel them back to the plantation because it was a conflict of interest, me being an officer of the corporation. It was determined that was a conflict - me having cattle there and not paying the keep of the cattle.

I considered managing the plantation as good a job as you could have in this country. When I first went to work there I lived in the foreman's house. It was a wooden house but it was painted. I got called back in the Service in 1951, and when I cam back I lived in the Brill House, in the middle of the lake, out there on Brill Point. Then they built me a house on Meridian Road, a brand new house, and enlarged the house any time I needed it. I had a swimming pool in my yard, all my utilities and everything was paid for. I had my own beef, had a good salary, had my own transportation. I had probably as good a job as you could possibly have.

For many years my office was right there in the house, until after Mr. Phipps died. Every morning, when I was in town or he was in town, I would get my men off to work at 7:00 a.m. and I would go up to the house and sit down and have a cup of coffee with him. We'd discuss business ideas, sort of beat around, pick each other's brains a little bit. It was a great relationship. I think he was like another father to me.

Tenant Farms and Farmers:

One of my first experiences that first winter on the plantation was going around to sign up the tenants to their annual contract. We had actual written contracts that they signed, which were based on the number of acres they would farm, an average of 20 to 30 acres, which they could handle reasonably well with one mule. Most of the tenants in those days were quite old, the younger generations having moved off during World War II when jobs became available locally and around the South. So when I arrived most of the tenants were in their 50s or 60s. They had a diminishing

amount of land that they would farm each year because of their age. They were just incapable of farming more.

During the decade of the 50's, I saw the number of tenants diminish from 55 or 56 to almost none. The only ones left were tenants that had been there all their lives and that had worked and lived on the plantation and Mr. Phipps allowed them to stay there.

The average tenant house was made of rough lumber with some form of metal roof. They were gray looking. There were not too many buildings around each one, probably a sweet potato bin under the ground with a little roof over it, and possibly a corn crib. Basically, that was it. Quite interesting to me is that all around the houses (the yard was) very clean, very bare. I say clean, there was no grass. Of course, when we got into the annual burning to enhance the quail population, the quail habitat, I saw the reason. Because when the fires came we didn't have to worry about the tenant houses or their cribs of their potato bins, or if they had small barns to keep a mule in, or a mule lot, or something like that. You didn't have to worry about it because everything was clean around there and the fires wouldn't harm it.

I was completely ignorant about the tenant farm system. I guess that my impression was that I was appalled at the condition of the houses. They were just rough pine timber. Some had windows, some didn't. They weren't finished on the inside, it was just the outside frame, and usually they would have newspaper tacked up on the inside to help with the insulation in the winter time. I guess it helped in the summer also. I don't recall any of them, or very few of them, having screens in the summer, so the customary thing was to leave the windows open and, I guess, to let the mosquitoes eat.

One of the things that struck me interesting was that you'd drive around late in the evening, about sundown in the summer time, you'd see the families sitting on the front porch with a big tomato can - a smudge pot, we called it - they had a little fire in there and the smoke settling around would tend to run the insects off.

Things were very, very primitive. On the plantation itself there were no paved roads in those days. The only paved road I can recall was Meridian Road, that went through part

of the plantation, and Old Bainbridge Road which bordered the plantation on the west side. Miller's Landing Road was a country road that was unpaved completely.

I was very much impressed with the truthfulness and the integrity of the tenants. These were very, shall we say, uneducated people. They were all black. They were very fine-quality people, very honest, very hard-working. If they told you something, that was the truth.

I think one of the most embarrassing moments to myself was right after I came to work (at Ayavalla). I went driving down one of the roads and there were a bunch of tenants walking, I guess up to the church. When I drove by, the men tipped their hats to me because of my position as manager. I thought that was so embarrassing. They were very high quality people.

Every fall, in November and December, we'd renew (the contracts) for the next year. The contract was based on the number of acres they'd farmed. We would fill in - it was a blank, two or three pages as I recall, rental agreement. "I, Junius Hill, will rent thirty acres and the house and I agree 90 bushels of corn, to be delivered to the owner's crib by the first of December, 1951" or something of that effect. It would have a list of things also on the agreement that he would sign that were more or less rules for the tenants. Not to light any woods fires, not to keep cats on the property - because they'd eat the quail. It was very primary type, basic rules they had to abide by. They weren't to hunt or trap any quail on the property, or turkeys or any game, unless they had written permission from me. In other words, they'd come to me and say, "I want to hunt opossums tonight." "Fine, glad you let me know, that's fine. I don't want to see you out there unless I know about it." Because you know, there might be somebody go with them and try to shoot a deer or something like that. We had a pretty tight control over the old farmer. But as I say, the tenants were very honorable people. I had no problems at all, hardly, with any of them. Now, once or twice you'd have one who'd get drunk or something on the weekend in town and call me.

(The tenants not only farmed the land) sometimes they would work for wages. One of those things back in the early days we used to do was, for example, we'd have a dove fields, and in dove field would be giant benne, which is sesame

seed. Giant benne grows fairly well in this country, it is susceptible to root nematodes, so you'd have to have new ground for benne, and you'd have to lay out your field in a place that would be a natural flyway for doves, it would have to be the size, with some good roosting trees around it. Its just a perception that this would make a good dove field and because of the nematode it would have to be ground that had not been farmed in a number of years. The new ground would be less apt to have annual weeds come up in it. Benne was a rather slow growing crop, and when you plant it - and you had to plant it in late May or early June. We'd have a twenty acre benne field. So we'd hire some of these tenants, particularly the tenant women, to hand hoe the benne. At least one time we'd have to hoe it to make a crop of it. Once it got up waist high, it would shade out all the rest of the weeds coming up and there'd be almost no problem whatsoever with weeds. They (The tenants did jobs like that, and then sometimes when were expanding our pastures we'd hire some of the tenants to build fences, and we'd pay them wages. Some of them we hired full time, some of the younger ones converted from tenants to tractor drivers for us. They had a little bit of mechanical aptitude, so we'd hire them as tractor drivers. Some of them worked there until they died, I guess.

Some of them lived way out on the north side of Lake Jackson and they'd drive a mule all the way downtown to Adams Street. There was sort of a mule yard on Adams Street. They'd drive to town and do their shopping, buy their hardware, whatever they had to do, and then drive back out that afternoon, on Saturday. That's an awful long way. You'd see these horrible looking old mules, they looked like they were starving to death, plodding down the hard road - Old Bainbridge Road or Meridian Road - this actually happened (in the 1950s). Saturday was the day they went to town. Everything was gradually converted from the tenants with their mule and wagon to the younger generation with automobiles or trucks. But the same process went on. Even though they may not have a wagon, now they had a truck, but they'd still go to town in that old rattle-trap truck on Saturday. It was just a custom that they did.

Of course, Sundays was church. They were a very religious people, extremely religious. There were a number of churches on the property. In fact, Mr. Phipps and I manipulated around a little bit to get people in one church, at the center of the property, and to give them

better property out on the hard road, just so we'd have them out of the way. (There was) a graveyard on the property. Amazing the number of people who wanted to be buried in that free graveyard. It was just specifically for people who lived on the plantation. I would get requests from Miami. Somebody died, and his daughter said he always wanted to be buried on the plantation. Well, who was he? He was the second cousin, once removed of so-and-so who lived here back in 1927. I said, "No way, that isn't the idea of the graveyard." He (Mr. Phipps) wouldn't charge them for the graveyard. My foreman, he would dig the graves himself, by hand, in the hard clay. He was a big, strong man, about 6'4". This was Lester (Eluster) Richardson. He would dig the graves himself for many years. Of course, we got to the point where we had to control it. I said, if we stake out and fence the graveyard, then we won't have to keep turning people down and be the heavy on this thing. They (The tenants) will control it themselves, because they can see there won't be no place left for them when they die, or their family dies. That was the smartest thing I ever did, was fence the graveyard, and say, "This is it now, if you want to keep coming in an asking for your third cousin to buried out there, and I let him, some of your family won't get to be buried out there." So, they controlled that themselves.

The tenants seem to disappear during the decade of the 50s. In 1960, I don't think there were any left except the ones he (Mr. Phipps) allowed to liver there - to live out their lives. We were faced with the problem of attempting to imitate the interspersion of cover that the tenants had performed for us by having these small patchy farms around. Obviously, as they got older, they shrunk the size of their fields. That left a bigger transition edge, which is actually ideal for quail. As they got older they didn't want to farm as much, so the field just naturally shrank every year and of course, the borders of any field are not as productive for crops as the centers.

Historical Development/Landscape Evolution:

So we were faced with the dilemma of how we were going to replace the tenants. At about the same time, maybe a few years one way or the other, the federal government got into the process of trying to establish corn-based acreage for all properties. So, consequently, I could see that would be a real plus in the future. We determined to try to get as

much corn under cultivation as we could. I think we had something like almost 1,300 acres, allocated for corn production, which was much more, in total, than what the tenant farmers had. It was fields that we had put in, in some cases we eliminated the tung oil, the tung nut trees, and turned those into corn fields.

In the meantime, we were establishing pastures out on the western portion of the property close to the lake. There had been some pastures close by the main house, and there had been some pastures out there (on the western portion) but they weren't very much improved, they were more or less unimproved. We planted legumes and better grasses for the cattle. We went into commercial cattle production. Mr. Phipps had been in it during World War II, but apparently he had some bad experiences with it while he was gone, and so he had sold his cattle. We started buying his own cattle back/ We bought some back from Lowell Crowder, we got some back from his brother in South Florida, and we put together a herd of maybe 300 head of commercial cattle. Meantime, he got interested in Charlois and Charbrae bulls. Breeding those to the commercial herd, we produced a much bigger, more profitable calf. Back in the early 50's we got very much interested in the Charlois cattle business.

In 1953, I guess it was, we started buying Charlois and Charbrae cattle. Charbrae is a combination of Charlois and Brahman cattle. They produced a bigger calf, a more growthy calf. We slowly got into the purebred business and maintained the commercial herd, also. (Commercial) is mixed breed cattle, basically Brahma backgrounds, but they have all kinds of shorthorn, Hereford, Angus, whatever in them. That's commercial cattle that you produce calves to sell to the market to feed lots, for beef. The purebred end of it is where you produce bulls and heifers for private treaty sale to other purebred breeders, or bulls to commercial breeders, like we were ourselves.

We did very well with the purebred cattle. We expanded the pastures, improved the pastures and took in more pastures. This was in the early 50's. Some of these things overlapped because each one was being done in conjunction with other things that we were doing. By the middle to late 50's we had a tremendous herd of Charlois from France. We bought some, we leased some, then in the early 60's, we got involved with importation of the purebred Charlois from France. We got in partnership with the Union Stockyards

from Chicago and they brought some females into the Bahamas. We went down there and got in partnership with them (Union Stockyards). Mr. Phipps got in partnership with a man from Oklahoma by the name of Mac Brawley, and we also went to France and purchased a number of female and male calves. Mac had an idea of a way to get them into this country, which worked. They had to be quarantined in France because of the hoof and mouth disease, and then they were shipped from there to the island of St. Pierre in Miquelon, which is just south of Newfoundland, and we kept them there - it seemed forever - maybe a couple of years, at least, maybe three years there. These were calves to begin with, five - six month old calves. We kept them there for three years, then we got permission to move them into Canada. Then we had to go into Canada and contract with farmers up there to take care of our cattle. As I recall, back in the early 60's, the business became incorporated. Then I became a vice-president and director of the corporation. I believe it was because we had so much money invested in these Charlois cattle, I think it was maybe Mrs. Phipps suggestion that I spend one week out of every month in Canada. She wasn't at the board meeting, but I think that was relayed by Mr. Phipps - said Klippie thought it would be appropriate and he thought it was a real good idea. So I did.

It didn't bother me too much. By that time, I had a decent staff on the plantation and the thing pretty much ran itself. I had excellent, excellent people. Dog trainers to handle the kennel, and the horses, the cattle manager, a maintenance superintendent, I had an assistant manager who came along, so everything ran very smoothly.

The entire place was rather picturesque because in the winter time, after a frost, everything was sort of golden. The sage grass was golden, and the fields were golden with the old corn stalks, and scattered pines and areas of woods. A really ideal interspersion of cover type for quail population. It is obvious that it had been managed. Mr. Phipps was very well read, an intelligent man who followed good management practices for wildlife management.

I heard that he and his father, John S. Phipps, had acquired adjacent properties back in the late 30's and before them, different people had owned different portions of the plantation. But most of it had been managed fairly intensively for quail. It was quite a popular sport in the

South, with the shooting set in those days. The plantation, as I recall, was put together in increments by Mr. Phipps and his father - the two plantations I should say - Ayavalla and Orchard Pond, which later became part of Ayavalla, after John S. Phipps died in the middle 50's. It (Ayavalla) was comprised of different properties, a number of people who had smaller shooting places, and portions of other land.

For example, the portion that Colin (Phipps) sold the city, that was called the South Davis portion of the plantation because that was part of the old Davis plantation that Mr. Phipps bought from Mr. Griscom Beadle, back in the 30's. The plantation that he sold to Frank Shaw, Sr., it was called Meridian Palntation. He sold him the plantation house and acreage around it, maybe a couple of hundred acres around it. When I first came to Tallahassee, the first house I lived in was right next to Frank Shaw's house. In fact, it was one of the tenant houses, one of the foreman's houses or something, for Meridian Plantation. That's the present site of Meridian Meadows Horse Farm. The major part of that was a big tung grove, also. One of them was the Thompsons, who owned land in the middle of the lake (Lake Jackson), but they had been displaced by high water of 1949 when the lake flooded. Their house had been underwater, so he allowed them to move into one of the tenant houses up there.

In general, I think my first thought of the plantation was the beautiful timber, beautiful interspersion of cover, rolling landscape. It was just unbelievably beautiful. There were a lot of quall, absolutely no deer. I think we figured out there may be one deer per hundred acres in those days. Of course, they had dove fields, snipe bogs, etc. But basically, the tenant farming was beneficial to the interspersion of cover because the tenants would farm little patches of corn and other products that, by using what we call bottom land, the little depressions for their corn, which was richer, more moist ground, that would allow the crops to produce better. It wasn't unusual to see a cornfield a half acre in size. That was perfect for quail. We didn't know in those days all the ramifications of the interspersion of cover, we just knew that the corn, in small patches, produced a lot quail. And, of course, it was complimentary to turkeys, also, because there was a lot of good woods.

Plantation Management:

Mr. Phipps was very much of a naturalist. He didn't want the timber sold unless he had to sell it. He didn't want the oaks destroyed, the hardwoods. He wanted the woodlands left pretty much like they were. He did do some cleaning and clearing to facilitate hunting, but basically he was much of a naturalist. He taught me a tremendous amount of identification of different valuable feeds and plants and trees and what they did. Back in the 40's I guess they didn't know that much about quail and what they ate. Oak trees, pine trees, gum trees, all of them produced mast that are very beneficial to wildlife.

The only problem we had, during the 60's there started to be an area-wide decline in the number of quail. Being, as we thought, rather knowledgeable about quail. (Mr. Phipps was extremely well-read on wildlife, and I thought I was fairly well-read, too) we had experimented all the time. He (Mr. Phipps) had given me very much a free hand in experimentation. For example, we discovered a new type of pea. We didn't discover it, we found it was available. It was called a combine pea. It was a tiny little field pea that was very hard. The quail loved them, so we would go out and harrow up a quarter of an acre for combine peas and we had a great feeding patch there. You'd almost always find a covey (of quail) very close to one of those feed patches. So that was going to be the solution for the lack of corn fields or interspersions created by the tenant farmers.

In conjunction with this, in the early 60's the U.S. Department of Agriculture addressed the screw worm problem with cattle. Screw worm was a larvae. Flies laid eggs on an open wound and the larvae ate on flesh of the wounds. It was particularly offensive in new-born calves. Anytime a calf was born after the 1st of March you had to treat its navel because screw worms would be in the navel. Of course, we had them. Every time a cow would rub its neck on a tree, just to scratch its neck, it would get it raw and screw worms would be there. What happened in conjunction with that was that we were continually attempting to create feed patches, interspersions of cover, leave rows of corn for quail, plant brown top millet, anything we could think of that might enhance the quail. We seemed to be in a cyclic decline in those days. Everything we did for the quail seemed to enhance the deer population

- the white-tailed deer. Those little quarter acre pea patches that we originally started with had to be increased from one to two acres to allow for the deer, who loved to eat on peas, to. Originally, you could take a quarter acre and go through in the late spring of the year and harrow that place up and they would come back up and reseed itself. They just ate up all the peas. In fact, I'd go out and see young fawns laying in the pea patch in the summer time, in July when the peas were real lush, I'd see just their heads sticking up over the peas.

(The cause of the increase in the deer population) was lack of screw worms, which had devastated the young deer for years, and the protection afforded them on the plantation. The management practices that we used for bob white quail seemed to be complimentary to deer. We were protective of the property, we didn't allow night hunters or poachers or things like that in. As the deer increased, I came up with an even better idea of getting off-duty sheriff's deputies to help protect the property by allowing them to kill a number of deer a year for their own use. That worked out beautifully. My assistant manager had at one time worked for the sheriff's department and knew all the people. I'd say, "Butch, let's get about five or six people that we can trust, that won't take advantage of us and will protect the property for us, and we'll allow them to kill three deer apiece." Well, when I told Mr. Phipps about it he said, "I don't like it at all." I said, "Just look at the advantage of it. These people will feel like they've got an interest in it, and they'll be helping us for nothing." He said, "Well, it'll kill some deer off. We damn sure need that." And so we did that and it worked beautifully. Oh, maybe once or twice we had to change people, but basically it was a very good program.

Wildlife populations tend to fluctuate, they are cyclic. However, the quail thing just seemed to be going down, down, down. Where we used to have maybe fifteen to eighteen coveys in a half a day's shoot, we were lucky to maintain eight or nine coveys - about half. Despite everything we could do to enhance the population, we continued an annual program, we sprayed borders where they were too rough, we wouldn't allow vehicles in the woods during nesting season, we even experimented with feeders in the spring of the year - and I think we got some benefit from the feeders - we even attempted a predator control type of thing for nest predators, which are basically the

biggest decimators of nesting quail populations. When they build their nests on the ground they are quite exposed to, for example, possums, that nose around and eat the eggs or eat the quail if they don't get off the nest. We came up with an idea of using eggs with strychnine in them - remove one cc. Of albumin and replace it with one cc of strychnine, with a hypodermic needle. We put those around the quail feeders, and the eggs disappeared just as fast as you put them out there, every night the possums of whatever. I recorded over a hundred possums killed on one hunting course one spring over the feeding. And the quail population almost tripled in that particular course that year. We thought we had finally discovered the secret. But the strange thing was, the very next year it went back down to the way it was because the possums, in the ecology of the whole thing, the possums probably eat young snakes, and other animals. We weren't quite as smart as we thought we were, but we kept experimenting. I must say, in retrospect, that Mr. Phipps gave me a free hand to experiment any way I wanted to.

Back in the 60's, after we imported these Charlois cattle, and I guess probably my managerial abilities converted more to being a salesman for the cattle operation, attending cattle meetings, shows, sales, etc. I was away from the plantation a lot more because I had so much dealings, in fact, a couple of years in the late 60s, we sold over a million dollars worth of cattle each year off of our purebred herds.

"SOUTH DAVIS" HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT/EVOLUTION:

somewhere back in the late 50's, I guess it was, he gave them (his sons) those two properties. Colin got everything south of Miller's Landing Road, which I call "South Davis". It had a very high bluff over-looking the lake, a very high area, a beautiful area. That was probably one of the least intensively managed portions of the plantation from our point of view. After Colin got it he intensively developed pastures and things like that. But until he got it, it was rather out of the way over there. But until he got it, it was rather out of the way over there. We had some pasture on the lake bottom, at the bottom of the hill. We had a fence across the side of the hill, we had pasture down there and Lowell Crowder, who we bought the cattle back from, we ran a steer operation with him. We had about 125-140 steers that we ran down there on the lake bottom in the

summer time, when the lake was low. There was a lot of good pasture down there. In the winter time we'd turn them loose in the woods and they'd keep the bushes knocked down, and the vines and the briars and stuff like that. I don't think it helped the quail at all, though, because any corn that was standing in the field, they would eat, and a lot of corn shucks and trample the fields down.

He gave Colin everything south of Miller's Landing Road, which included all the lake frontage up to the Brill House, I guess. Which he sold, of course, to real estate developments along Miller's Landing Road there, where Ralph Smith and all those people have their houses. Then he gave Gene everything on the east side of Meridian Road, which included Moore Pond and the Shelly property, which is the name of another plantation. Gene got more property in acreage, but he figured because Colin's was closer to town, it was more valuable. And I think Gene subsequently sold most of that property to Jim Smith.

Plantation Management/Development:

As Mr. Phipps got older, he enjoyed his duck hunting and his snipe hunting. We had dove fields and every year we'd have a fancy dove field. Then, later on, when he got sort of incapacitated, we got into the commercial end of hunting. That was Gene's idea, that we develop it into commercial hunting. We first started with the deer. We had so many deer. At the beginning, we probably had one deer per five hundred acres and in the 70's we had one deer per five acres. So that an increase of a hundred-fold for deer. Mr. Phipps didn't care for deer hunting. He liked to eat venison saddles, but he didn't care for the deer hunting at all. So basically, he just let me use that for my friends. We had people come out and every weekend we'd hunt deer with dogs and everything. Gene saw an opportunity to commercialize on that, so we stopped the free hunting and went into hunting club. We had a lodge that we renovated for the hunters and we charged, in those days, I think we charged them \$2000 per year to belong to the deer lodge. With that they had the right to kill seven deer, either them or their own guests, but it was limited to and specified what kind of deer they could kill. It was very well regulated. We had twenty-five members, I think, there. That worked out so well they developed it into a dove hunting club, then duck hunting clubs. The figure escapes me now, I think the fee was maybe \$1500 for the

dove hunting club, which would allow them to have two hunts per week during the legal dove season, which was in three increments - early, middle and late season. Usually each one lasted about two and a half weeks. What it meant was that they could either bring a guest and hunt one day or come themselves and hunt two days during the week. Consequently, we had six or seven, or maybe eight different dove fields around the property. They were supervised hunts. All the hunting was supervised. Then, we did the same thing with the duck hunting. We developed that into a duck hunting club. In fact, we established a different lodge from the deer lodge. We called it the Wing Lodge, over off Old Bainbridge Road. We had facilities, if they wanted to spend the night there, cooking facilities - we'd always have breakfast and things like that for them early in the morning, before day light. Played poker games at night. They had great times out there. We probably had six different duck ponds that we would allow them to hunt. They only had one hunt a week, I think, out of the duck club. (The commercial hunting) was in the late 70's, after Mr. Phipps got a little incapacitated. He didn't really believe in commercializing the hunting. He was very selfish about it, he said he'd maintained that for himself and his friends.

Everything was done in conjunction with everything else. We'd lay out plans and decide that we wanted to do something that would enhance the plantation. All this time we were in a transition from tenant farming thing to a corn farming thing. So we had a corn farming operation. We were farming over a thousand acres of corn for ourselves. We got into the Harveststors, the big blue, glass-lined silos, where you put silage for cattle feed. Marvelous, marvelous contraption, very expensive. I'd hate to put a pencil to it and figure out the cost of retiring the investment on those silos, but they were marvelous because they were automatic. We had automatic feed wagons, ensilage wagons, we'd go through the fields and cut the corn, cut it up, blow it in the wagon, the wagon would come to the silo, unload it, blow it up into the silo. Human hands didn't have to touch it - unless we had a breakdown. In the winter, when you're ready to feed the cattle, you blow the horn and the cattle all run up to the trough, you'd open the door, turn it on, auger it all out down the trough, the cattle would feed on it. It was a labor saving device and our cattle operation got to be very efficient. We built a beautiful purebred barn on the hill just a half

a mile to the right of the main road going into the house. We had a big oval-shaped barn with individual stalls for each bull or whatever we had in there, and then had long runs funneling out from each stall, all the way around this thing, except for the road driving in. All concrete, it was a beautiful barn.

I can't exactly tell you when (the tung oil operation) was started because there were mature trees when I came there in 1950. They had been, not, shall I say, neglected, but they hadn't been cultivated and fertilized intensively. One of the first things I did the first spring I was there, I took inventory of the tung trees and I made some contacts with some of the tung refiners and other tung plantations around and found out the potential that was there from these tung trees. I think we had about 450 acres of bearing trees and probably another 100 acres or 50 acres of smaller trees. There was a tremendous potential if they were handled right. I did some figures and told Mr. Phipps if we cultivated the trees by harrowing the weeds from under them, fertilized the trees, marketed our own tung nuts, we could show a profit. Unfortunately, after I started that I got called back in the Service for about 15 months, during the Korean War. When I came back, that had not necessarily degenerated, but (there had been a) lack of intensive management. In the meantime, the price of tung oil had dropped down. It wasn't quite as attractive as we had anticipated, so it sort of died. Then, some of the synthetics came along right after that and more or less negated the idea of the tung oil as a superior product in paints and varnishes. Eventually, in the late 50's we started replacing the tung trees - (by) just pushing them down, bulldozing them down and burning them. We converted many of the fields into corn fields that we utilized for the corn base. Everything in business, I guess, is maybe a little shady, but basically we anticipated that the corn base program was coming in and eventually it did. It paid farmers not to grow corn on their property so the larger the base, the more profitable the check from Uncle Sam was. When we found out the tung trees weren't going to ever come back to what we had anticipated they would be, we started bulldozing them out, burning them, and turning those into corn fields.

TENANT FARMERS AND TUNG GROVES:

(The harvesting of the tung nuts) was done by the tenants. It was sort of a Christmas present, Mr. Phipps would call it. The tung nuts would fall in October. They'd fall on the ground. The foreman, Lester Richardson, would get all the tenants together and say, "Okay, I'm going to start picking tung nuts, here's what we are going to pay for them, if you work hard and do a good job you can earn a lot more money than you've ever made in your life." And it was true. We converted from two dollars a day. They'd just pick around and hardly pick enough to pay their wages. By paying them by the five gallon bucket, 7 cents a bucket, they could pick them (the nuts) up and fill those buckets up in nothing flat. We had young boys, grandsons of some of the tenants that were still living on the place, would come out. They were making \$27, \$28 a day, back in the 50's. That was big wages. Lester would supervise. He'd say, "This is your row, this is your row." He'd go and inspect the row and if they weren't picked clean he'd say, "No, I am not going to pay you for them until you pick them up clean. I want them all up. I don't want to see any tung nuts left on the ground." They'd pick up big bunches and leave the scatters around. But he would sack them up in a croaker sack and throw them up in a fork of the tree so they'd dry. In January, after the first of the year, we'd go with big trailers and use some of our own labor and pack them on trailers and haul them into two or three different central places. We'd load them off and send them off to one of the tung processing plants. It was fairly profitable while it lasted. I loved Mr. Phipp's idea of it because he said it was just before Christmas and it was sort of a Christmas present to the tenants to give them an opportunity to earn some Christmas money.

Interviewed: Marjorie Stoneman Douglas Building
Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Tallahassee, Florida
07 Nov. 1995
25 Jan 1996 (revisions to 1995 transcript)

**WILLIE MAE ROLLINS CARTER AND MATTHEW
CARTER:**

**Dog Handler at Ayavalla Plantation - 1942 -
1947/48**

Willie Mae Carter:

Memories of the Phipps Family:

As far as I can remember, the Phipps bought in the early '30s, '33 or '34. It was earlier than '35. The first place he bought was Kimball's, that's on the lake (Jackson), off of Meridian Road, which is Miller's Landing now. The next place he bought was Fred Edward's place, because I can remember. The next place I remember, where they are living now, was Dr. Gwynn, and then his daddy bought another place, J. S. Phipps. They he bought the Moore's place later, and then Sanders. He swapped land with the Thompson's down off Meridian Road, down on the lake, and the Gardners. And then over here, over where the park is on Old Bainbridge Road, he bought over there. The Rollins owned some portions of that, but they didn't sell. Also, on Meridian Road, the Rollins owned property on the lake, joining Kimball's and Martin's place, but we still own that, we still have that property. He just continued to buy and during that time he bought - I wasn't twelve years old, I can't remember exactly how old I was - they called that place Shepherd's or cotton. And we had our church there, we also had Sunday School - bible study - we also went to school there.

School Days:

(When I was twelve) we lived off Meridian Road, down near the lake (not on Ayavalla). This portion over here, I don't know if all of it is named the same name, but over here, where he bought from Dr. Gwynn, that's the name. I don't know if all of it's the same or not, but I know they have a sign over here where our church (is) St. Paul's Missionary Baptist Church where we're getting ready to build on Old Bainbridge Road. We swapped maybe with Mr. Phipps and we're also buying some more property there. And also on that same property was the school called St. Paul's School. I don't know what the name of that school was. There was a church out there and they taught school there. They started phasing out all of the schools so they came over here on Old Bainbridge Road to a school, I think it was a Rosenwald School, they called it.

I remember what teachers taught there. Clyde taught there later, but Clyde was teaching for Mrs. Richardson. I don't remember her first name, but Mrs. Richardson. Clyde Richardson taught there, too, after they phased out St.

Paul's School. Then all of us, the black children that lived in the country, when they finished the 9th grade, they had to either go to town and live with somebody there or not go to school. Later, after my children were born, my youngest children started school, Louise and Matthew started school out here at the Rosenwald School on Old Bainbridge Road. Then they built the John G. Riley School, then they went to Riley School.

(When I went to Lincoln School the principal was) Mr. Porter, Professor Riley had died when I went there. I think he must have died a year or so before, but Mr. Porter, G. L. Porter, I think. Mr. Nims was the principal. In 1937, we started Lincoln High School.

The Old Shepherd School:

The Old Shepherd School. I was one of the students there. I'm 74 years old now. Miss Georgia Clark was our teacher. The only teacher at that time. Later, I think her sister, Emma Jane Thompson, taught there a while. Later they go Emma Jane Douglas. She was Emma Jane Walker at the time, but she married Sam Douglas. Then later, the community bought a piece of property, or they might have had it, I don't know, but we built a school, a two-room school. There was Mrs. Gardner and Mrs. Douglas and Hilda Goodman. Then Hilda Gardner, Mrs. Georgia Gardner's daughter, that married Mack Gardner, she taught there. They continued to teach there until they started phasing out those schools in the country for all those children. When we finished 9th grade, we would all go to Lincoln High School. That's where I went, to Lincoln High School.

We went so many months. I don't know whether we went six months or seven months. We wasn't going nine months. The reason they didn't go was because most of the people was farmers. At Lincoln High School they didn't go that long either. Most of the people out there were farmers or dairymen or something, and certain times of the year they had to work.

I was born in 1921, I think I was about seven years old (when I started school) because my sister and my brother and I, we were just a year apart, and all of us started school the same time. All of us were in one big room. But I can remember when Joe Williams was in our class, and my first cousin, Eva Lee Rollins, Rebecca Rollins, Rebecca

Austin now, and Naomi Landers, which is Naomi Fleming now, and Mary Cary, which is May Johnson now, that lives out there in the Macon Community. But Joe didn't finish with us because his mother died and somehow Mr. Phipps and all - his daddy didn't agree or something, I don't know what it was about, but anyway, he moved from there. And he moved to a place we called the hammock and Joe didn't graduate with us. We started high school in 1937.

What we studied in school. We had primers, they called them then. That's when you are beginning school and you learn your ABC's and learn to count and you learn to read and print. We had geography, we had history, we had chemistry, we had biology.

Matthew Carter:

We had a good time. In school there'd be a line and they'd cut you down (if you missed a word).

Willie Mae Carter:

A spelling Match. We had a spelling match every Friday at school. And I would also stand beside Joe. If he missed a word he would cry. And we'd stand up there and the teacher couldn't see you working your mouth, but we would say the word to keep him being cut down. If you miss a word, you had to go down, move down, to the end of the line. That was called cutting down. If you missed a word, someone else would take your place, and then you would keep on until the best speller, that would be the one standing.

We weren't too far from school. We walked to school. The sugar berry switches, off the sugar berry tree, bring those switches there and if you missed your lesson, you'd get some licks on your hand. If you were late coming to school, you'd get some licks then.

We carried lunch to school until the President, who was it started giving the free food? Roosevelt. He started giving free food. They would give food to the school and we had something you could cook the food but you couldn't bake no biscuits. Mrs. Georgia (Gardner) would carry it home and make biscuits and bring them back. They give corned beef, peanut butter and flour. I think it was wheat flour.

Matthew Carter:

Jelly.

Willie Mae Carter:

They didn't give no jelly, did they?

Matthew Carter:

Yeah, they did.

Willie Mae Carter:

I know they had the corned beef. He says jelly but I don't remember. I remember peanut butter. They usually give you applies. You would have an apple a day. And they'd give you raisins.

(Were white children living in the community?)

Yes, the Joyners lived over there but they did not go to school with us. I guess they was taken downtown to school somewhere. The only white school I remember them having is a school over here. That old school is still down there. You know where you go to Ayavalla plantation off of Bainbridge Road? There's a little school that sits - a little house - sits on the right hand side just up above a little pond of water. Now that's where the white children went to school. But anyway, as long as I can remember, they always had a bus that carried them. They always had buses. They had a bus that carried them to school. At certain times of the year they would have a band come out there and play. We basketball, too.

Mrs. Poole was a lady that was the homemaking teacher. Mrs. Poole would come around so often to our school. And Professor Brown for the boys.

Mr. Phipps swapped land with the church and I think they tore that building down (The Shepherd School) I am not too sure, there's not a road to go up in there now. We can't even get to the cemetery now. Shepherd or Cotton Cemetery. A lot of people buried up there. I had an uncle to get killed in the service, Earl Holiday, he's buried up there. There might be a way to get up there, but I don't know, because they a fence and everything. Well, they don't bury

no more. After that long time we just give in because we moved over to somewhere else. At St. Paul's Cemetery, that's where his (Matthew Carter) family is buried. But so many is in there now that we bought in Memory Garden. And so many other people. Grant, I think Eluster is buried in Memory Garden too, I believe. Grant Carter, his (Matthew Carter) brother, is buried in Memory Garden. Quite a few of them. A few, the Charltons, I think they still bury there (St. Paul's).

PERSONAL HISTORY:

Willie Mae Carter:

Some of the children, like myself, I lived with my great-grandfather and great-grandmother. I lived next to my daddy and step-mother. I lived with my mother downtown (when I went to Lincoln). When I was a small child, my mother moved out of town and stayed out of town until I was going to high school and then she came back into town and rented a house and that's where I lived, with her, on Georgia Street, in the 400 block, until my grandfather, John Rollins, died. (My grandmother was Julia Rollins. Julia Proctor Rollins. After my grandfather died, then we moved in to a white house there on Old Bainbridge Road, Mary Nelson's home. It (the house) was old. That's where I got married. We lived there a couple of weeks, and my husband and I, we moved back into the county. We moved on Meridian Road, in a house and we stayed over there I reckon about six or seven months. Then we moved in a house over there by Mr. Phipps, where his house is now. We lived there, I guess, about six or seven years. Then we bought this place here. My husband worked with Mr. Phipps as a dog trainer and horse trainer.

My great-grandfather was named Lawrence Williams. My grandfather - I never did know my mother's father - was John Rollins. My great-grandfather was John Proctor.

I can remember when he (John Proctor) did a building up there on the A and M Campus. It was a brick building up there, but the Proctor buildings, I think his brother did them. He was a senator and he wasn't a carpenter. They have a lot of writing on him in the *Hawkeyes*. Him and his family, they came from the Bahamas.

Matthew Carter:

I never seen my grandparents. My parents was Ellen Carter and Willie Carter.

Willie Mae Carter:

He keeps saying he don't remember. He remembers his father's mother was named Julia Herring. They was out there on the Phipps Plantation. We are just more from Meridian Road, back in there on the lake. That's where we used to have the ballgames. Down there on the Rollins plantation. There was a big dance hall and everything, picnics. There was a big oak tree there. We did baptisms. Down there on Rollins Lake, that's where we all baptized. Off of Miller's Landing road, that's where they baptize now, but during that time, when we were children, they was going through by my grandmother's house.

Matthew Carter:

They baptized in Archipond (Orchard Pond).

Willie Mae Carter:

Yeah, they baptized in Archipond. Matthew belonged to St. Paul's Missionary Baptist Church and I belonged to St. Matthew's Primitive Baptist Church, which is a little church there on Miller's Landing Road.

Bower Hackley. Reverend Hackley, Sr. lived in the house. But his mother was a Richardson. (She was related to Eluster Richardson) his father was her brother. Grant Richardson and Ellen Richardson was brother and sister. Clipper Charlton and those, their mother was his father's sister. Louis Thompson was my cousin. That was her first brother, because when they first bough they was on Meridian Road, and they built some small houses, there. I think it was one for Mr. Phipps and Mrs Phipps and their help and one was for the children and the nurses and then they had a house there for the butler to live in. I think they brought a butler from somewhere, named Robert, and then later they got Louis Thompson as a butler and he worked for them for many, many years.

Matthew Carter:

(After we left Ayavalla) I was with the C.C. Camp.

Willie Mae Carter:

He (Matthew Carter) was living on the Phipps Plantation when he was a young boy. He worked on the place and then, it must have been in 1937 or 38, he moved off the Phipps Plantation and went to the C.C. Camp and he stayed there. In 1942 we got married, when he came from the C.C. Camp. He never did go back to the plantation. He worked for Sam Smith, or Red Smith, and Rainey Cawthon. After we got married, we moved from Tallahassee, out of the city limits, and moved back on the plantation. We moved to a house just up above there the Rollins, down there on Miller's Landing now, just up above there. No roads or nothing going in, no houses or nothing there any more. That's where we moved and we stayed there four or five months and then we moved over there where Mr. Phipps' house is now.

That was my grandmother's house there (where they lived before moving near Mr. Phipps' house). Now my first cousin, Eva Lee, she lived up there in Matthew Rollins' (house or neighborhood) but I lived with my great grandparents and they lived on the Phipps Plantation that joined the Rollins Plantation. I lived next door to my daddy and his wife.

But we stayed there, I guess about five or six months, and my sister and her husband, Willie Carter, they was living there. We got married first. They lived there, then they started working for Judge Lander's wife, Mrs. Landers, and they moved on - they had a house, was living on the premises. That's where they moved and they stayed there. That's where Donald was born, there at Mrs. Landers. After Willie and Emma Lee moved, I guess they might have been with us about two months, then Agnes and Ephraim got married and Ephraim was working in Apalachicola and Agnes was downtown, but on weekends, when he come from Apalachicola, he and Agnes would stay with us in that same room, where Emma and Willie had lived. Neither one of them had no children. It was just the husband and wife. The first five or six months when we were married we lived in that house, and then after that we moved in a house over there by Mr. Phipps and it had tow rooms and a kitchen and it had lights. Didn't have no running water in the house, they had a spigot out there in front of the house. They had an outdoor toilet. Mr. Phipps always had running water. In the house that they (The Phipps) built off Meridian

Road, I don't know if the toilet was in the house or where it was, because I never did go in. The house they built over there (at the first location) they had everything in it, just like they have now.

I had eight children. I had four up there on the Phipps Plantation, I had the other four here at this place. Mary is working at the courthouse in Atlanta, working deeds, property, and Lenora is working at the telephone company, I don't know what position she holds. Irene is working at the telephone company. Sarah, the telephone company. Willie Mae is at the Capital. And Ezell is with the state road department. My oldest son just passed, he was a carpenter. And my youngest son, Jerry, he's named Jerry, Jerome, we call him Jerome but most people call him Jerry, but the people that grew up around him, I like Jerome best, so that's what I call him. Well, he's a plasterer. Took his daddy's business. He (Matthew Carter) helped Mr. Phipps. He started plastering with the Pullens. They learned him how to plaster. I. C. Williams and all of them, they learned how to plaster. Then, later years, he got his own business. And that's what the youngest son is doing.

When I was a childn, living with my great-grandfather, they didn't have a car. They had a horse and wagon that we went to town in. But when I went with the Rollins, they had a milk truck thing, shut in, where they carried milk to town. During the week, he'd go to town, he'd carry the family through the week time. On Saturday, he would take somebody to make money. Matthew's (Carter) father, and Grant Richardson, rode to town with him and my grandfather, Lawrence Williams, rode to town with him when he didn't go in the wagon. My grandfather was sick in the summertime. He had asthma, in the summer time he couldn't go. I was, I guess, about twelve years old, somewhere about there, and my grandmother was working to a boarding house somewhere downtown. And there was a store by the name of Peter Michael. My grandfather, he would write a list and give it to me and I would go to my grandmothers. Uncle Matt'd take me to town and put me out there where Clemmons is - was - that's not there no more, I don't know what it is now. But it's not too far from where the capital is, in front of city hall. That's where everybody met on Saturday, just meet and talking. In Clemmons they sold fried fish and sold fish. The Buzzard Roost was down further. The other corner was the Buzzard Roost, down there. Between where the courthouse and the City Hall, from there on back to your

north, that was Clemmons. That's where a lot of people met. And the Buzzard Roost, that was down below, on the south end. That's where they used to tie the horses, horses and buggies down on that end, where at that time, the Buzzard Roost, that's where the most people that was real ugly met. They didn't really do anything down there, but they just didn't look good. They called it the Buzzard Roost, and the intelligent people were up there by Clemmons. White and Black. They'd go in the store. They didn't stand around like the rest of the people. You'd go in and do your shopping and you'd wait there for your ride, you'd get your people to ride with. They had the dime store, and they had the HUB Store, and remember the Surprise Store, they called it, and Hicks Drugstore, had P. W. Wilson, and you had Turners.

Matthew Carter:

Joe Deeb.

Willie Mae Carter:

Yeah, you had Joe Deeb's store. There might have been a few more, but there weren't too many more uptown at that time.

Uncle Matthew (Rollins) had a route. He carried milk and these people he would sell vegetables to and also his eggs (in town). Everybody used to sell milk. (We took) live turkeys and live chickens. I remember that what my uncle would do, they would go to a lot of white people. They'd buy eggs and milk from you, and chickens, also live chickens from you. My grandfather did butter, they didn't do no cheese, they did butter.

Matthew Carter:

They had a dairy.

Willie Mae Carter:

Yeah, a dairy, a milk dairy. I guess about 60 to 70 cows or more. Uncle Matthew still has cows up there (that) somebody's seeing after. They had, I don't know how many mules and horses. My grandfather, he used to hire people to work his farm. The children worked too, but he would

plant a lot of cotton and corn and hire people to work.
Rollins plantation.

Now my (great) grandfather, that raised me, he was old and he didn't have no big farm. George Williams, and John Williams and my grant aunt named Creasy Williams. They would plant his crops and work them. I would work cotton and work in velvet beans a little bit. But we didn't have a big farm, I didn't do too much farming when I was a young girl.

Description of House - Willie Mae Carter:

When I finished school in the country, I moved back downtown and I stayed down until I got married, then I moved back out there in a house that was above where I used to live. I think it was two rooms and a kitchen, an outdoor toilet. The kitchen was attached to it. Our house always had our kitchen attached to it, but when he (Matthew Carter) was a child, where he was born in, the kitchen wasn't attached to the house. A lot people had houses like that, but we didn't. Our kitchen was attached to our house.

Ayavalla - Matthew Carter:

He (Mr. Phipps) wanted you to tell him what was on your mind, and not to hold back once. He wanted you to tell what you mean, he didn't want you to be shy of him.

Willie Mae Carter:

I remember when he used to go hunting on the lake, he used to hut, well we call them blue petes, but they was coots and ducks. My brother, Matthew Rollins, Jr., he would paddle his boat for him. He did that until he went in the Army. He came from the Army and he never came back here to live. He's in Jacksonville.

The only bad time we had, he (Mr. Phipps) didn't want you to have cats or dogs, and he didn't want the men to carry a gun. Because he was afraid they might shoot his birds. His quail.

He (Matthew Carter) worked for him (Mr. Phipps) about six years, because Louise wasn't six years old when we moved over there. She wasn't school age. I had four children,

but I had one the year after. That was 1942 to I guess 1947 or 1948, then we bought here.

(At Ayavalla) We had two bedrooms, a kitchen, we had running water and we had lights. But we had an outdoor toilet. And a porch. Some of those houses (are) still there, by the dog kennel. We lived close to the dog kennel. He (Mr. Phipps) got a man by the name of Booker Larry and he kept the dogs.

Matthew Carter:

They were bird dogs. I don't know how many dogs he had.

Willie Mae Carter:

He had a pit dog named Demon. That was a bulldog. He would fight the hogs. And if you hogs get out, he would go out and get the hogs and the cows. Everybody could have a cow. We had hogs, and you could plant anything you wanted to plant. You could raise chickens there. If your pigs got out, then Demon would bite the ears off. There were many pigs walking around there with no ears. He wouldn't kill them, but he would bite the ears off.

Matthew Carter:

We had three or four pigs.

William Mae Carter:

We had more than four pigs.

Matthew Carter:

We had the sow.

Willie Mae Carter:

Oh, you mean, you keep the male and the sow, and the sow will pig, but you raise those for meat. And you also plant your cane, and grind cane and make syrup. But those were good days. You didn't have freezers. You had refrigerators, or ice boxes, you called it. They used to sell ice. You could catch as many fish as you'd want. But they had a certain time, I think it was around March, they would close the season down. You couldn't fish for a certain length of

time. There was also duck hunting, coot hunting - that was in the winter time. I still eat coot and ducks and turtles and things, we call them cooters but they're named terrors (terrapien) or something, but everybody ate them. That was the spring meat.

Matthew Carter:

And Deer.

Willie Mae Carter:

Yeah, we killed deer, rabbits and squirrels and coons and opossum. I never ate a coon, I never ate a opossum. Nope, I might of ate it when I was little and didn't know what it was. I remember one day, we were small children - large enough to clip a tree - and we had a hen, there was a great big old oak tree, and the hen was laying and we would go down there, my sister and my brother. My sister's name is Emma Lee Carter. Now we called her "Babe", they called me "Sweet". They called my brother "Buddy:". That's Mathew. My father was old and my great-grandmother was old, too. She couldn't walk, she could push a chair along and walk, but she was crippled. My grandfather, he was old, too. They told us to go down there. We'd went to the house and told them there was an opossum in the tree. So they said go down there and make him get out. Kill him or something. And my brother and sister got him out of the tree and up to the house, and when we carried him to the house my grandfather took a stick or something and hit him and broke his neck. Then when he broke his neck she turned him over and then all the little old baby opossums in the pocket - and to this day, I can't stand an opossum.

We'd plant in the winter time, we'd plant collards and carrots, rutabagas and turnips. And we also could plant the early, June peas, you call them. You could plant radish.

Matthew Carter:

You could plant anything. Watermelon, sweet potatoes.

Willie Mae Carter:

That would be in the spring of the year, when we'd plant the watermelon, cucumbers and things like that.

Matthew Carter:

Corn.

Willie Mae Carter:

But the winter time, that's when you plant mostly greens. No, we didn't plant rice. Now my grandmother, my great-grandmother, said they used to plant rice here. They used to plant rice but I never seen any grow.

They had a smoke house and they had cribs for the corn (They were made of) boards. Had a smoke house for the meat. You killed your hogs at the same time you smoked the meat. The meat would hang in the smoke house. Well, first when they killed the hog, they would salt it down and lay it down in the pine straw. And they'd let it stay there for so many days and then would take it up and wash it. And put red pepper or syrup or whatever they wanted to put on it, and smoke it until it cured. And they would let it hang there.

Matthew Carter:

There used to be a time when we hunted wild hogs.

Willie Mae Carter:

You used to hunt wild hogs after you got grown and married. He didn't hunt wild hogs while he was young because there wasn't any over there. There was wild hogs over on this side of the lake, but over there on Meridian Road, where we were born, we didn't see no wild hogs. We didn't know anything about wild hogs.

Matthew Carter:

(When I worked for Mr. Phipps) I'd get up early in the morning and get the dogs ready.

Willie Mae Carter:

They'd kill cows and he had to cook their (the dogs') food.

Matthew Carter:

I was living there and one time went bear hunting. (the guests) would tip you. They'd give you a tip. Fifty cents or a dollar sometimes.

Willie Mae Carter:

They (tips) were big back then. You could buy a lot of rice for five cents and sugar for five cents.

Matthew Carter:

When we'd go down to the lake, Mr. Phipps, he'd have me push his boat. And he wouldn't give me a tip. I'd do to someone who would tip me. No, he (Mr. Phipps) wouldn't tip. He (Mr. Phipps) paid a salary. Seven dollars a week.

Willie Mae Carter:

When we got married he was making #15 every two weeks. We could (live on that) because you buy flour and rice for five cents. And you had your own milk and butter, you had your sweet potatoes, you had the syrup, you carried corn down to the mill and grind it. A lot of people used to make grits out of corn, well you do make grits out of corn. They used to carry it to the mill and grind. (The mill was) over there on Meridian Road where Poppell's is. You know where Poppel's place is, that two story building on the road, there? Meridian Road and Miller's Landing Road. That house right at the intersection. And you see a little building there, I don't think its used any more, but that's where they used to grind corn. Didn't they used to sell gas there, too?

Matthew Carter:

Yes.

Willie Mae Carter:

And then we had another store on down, further down, almost where that church is on Miller's Landing Road. It was on the right hand side. The man's name was Store George. He had a store down there. That was the only store out there. And Mr. Poppell, I think they sold something in there. And then later, they started the rolling stores that come around every Wednesday. They had practically everything you'd want. When we were children we'd mostly meet them at

the school, buy you some candy or cookies or something like that. Get the eggs and chickens and sell them, and get your candy. But they'd have practically anything you'd want, salt franks, soda water, Nehi.

Matthew Carter:

You could catch fish and sell them.

Willie Mae Carter:

Yeah, Mr. Phipps would give you, he wasn't hard. You could make a living with him because you were allowed to catch fish. I don't know if you were allowed to sell them but they did sell them. You could grow the food you ate. And just like I say, we ate meat within the season. We bought a little. You could kill your hogs, you could make cracklings and the grease from that, you used that grease. The lard. And syrup. We'd have to buy a little sugar. A lot of things we didn't have to buy. I made jellies and preserves. I canned string beans and corn, tomatoes. I made figs, I made peaches, blackberries, plus. We had mayhaws at the time, I'd make jelly out of mayhaws. Apples. They'd grow in your yard or there in the woods that you could get them. Everybody had fig trees, plum trees, apple trees and we also had orange trees and pear trees. All kinds of pears. Chestnut trees and pecan trees. You had your pecans, you had your peanuts, and you would take those peanuts and dry them out and keep them almost until peanuts get ripe again, and same thing you would do with your pecans. I used to make my children's clothes. I would go to the Fairy Tale Shop and buy some on sale. I'd also go to P. W. Wilson. I bought from the dime store. But when you'd want to get some expensive stuff, you'd go to P. W. Wilson or go to Turner's to hop, or something like that. The only thing that we would try on was the shoes. You could estimate about the dresses and things like that. I never did ask to try them on, never did ask, because I would always know the sizes of my children's clothes. I'd estimate them. You could try on the shoes. Try on your hats too. Now, there might have been a time when the couldn't do that, but not in my time, not in my life time. Because I tried on dresses and things in the stores. Now you had certain bathrooms assigned. If you wanted to go to the bathroom, things like that, you'd have a problem. Just like at the dime store with the eating. They had certain places where black people could eat and certain for the

white people, and all of that. I remember riding the bus, I remember you had to go to the back of the bus to find you a seat. Now, I remember that. You had to go to the courthouse to the bathroom.

Interviewed at:
Route #9, Box 105
Tallahassee, Florida 32303
23rd of April, 1996

WILLIE J. GARDNER, JR.

Grandparents traded property with John H. Phipps; owned Meridian Grocery, near Ayavalla Plantation.

Personal History:

I'm Willie J. Gardner. (I was born at) Route #1, box #13, Leon County, Tallahassee. That's out North Meridian Road. The home place is right by Gardner Road and Meridian. Gardner Road comes down to Lake Jackson. That's about a quarter of a mile below that new school out there. Hawks Rise, I guess about nine or ten miles away from town.

(You were an educator, what schools did you work with in Leon County?)

Rainey Elementary School was the first school. Then when they integrated I was transferred to Griffin. I started at Rainey in 52. It was about 67, or 66 before they phased Rainey out. Then I was transferred to Griffin as Assistant Principal. I went from Rainey to Griffin to Cobb Middle School.

I went to several schools. You could start real early when I cam about. I went to school out there by the home place on Meridian Road. It was Poplar Spring. It was a school I think, and Poplar Springs Church sometime back, before my time. Maybe my mother went there. This was right below Hawk Rise. The school was one room. I don't remember what year I started school. After I left the rural schools, I started at Lincoln. I think they called it Fairmount, kindergarten. I finished Lincoln High School, on Brevard. I went through the 12th grade.

Professor Riley (was principal) when I first started. He was strict. He used to come around and spray in the morning. I don't know what it was a deodorizer or something like that. I don't remember just how he dressed, but I do remember him when I was down in the lower grades. He was the first principal I had at that school when I started. Mr. Dabney, I think, was principal later, and then Mr. Griffin, I believe. I don't remember about him (Mr. Riley) closing doors (on late students). I was real young, during that time.

(When I went to Lincoln), I lived with my grandmother down on 450 West Carolina Street. We would live with her at school time and we would go on the farm during the summer, out on Meridian Road. (As a child the only school I went to were) Poplar Spring and over at Lake Jackson was Shepherd School.

(Georgia Gardner) was my mother. She taught at Shepherd for a number of years, was principal, too. The building seemed to be full. They (Students) took up most of the space we had there at both schools. In Shepherd it was a church that they had school in. Then later, they built the school.

I don't recall (a garden at the school) but all the parents were farming, and they had gardens so I don't know if the school had a garden or not. You could get any vegetables from the parents. All those had gardens.

They used to bus the whites to town, but we had to get there the best way we could. Either walk or ride in a car, truck or whatnot. Eight miles, a little over eight miles. We used to ride with Mr. John Austin. He ran a dairy and he used to take us. In fact, he'd pick up milk and cream and we'd ride a lot with him. But I lived with my grandmother at 450 West. Carolina Street and that's not far from Lincoln School. (My grandmother's house) is still there. They remodeled it about three or four years ago. Put in air conditioning and all that, except for heat. The house next to it was the first house my granddaddy and grandmother built, their first house in town, is still there. I own that one now. Undoubtedly, it was built before I was born. September 24, 1917, that's my birthday. I think my granddaddy passed when Mac (His brother) was about six months old. Either six weeks or six months old, one, when my granddaddy passed.

We all (brothers and sisters) went to Lincoln School over there on Brevard. But some left. Now my baby sister, she left in elementary and went up to Newport News to live with my daddy's sisters. But we all started at Lincoln. Another sister didn't finish Lincoln. All my sisters and brothers finished Florida A and M University. My mother finished Florida A and M. I have four children, they finished A and M, too.

Phipps Association:

The Phipps bought 120 acres from my grandmother, my father's mother, Annie Mariah Gardner. Her maiden name was Floyd, but she married a Gardner. You've heard of Archipond (Orchard Pond)? Well, we had land running across Archipond on out there, near Highway 27. So he bought 120 acres from my grandmother. After he bought that, I think my grandfather sold about 40 acres. I think the track was about 380 acres to start with, something like that. After she passed, it was 340. We eventually traded Phipps that land for land over here on Meridian Road, where are now. All of the home place over there, this land we traded with Phipps, is from Bannerman Road on down Meridian. That's where my farm is now. We still have the homeplace out on Meridian and Gardner Road. I think its over 100 years (old) because my granddaddy and grandmother, they raised their children on that spot. My grandfather, Madison George Gardner, bought 40 acres there, that was the home place, my granddaddy on my father's side.

We traded with the Phipps, some land over there on Archipond (Orchard Pond). I think the relationship with the Phipps was good. Because we used to let him have all the hunting rights for a while and he would let us pasture on some of his land over there off Meridian Road.

Family History:

My father was Willie Gardner, Sr. My mother was Georgia Thompson Gardner. Her maiden name was Thompson. I know her mother was Jane Thompson. My great-grandmother was Emily Williams. That's on my mother's side. On my father's side, my grandmother was Annie Floyd Gardner and my grandfather was Madison George Gardner. I don't remember the names of their parents. That's as far as I remember names.

My brother, Edmund Gardner, we call him Buster, he comes up and lives there off and on. Sometimes he comes up once a month and stays a while. Sometimes he comes up every two months or three months. That's the only person; he and his wife live on the home place now.

Description of Houses:

The first house was there, I believe. Or my grandfather built it. Later, when I was a child, they tore that house down and built the one that is there now, on the same site.

(The first house) it had a room on the south side and a room on the north side. We had a hall running from the west side toward the front. We had a kitchen. I remember that much. (The kitchen) was attached. We had a double fire place, we had one in the center, with a fireplace on each side. I'm trying to think whether there was a third room, a bedroom I mean. That was the first house.

The second house, what was built when I was a child, it has a lot of rooms. It has four bedrooms upstairs and a bedroom downstairs. Well, there was two bed rooms, but they made one bed room into a bath and a library. It has a dining room and a living room, a kitchen, two baths, the house out there now. We have a chimney but we heat by gas. We don't use the fire place any more, we use gas heat. It still has fire places. It is wood construction. It faces east, faces Meridian Road. I was in elementary school when it was built. I finished Lincoln in 1937, so undoubtedly that was in the late 20's, I guess (when the house was built).

There was seven of us (brothers and sisters). I think all of them was born on that particular (place) except one. There's three boys and four girls. Mac, my brother, is deceased and the rest are still living.

Gardner Store - Meridian Grocery:

My granddaddy had a commissary there. The farmers in the community could come and trade and whatnot. Flour, syrup, all the store goods. Later, my father ran the store. It was right in front of the house. Cynthia, my niece, had the store town down about - hasn't been quite two months - just a little over a month ago (March or April 1996). She

lives in Maryland, now. Some of the family members may be a picture, but I don't have one myself, of Meridian Grocery. That was the name of it, Meridian Grocery. I guess they called it Gardner Store after my father, but he named it Meridian Grocery. It was the Gardner Store.

(Did people who lived on the Phipps Plantation trade there?)

Yes, we had a lot of white customers, those from Georgia and other places that come down to fish in Lake Jackson. They would trade. They'd stop and talk with my father and trade. So we had white and black business. But in the beginning it was just for the farmers in the community.

They paid cash during my daddy's time. During my granddaddy's, I don't know. He used to have a credit, he used to have accounts, too. They'd (the customers) come in and pay when they got their money. He had his book, a ledger, he used to keep credits for his customers.

Country Life:

We did the farm work, the boys. I think only one girl did any farm work. That was my sister, Pearl. All the boys worked on the farm. We had to milk cows, cultivate the fields, the crops - corn, cotton. We harvested corn and we harvested cotton. We also ran a little dairy, we used to sell milk, cream. We would separate the cream from the milk. The skim milk would come out one (spout of the separator) and the cream would come out the other. The trucks used to come from Georgia and pick up milk every morning. I guess we would milk about 15 to 20 gallons of milk a day, so that's quite a number of cows. My father would sell dairy cows to dairy men from South Florida. They'd come up and he'd sell some of his cows to them. We had Jerseys.

We had a large garden when I was coming up. All kinds of vegetables. We had a smoke house of meat. We had a lot of meat. My dad would kill hogs and cure the meat, smoke it. We had chickens, turkeys. My mother sold the turkeys. We'd eat the chickens. That was her little cash crop, the turkeys. Thanksgiving and Christmas. She'd sell them live. (In the gardens) we had okra, collard greens, mustard greens, turnips, butter beans, peas. We also would grow

watermelons, but not in the garden. That's mostly what we had. Peas, butter beans, okra, tomatoes.

My mother used to can. She had a pressure cooker and she used to can. She used to sew, too. She would make a lot of the dresses for some of the ladies on the farm. Mostly as a favor, lot of people used to work for my father. Sometimes he'd have 15 to 10 working on the farm. Also, she used to cook. Mostly they worked, seasonally. During the summer and the fall. In fact, we didn't go to school until after the crops (were harvested) most of the time. In the rural areas the school term was short. It'd start after you would harvest the crops and when we'd start growing crops again, schools would close.

(Who were some of the other families living in the area where the Gardners lived?)

Well, the Parramores up there across from Hawks Rise. Some of my mother's brother's children live up there. The Thompsons, Louis Thompson, that's my uncle, my mother's brother. Not the younger Louis, but the one that passed away some time ago. He has a son named Louis living up there. Roberta Thompson, that's my uncle's wife, she's still living up there. We are not related to Matthew and Wille Mae Carter, but I've known them since we were children. I went before their time at Shepherd School because I imagine I'm about three years older or something like that. I used to go with my Aunt up there. Mr. Reed, he used to be the teacher/principal of that school when I used to go. One of his legs was amputated but he was over the school. But Willie Carter and Matthew Carter hadn't started school then. I started before my time, I'd just go with my Aunt.

Emancipation Day and the Fourth of July

The 20th of May we would go over there (to the Lake) and they would have picnics and baseball and dancing, and swimming. We would celebrate the 20th of May and also the 4th of July. We'd go over there (to the Lake), that was one of the main places. You've heard of Miller's Landing. We'd go down there, they'd have a lot of amusement during the 20th of May and the 4th of July. (The 20th of May) that supposedly was when the slaves was freed, it is not the actual date, but that's when a lot found out they were free in the South. That's when the land owners told them. They

were free much earlier. So that's why they celebrate then. The 4th of July, that's all of us, Independence Day.

Family History:

This is my wife, Anita M. Gardner.

Anita M. Gardner:

(Were you in the school system, too?)

Yes, my first school was Berry Hill. My second school was at Riley and when they integrated I was sent to Sealey. I was at Sealey for eighteen years.

Willie Gardner:

She also taught with my mother at Shepherd.

Anita Gardner:

I sure did.

(Are you from Tallahassee?)

No, I'm not from Tallahassee. I am from Ohio. We met in Arcadia, Florida.

Willie Gardner:

I got my first teaching job in DeSota County in 1941. I met her after the War. Her brother-in-law was pastor of one of the churches in Arcadia and she was down with her sister, seeing after the children.

My first daughter, Jacqueline Gardner Stevens, she taught in Virginia Beach and Newport News. Now she's teaching out from Baltimore, Maryland. Geraldine's teaching in this county, she's over here at Bond. Geraldine Gardner Williams. Anita is working for the City at the Police Department. She finished in Business Administration and now she's a crime analyst. Willie J. Gardner, III, is now working for the City, too, in the Electrical Department. He sets meters and whatnot in new buildings, and repairs meters. He finished (school) in Political Science, started in pre-med.

Interviewed:
613 Howard Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32310
02, May, 1996.

BURT HADLEY
Lived on Ayavalla Plantation
C: 1945-1957

Personal History:

I moved my membership to Elizabeth Poplar Springs Church on Meridian Road. After a length of time I couldn't get there to give service, so I had to move to where I could give service. I've been there ever since.

I've been in the church ever since I was sixteen years old. I ain't stopped yet. I've been going to Sunday School ever since I was eight years old. I got converted at Bethlehem Primitive Baptist Church, first, on down the road. But I got where I couldn't give service there. Any place you belong to, anything you're connected with, if you can't give service there, you ought to leave and get where you can give service. You don't want to do half, do no job. A half done job won't pay off. You want to do a well job. You want to hear that welcome voice saying, "Well done, faithful servant." If God said it, I'll believe it. If God wrote it, I'll live by it. And I'll be 85 the 16th of October (1996).

Teaching is more important than preaching. You want to tell people how to live, tell the people how to care for their neighbors, how to love one another. When you miss that love, you've done missed the whole picture. There's nowhere in that Bible you can read "get over love". I don't care how you're preaching, how smart you are, I don't care what color you been. Christ told you to love one another, as I first loved you. You love one another, that's the greatest commandment. And love your neighbors as yourself. Do under others as you wish them to do unto you.

I worked at Tallahassee Nurseries. Started at a dollar a day. I life school in the second grade and graduated all them kids (his children) from Florida A and M University. I was born right out there at Hayward Hall Plantation by

Bradfordville. That's where I was born and raised, Bradfordville. Out there in that field, there. Hayward Hall owned it at that time, but since then, Maclay bought the Hall Plantation. Then, on down the road, Phipps bought it from Maclay. And that's who has got it now. When Phipps bought Maclay Plantation, I wasn't living there then. I had moved over here (on Hadley Road). I lived on Phipp's place one time, twelve years. Let's see, I've been here thirty-three years, and that's been about thirty-nine years ago (about 1945 to 1957). I put in forty-five years at Tallahassee Nurseries. And I've been there ever since. I'm the oldest hand there. I worked for his (Gene Ellis') dad for a dollar a day.

Phipps Association:

When I worked for the Phipps on the plantation at that time, I was a handyman. I was driving mules, fixing fences, you name it, I done it.

(Did they pay well?)

No, that's where the truth is. No, sixty dollars a month and all like that. And I told them, I said, "I couldn't earn that." I said, "I'm going to have to hunt me a higher bush and a sweeter berry." So, I called up my people who I first started out in life with, when I first got married, at Tallahassee Nurseries. When I first got married, that's where I went. But I left, you know how young folks is. If they can't see no fun they string up their shoes. You know how it is when you are young. So I got out there (on the plantation) and I said, "Now I better go back over yonder. So, I got in touch with them (Tallahassee Nurseries) and they said, "Year, we've been looking for you and I've been there ever since. I've raised all my children working right there.

Family History:

My wife was the mother of eight children, and three of them died.. And all of the others lived, except Louise died here about three years (ago). Something like three years ago, my oldest daughter died.

(What do you remember about living on the Hall Plantation?)

Well, when I was on the Hall Plantation, we were farming. I was plowing with a white steer named Joe. Plowing with one line. If anything would go wrong, I had to throw it over there, you had to be quick, go over there and make him get back where he ought to be. People might say, "I don't know how you could have done that." Well, you'll see, too, after you get to the place where you can't do no better. You don't know what you can do until you have to do it.

My parents were farmers. I was with them, you see. I was born there. They stayed there, oh my goodness, well, they stayed there all of their lives. My mother and father died out there. We (Mr. Hadley and his sisters and brothers) were born on Hayward Hall place. Then later, Mr. Maclay, he bought the place. And my parents were still there. Well, after I grow up, I went and stayed on Maclay Land too, for twelve years. Then I left there and I went to Phipps place and I left Phipps place and I come here. But my parents died there.

(My parents were) Robert Hadley and Josie Hadley. She was a Ford, she was Josie Ford. But her daddy, was Wallace Carr. Some called her Josie Carr and some called her Josie Ford. But Wallace Carr was actually her daddy, by Francina Ford.

(Do you remember any of your ancestors past your mother and father?)

Old man Steve Ford was my great-grandfather. I remember him. That was my mama's grandfather. And old lady Nancy Ford was my great grandmother. That was Francina Ford's mama. They all done growed up out there in Bradfordville. Back in them days, they aint' had no way to go. They'd growed (up) out there on them farms...the people didn't fix no decent houses for them back in them days.

You may think I'm telling something wrong, but I'm going to tell the truth. When I got married, you could see the moon shining through the top of the house. Me and my wife was married sixty-three years. I got married at my wife's parents home on Meridian Road, a place called Kirksey.

(There was a school there called Kirksey?)

Well, yes, and there was a church there called Kirksey Church. The school was right there and the church was over there.

Education:

(When you were a child, what were the education opportunities like? Did you go to school?)

I didn't go much because they didn't give the black people but three months and I had to work part of them. You got the schools eight, nine, ten miles apart. You had to walk.

Then on down, when things were getting a little better, there was a few whites, but they had a better foresight, than the black people. They would tell the black people (that) you don't have to send your children to school. All you do is get on a farm and (get) a steer and a plow and let them make some corn and sweet potatoes and have a milk cow, and kill some hogs - said, all they want to do is make a living. Well, how can I teach this child (pointing to his grandson, Keith Hadley) if I don't got no teaching ahead of me? I can't do it. I have to set an example to this child so he can know what to do as he come along. See, you can't teach what you don't know. And you can't lead where you don't go. So, they said, you didn't need that. There was a few black people could see and they sent their children to school. But it was just a few.

I said, I'm going to try and send mine (children) to school. I went to work and told my children, I said, "Now, you all get an education. I don't have no education, I'll admit it." I said, "Blessed he that acknowledge his faults." I acknowledged I didn't have any. I left school in the second grade. I said, "You all are going to need it. I don't want you to come up like I come up. (I left school) in the second grade. I was going out there to Bradfordville. Bradfordville School. It was the name on it. It was a Leon County School. Just one building, one big room, and that's all you had. And you had to go outdoors and get work to stick in that wood heater. For that whole school. And if you didn't come with some good clothes on, you'd have froze to death. Cause you could look through the wall and hear the wind. You'd better put on some warm clothes. There was about fifty (children in the school). There was a bunch of them, all in one room.

(Do you remember the teacher?)

Yeah, my uncle's wife was one of them, Mary Carr. That was my grand-daddy's daughter-in-law, which was Wallace Carr. Willie Carr was my mama's brother. Willie Carr, Tony Carr, and Bootsie Carr, all of them was my mama's brothers. Mary Carr, she was one of them (Teachers). Another teacher out there, name is Farrell, another teacher out there, name is Parris. I remember them well. They put it on you when you didn't get that lesson.

(Did you live a long way from the school?)

Oh, Lord. Take me an hour. It was about eight miles. You know, living way back out there and going way out here to Bradfordville. Do you know that Sing Store on Thomasville Road? It's a Sing Store sits right there, turn to go on Bannerman Road, sets in that corner there. Well, I had to walk from way over there on Hayward Hall place, I mean, middle of that place, too, to half a mile from where that store is at today. The school was on Bannerman Road. I was called Bradfordville School, as far as I could keep account of it. Nothing in there but blacks.

(Where did the white children go to school?)

They had a school down below us. It was right off from the Sing Store to your right. Sing Store sets there and the road goes between the Sing Store and the school. This school set over there to your right. That where the whites went.

(Do you remember what happened to the school you attended?)

Them people has got houses built out there now. They tore it down. And they built another school, down there going toward Moccasin Gap, called the Rosenwald School. That was a pretty nice school. That was way on down later that they did that. I think the black people built that school. If the whites had anything to do with it, I don't remember. But they called it the Rosenwald School. And that's where mostly black people went then.

(Was that at Lake McBride?)

That's right. Now you hit it. Lake McBride School. See, they tore down that school and (then) named the (new)

school Lake McBride School. But they usually called it Rosenwald School.

(What did you do for fun? When you weren't working, what did you do?)

When I wasn't working? To be honest about it, you just had to sit on the porch or go down in your yard and listen to the birds or whatever, because you ain't had nothing for entertainment.

Family History:

My children, I've got one up there in the University there. He's over a bunch of people, working. Rebecca, she's in West Palm Beach, she's a child counselor. She works at Kennedy. Gloria Ann, she works with Colin Phipps at the TV station, with Colin and Gene Phipps. This other one, he's out here at FCI, he's got a bachelor's degree in agriculture.

Well, Burt, he got graduated after he went down to St. Petersburg. Honeywell sent him to school. Fred, Rebecca, Gloria Ann, Samuel and Wilbur all graduated from Florida A and M University. I've got six children. There was seven of them but one died. Louise. Andrew, I forgot him. Andrew, he went to school, but he didn't go much. He didn't care much about it, couldn't get him to go. The thing about him, he got a good job, and he worked. He always made good money. He's got a nice home, nice car. He's got a real good job. Samuel, he teaches out at Bellevue. He's got a big shop out there where he makes cabinets, too. He's got a master's degree in industrial arts.

The Charltons is first cousin to my wife.

Twentieth of May Celebration:

On the 20th of May we would celebrate. The way I was told, they've got a history of it. Here's what happened. The black people were free, I think in January or February. One or the other of the months. But they didn't realize they was free until the 20th of May. See, the old master wouldn't tell them they was free. But somehow or the other they found it out. And it was the 20th of May. That's why they celebrate the 20th of May. Course, the black people are getting away, they hardly ever do it now. But when I was

growing up - whoooo, I'd go out to the lake and spread out and put all that cake and chicken out there, and pie. That chicken cooked on them fires down in there, that was some good chicken. Eat and beat them drums, some had that good old corn buck, you know. We didn't have no fruit.

They still beat them drums on the 20th of May now. We have a man around here named Eddie Hill, he beats them drums around here so nice. They were regular drums. Like they have at A and M and FSU. Regular drums. Drums sounded good, too. I never did beat none, but I love to see them beat them.

Family History:

(Did any of your elders, or your parents, talk with you about slave times?)

My (great) grandfather used to talk with me about it. My daddy never did. He (my father) used to tell how hard he had to work. He had to do the mostest work and the hardest work and get less money, he'd tell me that. But my (great) grandfather used to tell me about it (slavery). (He) said, if you said you didn't do something, you know you didn't do it, but they're still going to put it on you. Whip you, too, and all like that. Granddaddy used to tell me (that) he had to put cotton down in a basket, Old Man Steve Ford told me that, my great-granddaddy. And put a rock in that basket on top of that cotton. Then he'd take more cotton and stuff it on the sides of that basket, and top of it, so it'd weigh the amount he was supposed to get. Tell you to get a certain amount and if you didn't get a certain amount of cotton, so many pounds of cotton, he (the overseer or ownder) would put you across that barrel with that strop. And what they'd leave you wasn't enough to help you. They got the biggest of it from that strop. He say he did it to save hisself, you got to save yourself. I said, "Well, why did you do it?" He said, "We'd reach down and around, the best we could, and talk to the guard, too, all together, and get out of the way, and then we'll go empty the cotton and kick the rock out. He said, because every day you couldn't get that amount of cotton because some of the cotton was thick and thin. And if the cotton was a lot, then you had a lot, but you had to get it. Old man Steve Ford told me that. He come back along in slavery. He lived (at) a place down there, not too far off from Bradfordville, on Hayward Hall place. Yes sir, he said if

you didn't get that amount of cotton to make what you call that bale, they'd put it to you.

I used to go down there many mornings and get milk in the bucket. That's Nancy Ford and Steve Ford. They had a cow. I never will forget it. IT was clabber milk.

I'm going to tell you the truth, because the Bible's got the answer for everything. I don't see how a person could have the heart to do a human being like that. I don't care what color you are. I just couldn't, I can't see the difference. I've come to myself, I can see according to the Bible. There'll come a time that man will not stand up. A man will be naked against naked. There will be hate against hate. Well, for me to treat you like that, I've got to hate you. 'Cause I love you, I wouldn't do it.

I asked God to send me my wife. And I waited until I got an answer. And when I married her, she wouldn't weigh over 95 pounds at the head limb. She was so little (I met her) down here to Kirksey. A place called Bakertown right down where that school and that church (were). There was people living around there. It was a place, there was a bunch of Bakers lived there and they called that place in there Bakertown. It was a school above Bakertown by that church. Thesalonia Church. The church on Meridian Road they called Thesalonia Church. Now, the school sat on this side, and the church over here. She was going to that school, she could almost jump to the school, because she was raised out there on a plantation, too. She was on Dwight Davis plantation at that time, but Phipps bought all that later. She was born and raised on Dwight Davis plantation and that's where I met her. Never will forget it. One Sunday on that porch, I told her, "I wouldn't fight you, if I fight you, I leave." You don't have to do that. Anything you care for, anything you love, you care for it.

(Are you a minister, do you teach Sunday School?)

Some of it, I was born with a kind of gift for that. I was the Deacon out there (Poplar Springs Church) for fifty-five years. I got converted at an early age, sixteen years old. I never will forget a preacher named G. T. Moore. He told me about getting converted. He said, "You first seek the kingdom of Heaven in its rightgeous(ness)." And, he said, these other things will be added later. I obeyed that. He was a pastor up there, Rev. G. T. Moore. Then after I did

that when I was sixteen years old, when I was seventeen years old, then I begin to pay girls attention. I said, "I'm going out here in the world to court." I said, "I don't want to mess around and get trouble." I said, "Lord, send me a wife, I want me a good wife." I prayed and I prayed and I prayed and I prayed. When he sent her, I recognized her in that hour. And she made me a wonderful wife. We lived like two peas in a one hull. Eva Hadley. She was Eva McGriff before I married her. I knew her people. She come from a family of fine people, if she didn't, I wouldn't have had her.

I'm going to tell you all the truth, some things, I ain't never told what I went through. I ain't never told. I ain't told my wife, I ain't told my children. The only thing saved me are common sense and a still tongue. Or I wouldn't have been here today. But I had to do it to stay here. You know, eighty-five years ago, that's been a long time. Do you know eighty-five years ago, some black folk went through something. I ain't never told it all. I ain't told my wife, I never did tell her. I guess I should have. It was all over at that time, and I should have told her. But I tell, I had a white man to tell me, he tried to get me to do something, and I told him I was the wrong one to do something wrong, I wouldn't do it. So I was walking, and he said, "I'll get my gun to you." So I said, "Well, you'll just have to get it, I suppose, but what you want me to do, and me to tell, I ain't going to do that." I said, "You'll just have to kill me." When he see that I was willing to die, then he figured that was wrong. And I meant that.

I got married early and all I had was 60 cents - and that was give to me. Sixty cents. Honeymoon? How am I going on a honeymoon and me and my wife too poor to stay together. She stayed with her people a year and I stayed with mine a year. I shouldn't of did it, but I done it. You asked for the truth. We put our heads together, and we worked hard, and I tell you, I ain't owe nobody a hand. I ain't being pushed around by white nor black nor brown. Nobody now. I'll tell you where to get off in a heart beat if you get in my way. I went through lots, and I took a lot. But no more.

I worked for Mr. Ellis at Tallahassee Nurseries when he was just getting started. I was looking at that dollar a day. You couldn't get nothing to do. Was it a lot of money? I

reckon to God it was. You could take three dollars and feed your family two weeks. Three dollars. You could buy a pair of shoes for two dollars. You couldn't wear them out hardly.

(Where did you shop, where did you buy your clothes?)

I'd go to town and buy them. He (Mr. Ellis) would take me to town and I'd buy my clothes. The grocery, there was a store down there below Tallahassee Nurseries, I'd come by there and get my groceries and come on home. But if I wanted some clothes, he would take me to town and get me clothes.

(How did your family get things? How did your wife get into town, to get their clothes?)

Their clothes? Well, she'd tell me what she wanted and I'd bring them. I'd bring them. I'd bring them because she ain't no way to get there. I'd bring what she said. If she didn't like it, she had to wear it.

He (Mr. Ellis) carried me to get my clothes when we'd knock off on Saturday. We had to work all day Saturday. Work till Saturday dinner, and I'd say I need to go down and get me a pair of pants. I could get me a pair of pants then for a dollar.

I will never forget it, the man's name was Woodberry. He worked in Lewis State Bank on Monroe Street. I see her sometimes (Mrs. Woodberry) and she says, "Mr. Hadley, me and you will never forget them days. I was the first black man to put money in that bank.

I got the mule and wagon way later. At that time, I didn't have no transportation. Everything I had to do, I had to walk. Walk to work and walk back. Six days a week. To walk to work, I could make it in about an hour, an hour and twenty minutes. When you walk thee, its going to be cool because its going to be night. He (Mr. Ellis) tell you to be there are 7:00 a.m., you were going to be there. When he woke up, I was sitting on his back step. He was a good man, but he sure loved to cuss. "God damn, Burt. You damn sure want to work. You here a little before seven." I say, "Yes, Sir, I'm here." I was on the back step. Now, not the top step, that bottom step.

Long in time when I was born, the back man didn't have no power. He ain't got no power. Quite a few white folks will tell you, black man ain't got no law. White man make the law, he break it. They'll tell you they're making it, if we have to kill you, we'll kill you. There's a place down there on Calhoun Street, there used to be a jail down there. They had a tree down there. A man came from out of town and asked people in Tallahassee where is the place that black folk hang out at. Quite a few of them told him, "Where they hang out at"? He said, "yeah". (They told him) "you go down there by that jail, and look up there and see them limbs up there, and all those clothes hanging up there, because that's where they hang out at. That's where we hang them at." He said, "I mean, where they have fun at." They said, "We ain't have no fun here."

That's just a little bit of it. I tell you I ain't never told it all. And I had to go come around to the back, my wife did too. I've seen the time they hired black police. They had to talk and the white police ride. I see it. If a white man did something, a black man couldn't arrest him. You had to call the white. When they got ready to carry mail back in them days, the white man rode, the black man would have to walk to carry mail. That's why I tell you, you can't go bear hunting with your naked fist.

You've got to use opportunity when you've got it. What I mean, now, if you get a better opportunity, you ought to use it, and use it sensible and use it wise. Now, you take me. I'm uneducated. But I used common sense to get as far as I did. 'Cause education ain't getting me this far. Education didn't help me educate them boys and my daughters. I had to use common sense and the grace of God to get me this far. I had plenty of common sense. See, I didn't give but \$681.07 for this whole place. And I've been offered enough for an acre or two to last me the rest of my life. But see, I got sense enough not to sell it. And I've sowed gross on a \$1,000 an acre, \$500 an acre. Cows, hogs, horses. Now, one thing about it. You don't have to be a fool 'cause you don't go to school. 'Cause it's a lot of educated fools. And there's another man, just got common sense, and he out-do the man will all the education 'cause he (educated man) don't know how to use it. There's a man right here in Quincy, got about five or six busses, some coming to Tallahassee, some going to Chattahoochee. Got men hired, the man's driving the busses got education, and the man can't write his name. But he

got all them busses running. And them people in Quincy say if that black man take his money out that bank, they'll sure miss it. But he got plenty of common sense. And mother wit.

Phipps Association:

(Do you have any relationship with the Phipps family?)

Phipps and them? No, not now. I've been out there some time ago. The Phipps, they wanted to see me and talk with me, they hadn't seen me in a long time. But I go up there every year when they have the people come up and show them on TV. I think around Christmas time I go up there. Me and my granddaughter and my daughter.

Description of House:

(Can you describe the house and the farm you lived on when you were a young boy?)

It was an old house, wooden doors, wooden windows. Hinges on the windows that long (gestures), you'd open the windows and you'd hear them windows crying from here to the road out there. Never would grease them. The windows were solid boards but they had those old big hinges on them. Back in them days, them people building houses for you to stay in, they didn't fix nothing decent for you. As long as you paid that rent, that's all they wanted. Oh, yeah, they (his family) paid rent. They had no choice. They had nothing but themselves. They had no place to go. They ain't had nothing.

(Did the windows have glass in them?)

No, no, ain't had a glass to drink water out of, let alone a glass window. We'd drink out (of) them tin cups. If a hole was in it, you stopped it up and drank right on.

(The house) looked like a barn. Old barn, too. And there weren't nothing but tin on top, nail on a piece of sheeting. And you'd freeze to death. All that cold off that tin coming down on you. Didn't ceil things up for them. You'd better get some quilts and get them fast and have them ready for the winter.

Making Quilts:

My mama made them. They'd go house to house and make quilts. You take those old britches when they get so patchy and get to breaking so bad - and take them old britches and sew them together and make linings. And old pieces of shirts when they get so raggedy and then you couldn't wear them, you'd take them old shirts and piece them together to make quilt lining. If you wen to the gin house, time they gin cotton, all that old waste cotton around the gin house, you'd pick it up and knock the dirt out. You carried a sac to put it in. All around there you could pick up a couple of sacks of that old cotton. And you'd bring it back and take that cotton and dust it out good, and take it and spread it out in the lining and then put another lining on top of that and make them quilts. And when it'd get cold, you wouldn't know because (there'd be) three or four quilts on top of you. Nothing out but your nose.

(How many rooms were in this house, when you were with your parents?)

A little kitchen and two bedrooms. A double chimney, the parents on that side and the children on this side.

(How much did your father pay for rent?)

Well, as far as I know, then he was paying 350 pounds of cotton. That's what you had to pay your rent with. Now, some of those real good farmers, made three or four bales of cotton. What some of them would do, they'd go out in the woods out there, they'd clean the woods up. That crop would grow out there where you'd cleaned up them woods. Watermelons would be that long (gesture), cane, corn, sweet potatoes, peanuts. Some of them would have two or three horses and barns. Some of them was big farmers.

(Did anybody every get put out because they didn't have the rent?)

Yeah, some of them, they'd pull them out. There was just some people wouldn't get up and work and make that crop. So they'd go and stay on somebody else's place. We never did have to be put out. We always made way more than our rent.

They had peanuts. Cane, ground cane and made syrup. Them old horses would pull that sugar mill. We'd kill us four or

five hogs. (Have) two or three cans of lard. You had to raise what you ate, else you died. You may not believe this - I didn't have money to buy a beam to put in my plow. I had to go in the woods and cut down a tree and make me a plow beam. I aint' had nothing to buy it with. I made it, too. Hunt me a fork of a tree. Cut that tree down.

Interviewed:
2849 Hadley Road
Tallahassee, Florida 32308
20, August, 1996

JOHNNY COFIELD
Son of Mary Murray Cofield
And Albert Cofield, Sr.
Tenant Farmers on Ayavalla Plantation

Personal History:

My name is Johnny Cofield. I live at 1721 Hillgate Court. I retired from the Tallahassee Police Department. I was born on Lake Jackson, which is the John Phipps plantation. I grew up there on Lake Jackson then I moved from one place to another one, which is back of Poplar Springs Church. That's still on the John H. Phipps plantation. When I grew up, I worked for Mr. Phipps, gathering hay, during the summer. Then I went to school, there was a little school right there called Cotten. I started Cotten in 1945. The school closed down in 1952. I started at a little school called Macon. I left Macon and I graduated from Lincoln (High School) in 1957.

When I was growing up, I lived on a route. There really wasn't what you'd call a house number at that time. It was a route. We'd pick up our mail on Meridian Road, in front of Mr. Mainor Poppell's. When I was in elementary school, it was one school for all (grades), this was Cotten. I started to work at Miller's Boat Landing, washing out boats. I started there when I was ten years old. I gave me something to do while I was in school.

Education:

(At Cotten), school started in September. I think in that time it was September the 6th. We'd go to school, I think,

it was eight months. My first grade teacher was Miss Emma Jane Douglas. She was a sweet woman. If she found something was going on that ain't right, like why you'd missed school, she'd come by the house and check on you. Why you weren't in school yesterday? If you didn't have a good reason, she took the paddle. During that time we'd leave home for school and stay in the woods all day. Your mom didn't know nothing about this. You'd come back home. It didn't happen too often because you'd start thinking bout those whippings. You had to tell her something, Miss Emma Jane Douglas.

In the second and third grades, she (Miss Douglas) was my teacher. Miss Hilda Garnder, she was my fourth grade teacher. I'll never forget that. She was a sweet person. Miss Emma Jane and Miss Hilda. They was concerned about you.

The (school) building was an old church. They had service in that church every Sunday. A church and a school. One section for the church and back on the end you had your little classes. Everybody was in one room, for school.

We didn't have to pay for lunch way back then. They had free lunches for us. Peanut butter sandwiches and pork and beans, (we) had a lot of pork and beans. I learned later that the school board got together and sent these lunches and these canned goods to different schools to feed the children, because the parents at that time were unable to feed the kids, and send them to school.

We had old books. The names of the books, right now, I can't tell you. But we had all kinds of good books, (or) that we thought was good. We learned later those books came from the white schools, that they had give up. They didn't need them no more, so what they did with them books, they sent them to the black schools, and that's what we had to learn on.

I think it was in the 7th grade that I went to Macon. Miss Williams was my teacher. And Miss Jackson.

Cotten School was off Meridian, off that dirt road, going down to Lake Jackson there. It was off to the right, sitting up on a hill there. Cotton, that was the name of that little settlement during that time. And St. Matthew's Church was there. Old people lived back in there. The

Church was St. Matthew's but the school was Cotton School and St. Matthew's all in one. We went from Sunday School to the same classroom where we went to (regular) school. From Meridian Road you turn off what you call Miller's Landing Road now. You turn to your left, right in front of Mainor Poppell's (Sr's store) and you go about two or three miles and its to the right up there.

Shepherd School. That's the same school, but it changed to Cotton. I'm telling you about the old neighborhood school. Shepherd was later, it replaced Cotton. Shepherd was the old Cotton School, where my sisters and brothers went. There is nothing there, they tore it down. Mr. John H. Phipps gave them another piece of property down on the road, Miller's Landing Road, down the hill from there. The cemetery was up there. My grandmother and all them was buried back there. I don't know whether they dug up the graves or what. Its nonexistent, but those old people was buried right back up in there. Now at St. Matthew's Church there's a little cemetery, so what they (The Phipps Family) did was give them the spot (where St. Matthew's is located) and they took this (the area that once was Cotton-Shepherd). There's nothing there, where the tombstones were. You couldn't get back there. Its Phipps Plantation and they've got no trespassing, you can't get back there.

Macon School is out on Meridian Road. About six or seven miles back towards town. I used to ride my bicycle to that school. That's before busses were picking us up. Before busses, we had to ride bicycles or walk to school. After I moved back of Poplar Springs Church, then I bought me a bicycle.

(To get to Cotton School) Miss Emma Jane used to come by the house. We had to meet her out to the road and then she'd take us to school. If we didn't catch her we had to walk. That was a long way. And we was on time.

I started to Lincoln in 1953. Mr. Gilbert Porter was the principal. He left and Frank Nims was the principal when I graduated in 1957 from Lincoln.

Family History:

My mother, they called Chippie. But Mary Cofield was her name. My daddy was Albert Cofield, Sr. He worked for John H. Phipps. My mother didn't work. The only job I remember

my mother working was Miller's Boat Landing, which was Mrs. Clyde Miller. She used to cook for them, go out there every morning, cook and then come back to the house. (Her maiden name was) Murry. All the Murrays, her dad, they lived over there somewhere. I never did pay attention while I grew up. I was a baby when her dad passed and I don't remember nothing about that, unless she told me something.

I had eight sisters and six brothers. One is dead. There was a lot of us out there. There's a years difference between me and Fred. And the other sisters, about six or seven years.

(Of my father's people) my aunt, which is Martha Ann Williams, Martha Ann Horton. Then I had Nancy Williams, then one they called Patsy. They (Patsy and her husband) passed when I was a little boy. I don't know nothing about the grandparents.

Life on Ayavalla:

They (The Phipps) give my father a place to stay. But you had to farm it and work it. If you keep it clean and farm it, you could stay there free. So that's the reason why we was there. Sometimes you'd have to help him (Mr. Phipps) gather his crop.

(My father had) a little one-horse farm, we called it that. Potatoes and a little cotton, had to plant cotton, peas and butter beans. One-horse, that means if you had one horse or a mule you could take care of it with one horse. During that time there wasn't no "garden". There was a place where you just planted stuff and gathered it. A garden is a real small place, but we had this one-horse farm and we had everything on it. We ate off that farm. We had hogs, cows, we had two horses. Milk cow, the cow named Daisy. Just a regular cow. She was white with black spots. She give a lot of milk. Sometimes it was my job (to milk), sometimes it was my mom. We had to feed the cows every evening. I think at one point we had four or five cows. We had to go get them in the evening time, you can't come home until you get them up, if it takes until 10 o'clock at night. We used them for milk cows. You didn't have no beef back then. Pork. Hogs to kill. It was too expensive - beef - during that time.

Butter Churning:

We made butter out of milk. The way you make butter, you put some sweet milk in a container, then you set it up and let it get sour and the cream comes to the top. My mom had an old beater and keep beating the cream and milk together and after while the butter comes to the top. That's how we did the butter. This was a daily thing. Milk don't sit around. When it gets sour, it gets sour. We had an icebox. There was no refrigerator, it was an icebox, where the iceman come by and leave ice. We put that butter in the ice box and it'd keep.

Before we had an icebox, I remember the iceman'd come by. My dad had a hole out there in the yard, on the side of the yard, and he'd get sawdust and put that ice and that sawdust (in the hole) and cover it up and it'd keep. That's where we kept the stuff, with the ice. Regular sawdust.

She (Mary Cofield) sold butter beans and peas. She might have had some butter. But most likely, there was one or two white people that used to come by and get butter. Names, I don't' know, I didn't pay attention at that time. She'd give (sell) it to them.

Once a year my dad killed hogs and we had pork. My dad took care of that part (the killing). I don't think I could have done it. He hit them in the head, stabbed them, cut their throats. That's the way life was during that time. He had to do what he had to do. The part of shooting them in the head - that's what you called hog brains, we ate that stuff.

Description of Houses:

The first house was right off Lake Jackson. You could walk right down the hill and go fishing. I was born down there. It had about three rooms. All the kids sleep in the same room and you had a kitchen in the middle with an iron stove, where you cooked. And mama and daddy and some of the kids slept in (the other room) there was so many of them at that time. But when I came along there wasn't that many children. All of the children were about gone. It was a board house. You know about a board window, where you close it at night, shut it and latch it from the inside. No screen. You just open it up in the day time and let the light come in. You didn't have no electricity back then, so light from the outside lighted the house up. We

used lamps at night. It was too hot to use lamps in the daytime. When you opened those big windows up, you could see everything in the house.

I remember one time it started raining and we were sitting in the house and all of the sudden the water started running in. We had to get buckets and set them in the middle of the floor and gather the water. Sometimes we drank that water, the rain water. Because if you catch just water, you won't have to go down to what you called the running water, which is a branch, is what we called it. Tote water back to the house and take baths. We'd wash with that water. No plumbing. We had an outdoor toilet. It sit off from the house, it looked like a little box.

This picture right here, this is my dad. If you look there is a toilet back there. You see the clothes hanging there. The clothes on the line. This is where I grew up, back of Poplar Springs Church. And this is the front of the house. My dad's just standing in the yard.

This house was on the Phipps plantation, back of Poplar Springs Church. The second house. It was a little old house, three rooms - you could make anything out of them. Then you had a little section for a kitchen, right in the middle, you'd come in there and go to the kitchen (drawing imaginary plan on the table top). Around here a fire place, back there a fire place. This is where my dad used to sit. Everything was in one. It wasn't like it is now. Everybody's got a room now. (Then) everybody was just sleeping together.

(Looking at the photo; is this a swing on the porch?) No, that's not a swing, it's a little place where you hang a bucket or something. I think that's what it is.

Life on Ayavalla:

The only fun we had was when we used to go to school. Telling like it is, there was not what you call fun. But we'd get to see the other people. You were so far apart. You didn't have neighbors. The closest person to us during that time (living at Poplar Springs) was old man Mainor Poppell. That's the closest person to that church, which is Poplar Springs Church. If you didn't go to church on Sunday, you didn't see nobody. You'd just go to school and back in the home. After we moved up to this house (Poplar

Springs), which is on the road, I started to Macon School. I went there for two or three years, then they closed that down.

(My father) was a strict man, he was real strict. He didn't want you to say nothing to Mama. People talk back now to their mom, to their parents. We couldn't talk back to Mom. If we had something to say, (say it to him), but you don't say nothing to Mama. He was pretty quiet. But when he'd tell you to do something, he ain't going to tell you but one time. I think he was a good man. I was crazy about him. Because (of) his teaching. He taught me to treat everybody right. He never talked about the way it is and segregation - what he can't do and what he couldn't do. He did the best he could. I think about that all the time now. That's the reason why I've kept a straight face. I look down the road, I look for the future and I know things are going to be better. He told us that. Things can be better. Sometimes he took things, he never explained nothing to us, what he was going through. He didn't look back, he didn't want us to know about (it). He did a good job with me, I think. I don't mistrust people. He was a church man. All of them was in the church, my Mama and Daddy. If they didn't go to church, they'd send you to Sunday School. You had to go to Sunday School. That's the only learning to know about Christ during that time. My dad couldn't read. My mother could read. What he learned to do, mom taught him. She went to the 7th grade, I think, my mother did. During that time if you'd get a 7th grade education you had a lot. She was real sharp.

My dad, I think he did a good job. Some of them might say he could have had more, but I don't look at it like that. I look at it that he did the best thing for us. He worked out, when he'd get all the crop together, then he went to work for what you call the W.P.A. That was doing the streets around town. I used to look for him coming home, because he'd save me a little something in his lunch bucket that Mama had fixed for him. Every morning Mama had his lunch bucket reading. You couldn't buy nothing because you didn't have no money. He'd leave me something in that bucket and I'd be glad to get that biscuit or whatever it was.

Meals:

(The kinds of food we had) mostly it was neck bones, bacon and biscuits - sandwiches. We didn't have no white bread back then. Just all the biscuits that Mama cooked. The breakfast was probably neck bones, pig feet, sometimes we ate that for breakfast. We didn't have no grits then. Grits, that was expensive, you couldn't have that. There'd be just bacon and cornbread. Milk and bread, which we did. Mama'd cook some hoe cake - some cornbread - and then you'd have milk, we'd use the cow milk, for milk and bread. Milk and bread, that's what you'd have for breakfast. Sometimes for dinner, too. It didn't make no difference, they wanted you to eat.

Grist Mill:

We took the corn to the mill over on Thomasville Road. Martin Mill, where you grind your corn up and make meal. Old Man Martin. My daddy used to take it over there in the wagon and they'd grind it for him and make meal and bring it on back to the house. Sometimes, he'd take some of it for the cost for the man that did the grinding.

Family History:

My wife is Freddie Mae Cofield. I've been married for 39 years. She was a Williams. We have four kids. Johnny Carl, Jr. My next is Sharon Elaine and Cedric and then Natasha. That's my baby, there's about seven or eight years difference (from the other three). Carl sells insurance, Sharon drives a school bus for Leon County school Board, and Cedric's in the Marine Corps, he's staff sergeant. He's been there about 16 years. Natasha works for a doctor down at CHP, she's a receptionist down there. I have nine or ten grandchildren. All of them have their own place, that's the blessing.

My father passed in 1969. When he passed he was living on Dunn Street with my sister. They had left the plantation. They left there in 1961, they moved to town. They was getting old. I got married in 1958, I was the only one home. So they thought it was dangerous for them. My brother and sister wanted them there. My mother was blind, she went fully blind at 60. She needed somebody to help her. My sister moved them in with her. My mother died in 1981. She lived a long time. She never did work for the Phipps. She didn't hardly work out. She worked for Mr. Clyde Miller. She cooked for them.

Memories of Clyde Miller:

Mr. Clyde Miller used to buy us shoes way back then. He'd bring us to town and put shoes on our feet. He'd say we were supposed to have some shoes. During that time, we didn't have shoes. There wasn't no such thing as a pair in the fall. It was the year around. The shoes we wore to school, we wore to church. We didn't get a new pair of shoes for school. We got a pair if we needed them. Sometimes we had to have to fix the soles. You'd take some wire and jerk through there and make holes and cut the wire off and put your soles up and continue to wear them. That's the way it was.

They named the road after him - Miller's Landing. That's where I worked. I'd wash the boats down there. I was ten. I started at ten. I remember one time this guy came from Cairo, I forget his name. I was a little boy, I was about eleven. I unloaded his car and put his motor on his boat. During that time we didn't - we just put it on the boat, then they (the boat owners) would tighten it up. I set it back there, I thought he was going to tighten it on the boat - this particular white male. After he went out and lost his motor, he came back to kill me. Well, he say he's going to kill me. And Mr. Clyde Miller took over. He told him, "I'm going to kill you if you hurt him." He said, "You know this is a little boy, you should have tightened you own motor." Mr. Miller paid him. He said, "Listen, I'm going to pay you for this motor." At the time, I don't know how much it was. He said, "I'm going to pay you for it, don't you never come back down here. If you come back down here, I'm going to kill you." That's the way he told it.

Sometimes I look back, and think about segregation, integration. Back then, I was integrated. Me and Mr. Miller. Mr. Miller was a white man. I used to sleep in the same room with him before he got married. He really cared about us. About two years ago, three years ago, he got killed up in Pavo, Georgia. So, last year I took some flowers and put them on his grave. I didn't know he was dead. I was driving up there looking for him. They said he got killed, and his brother got killed, in a car wreck.

That's unusual for a white man during that time. He didn't look at you as a black person in some ways. He looked at you as a person. If you worked, he paid you. He didn't

work us for nothing, now. He paid us. I think about a dollar a day, what ever it was. And if you didn't feel like going home at night after you'd stopped working (he'd say) "Come on, let's go to bed." He put me in my bed right next to his. He had two beds there. During that time, I could sleep there. He was a sweet person to be a white man during that time. I didn't know no better. I didn't know what segregation was during that time. I thought everybody was supposed to act like that.

(I first noticed segregation) when I started going to high school, and Macon. Macon was about the first part. He (Mr. Miller) taught us. He was telling us these things, but at this particular time, I didn't know what he mean. What to look out for. The way it was. But if you didn't make no contact with these particular people, you'd never know. Because we went to school with blacks, we didn't what you call - mingle, we didn't be with whites. You couldn't go to restaurants. The dime store was the only place uptown where the black people went. They had a place for the whites over here, the blacks eat over here. I though that was real life. But when you started reading, you know things were different, and you had problems.

He (Mr. Miller) would tell us what to look for. But you couldn't see it because you didn't know what he mean. He'd just tell you up front. He got married and his wife, after he got married, his wife was called Velma, didn't want us in the house no more. About two years later he divorced her. I don't know - I thought about us. He said it wasn't, but he never did tell anything.

He took us to his parents house in Pavo, Georgia. His mother, I forgot her first name, she fixed us a little plate off to the side, for us to eat. We couldn't set up to the table. There was a big round table where in the middle you'd pass the food. He told his mama, "Listen, if they can't eat at the table, I won't eat." His mama looked at him and said, "What's wrong with you, boy?" I don't know what she thought. He said, "I'm not going to eat nothing." He said, "I want Johnny and Freddie right here to the table with us." And he didn't, either. He came over to the table where we were sitting at. I didn't pay it no attention. I was too small. I thought it was a way of life. We never made contact with anybody.

This is what I think, after I grew up. He had been in the military. He used to always show me his bunk buddy in the military, which was a black guy. It was unusual. At this particular time, you'd never know whites. But all his surroundings, and his friends, were black. He just didn't like the way white people treat black people. So, I think, he was going to make a difference. He was going to show people that its not supposed to be like that. But he couldn't get out there and fight. Because at that time, to fight for a black, they might burn (his) house down. But he did what he thought was the best for us. (He lived his life) different from his brother. He drank a lot. He used to go on vacation and left me in charge. I never stole a penny from him. I was running the boat landing and everything I made, I give it to him. I didn't have to write nothing down, and say, "I rent this boat and rent that boat." Every boat had a number. I'd rent and he took my word for it. I was about fourteen.

Liife at Ayavalla:

The only time I worked for Phipps was gathering hay, when they cut hay. We had to help him get up the hay, which was to feed his cows, I think. John H. Phipps. That's the old man. And you'd gather hay and go on and do what you'd want to do. Get his crop up. Because he was up north. The game wardens on that plantation were, I think, Buddy Poppell, and Sam Richardson, (he) was a black man, and Will Carter. Old Man Will Carter. They'd look after the farm and gather everything. You couldn't hunt after a certain time on that plantation. You couldn't hunt dove, quail, no time. That was his. But coon, opossum, foxes and things, you'd shoot them.

They (The Phipps family) didn't control the lake. Game and Freshwater Fish Commission controlled the lake, Lake Jackson. But he (John Phipps) owned everything around the lake. In order to get to the lake, you'd have to come through his farm. You couldn't go down in there. You could go to Miller's boat landing. Over by Cotton Church we used to go down there. Down there by our house, Old Man John Austin used to be down there. Unless you'd be trespassing, (those were the only access points to the lake).

Mr. John Austin, he was down at the store there, near Lake Jackson. He owned some property down there. I think John

H. Phipps swapped him from one section to the other one. But I didn't know too much about that, I was a little boy at that time. Herbert Austin married my sister. Reba Austin and Herbert Lee Austin.

We had dogs (on the plantation). Just regular street dogs. We had a dog called Bullet, and Black Boy. That's the names we had. Them dogs was real smart.

I didn't do it (duck hunting). I'd be too small at that time. I used to be with him (his father). Mama would clean them and cook them. You couldn't kill deer at that time, because John H. Phipps wouldn't allow nobody to kill the deer on his plantation. You had these jack-legged game wardens out there. They were Mr. Phipp's (employees). He had to control the interest to the lake. When you'd get out on the lake, you'd have game wardens out there, too.

Food Preservation:

(Did your mother put up preserves?)

Preserves. Yes, she did. Jars. She'd put them cap tops that'd go on, once a year you'd go buy those. They (the jars) had those rubber seals that'd go around there (the tops). She'd preserve figs, apples, pears, and berries. She'd preserve them so we could eat them year round. Blackberries grew up on the farm. Pears, we had a pear tree. The figs, you could get all that stuff right to the house there.

Outbuildings:

We had a crib. That's where you kept the corn and all the little stuff. Feed the mule and the horse. That's about the only thing (building). It's not as big as a barn, a barn is a big one (building). We had a crib. We kept corn and stuff out there. Like when it dried up, instead of throwing that stuff away, we'd keep the stuff and feed it to the horses year around. We had a place out there called the stable, where the horses go in and eat. They'd get out of the weather in that little stable. They had little stalls. Each one of those horses knew their stall. If they'd go in the wrong one, some of them would kick until you'd get out of there. We had cribs at both places (where the family lived on the Phipps Plantation). You'd have

dried corn. About every two or three weeks, I'd say about a month, you'd get that corn ground for meal.

Laundry Day:

(My mother) washed with a tub and a wash board. You'd boil your clothes in a black pot. And when you'd boil them, you'd put your dirty clothes in there and she'd build a fire up under a big old black pot. She'd keep a stick and keep jiggling, you'd be surprised at how clean they got in that boiling water. Then she'd take them out of there and put them in a big old wash tube. Then she'd get a rub board. So what she'd do is wash them clothes until they get clean and then she'd rinse them out in some water. You had to have clean water. Then we'd wring them clothes out and put them in the sun to dry. A clothes line. You can see in that picture there the clothes hanging on that line. Papa's clothes, it looks like some of his long sleeves or underwear that he wore.

We didn't have too many clothes. You had about three pants and three shirts. If you want to wear something clean that next day, you have to wash it that evening, before the sun go down, and you might be able to wear it. Sometimes you wore clothes that were wet - but they was clean.

(Did you know Burt Hadley when you lived at Poplar Springs?)

Burt Hadley, I was out there (at the same time he was). He was on the plantation. But he moved out there, somewhere across the river or somewhere, back of Lake Iamonia. Burt Hadley was a strong church man. He was a deacon. If he saw you do something, he was strict. All those people were strict. Everybody around out there was mom and dad at that time. He'd tear you up and your mama was going to tear you up when you get home. All them old people - it wasn't like it is now. (Then) you had to respect everybody and not some. He'd come to the house and say, "Mama, Johnny did this," you're going to get a beating. They'd take his word for it. And nine times out of ten, Johnny did just what he'd said. But looking back, those standards that was set back then was good. Real good. You look back, you appreciate all that stuff they was telling me. My dad never told me to do nothing wrong. Never. He'd say, "If I was you, I wouldn't do that, that's wrong." He didn't tell you not to do it, so if you could read between the lines,

you'd better not do it. Because if he said, "Don't do it," what ever the consequences, you're going to get it. That's the way it was back then.

Interviewed: 1721 Hillgate Court
Tallahassee, Florida 32308
21 August 1996

CLIPPER CHARLTON

Ayavalla Plantation Cook for 48 years

MATTIE CHARLTON

Ayavalla Plantation Maid for 49 years

Personal/Family History:

Clipper Charlton

My name is Clipper Charlton. I grew up on Dr. Gwynn's plantation and years later, John H. Phipps bought the plantation. I worked for them (The Phipps Family) about forty-eight years, as a cook. I retired in 1989, and moved off the plantation, out on Carrington Place.

My parent's names were Locke Charlton and Florence Charlton. Locke Charlton and Florence Charlton were the parents of twelve children, seven boys and five girls.

Mattie Charlton:

I'm Mattie Charlton. I used to live on Dr. Gwynn's plantation and now it is owned by the John H. Phipps plantation. My parents were Locke Charlton and Florence Charlton. I worked for John H. Phipps about forty-nine years. I worked as a maid, doing the laundry and keeping up the laundry and things like that.

(Did your parents also work for the Phipps?)

No, they didn't work for the Phipps. Daddy was a superintendent over at Dr. Gwynn's plantation. John H. Phipps bought the plantation, so he did a little work for them, but not very much. But my brother, Ephraim, worked for the Phipps a long time. He used to be a gardener, then he came in the house and worked a few years, before he passed.

Clipper Charlton:

My oldest brother, his name was Palmer Charlton. My next oldest brother was Elver Charlton, my third oldest brother was Thomas Charlton. The next brother was George Charlton. The next brother was Ephraim Charlton. Then Locke Charlton and Lloyd Charlton. My oldest sister was Lorene Charlton, my next oldest sister was Minnie Charlton. I come next (Clipper). Then Florence Charlton, and then Mattie Charlton.

Mattie Charlton:

I'm the knee baby. Lloyd is the baby.

Clipper Charlton:

My oldest brother, I didn't see too much of him. When I got pretty good sized, he left home. He went to Sanford and he stayed down there until his death. The other ones stayed around.

(What was your mother's maiden name?)

Dickey.

(Do you remember your grandparents?)

I remember my grandmother and I remember my granddaddy. I remember my daddy's daddy and I remember my mama's mama. My mama's mama was named Julia.

(Julia Dickey?)

I don't really know, they said her maiden name was Brown, but when I knew her, she was a Herring. I don't remember if they told me my granddaddy's name or not. I can remember a little about my grandmother, but I can't place my granddaddy.

(Can you describe your lives when you were children on Dr. Gwynn's plantation?)

When we were on Dr. Gwynn's plantation we were farming. We had a farm and we worked as farmers before we started working for the Phipps. I started working for the Phipps family at the age of 20. From then on I worked (for them). (When) first I went out (to the plantation), I was helping

the teacher, and then after that, I started cooking. I was the main cook.

(Where did you live when you worked for the Phipps'?)

On the Phipps Plantation. A few years I lived in the main house, and years later they bought us a trailer and we moved out of the main house, not far from the big house, though.

(How old are you?)

I celebrated my 77th birthday, February 26, 1996. Well, I don't do too much getting around since I've been moved down here, but it's nice and quiet. My grandson, Clifford Charlton, he bought it, or is buying this house and he wanted us to move in it. So that's why we are here. He graduated from Gainesville (University of Florida) and he played (football) for the Cleveland Browns. He lives in a little place near Orlando, Apopka. We (Mattie and Clipper) together decorated the house.

Plantation Life:

Clipper Charlton:

(Can you describe the house you lived in on the Gwynn Plantation when you were a child?)

It was a board house with a tin top. It had four bedrooms, and a kitchen, but we didn't have a dining room, we just had a kitchen. The kitchen was a little house built off from the house. We drew water out of a well. We had outside bathrooms.

Mattie Charlton:

I worked on the plantation. Chopping cotton and hoeing corn, feeding the hogs and pulling weeds for the hogs. We used to tie the cows out on the plantation and we had to get in the cows. At the age of sixteen I started working for the Phipps. We (she and Clipper) lived together, in the main house. After then, they bought us a trailer and we lived in the trailer together.

Clipper Charlton:

We didn't have a real school, they had school in the church. So we went to school in the church, St. Paul Church. I stopped school when I was eighteen years old. (I completed) 8th grade. I believe children were going to school then about six months, maybe not quite that many. I really can't tell you. We went to school in the morning. In the afternoon, we'd come home, we'd have to go to work in the field, cotton field or corn field. I believe school started around 8:00 a.m. and it usually turned out around 3:00 p.m. in the afternoon. (Some of the work was done before school). Milk the cows, feed the hogs, and someone would be home cooking breakfast and then you'd get straight for school.

(For breakfast we had) mostly a little fried meat and syrup. Bread. I never did want to take lunch. I didn't want to take lunch to school.

(You went all day without eating?)

Right.

(Why was that?)

I didn't have nothing (to take) but a little piece of meat and bread.

(You said a little piece of meat for breakfast; was that fatback?)

Well, we mostly raised our hogs and cows and we had a lot of milk and chickens. We had a nice garden. Beans, peas, onions, collard greens, turnip greens and rutabagas mostly. Ice potatoes, and squash. White potatoes, but we used to call them ice potatoes.

They (family members) didn't sell so many (vegetables) but we had a garden and these family people were mostly in the same community. We'd give them some and they'd give us some. Whatever you have, you give me some of yours, I'll give you some of mine. Peanuts and potatoes.

Mattie Charlton:

Before I stopped school the government, or whosoever it was, would furnish the schools some lunch. It wasn't too

much, but it was something (that) they'd prepare for the children for their lunch.

(Who were some of the other families who were living in the area when you were sharing garden crops?)

Clipper Charlton:

The Carters, the Richardsons, the Dickeys, the Browns. I think that's about it.

We had a smoke house. After they'd kill the hogs, you'd pack them down in salt, let them stay until a certain time. I don't know how many days. Then they'd take them in and wash the meat off, and they had a smoke house to hang it up. You'd build a fire under there and make mostly smoke, didn't let it blaze up. Just mostly smoke. And it tasted real good, too. (The smokehouse) was just a little house. Boards, mostly out of boards. It wasn't as big as this kitchen, but the roof on it wasn't quite so high (as the ceiling) but they would have it for the meat to hang down, about like that (Two-three feet from the ground) so the smoke could really get to it. (The kitchen area in the Charlton home is about 10 - 12 feet, with 10 foot ceilings, so the smokehouse Clipper Charlton is describing was somewhat smaller). You would keep it there all day, but I don't know how many days they'd smoke it. But it'd get a good brown on it.

When the hens would start setting, and have little biddies, then we'd put her in a coop. (the rest of the time) they just ran out.

(Didn't the opossums and raccoons get a lot of them?)

Well, some of them. Not too many, it wasn't too bad.

(What kind of chickens did you have?) Rhode Islands. And guinea hens, turkeys. They took the hen eggs to market. But usually they didn't take the turkey eggs. We mostly ate the guinea eggs unless one set and saved enough to sell. We marketed in town. Mostly they sold eggs to the stores. I can't think of the names (of the stores).

(When you were children, living with your parents, what other animals did you have besides poultry?)

We had cows, horses, and once upon a time we had goats. And cats. We had practically everything we needed. The horses, that's what they used for plowing corn, cotton and stuff.

(What did you do with the goats? Were they used for meat?)

Yes, I've eaten some. But it's been so long. It tasted all right.

Education:

Clipper Charlton:

(Was the school and church, St. Paul, right there on the plantation?)

Right. We always went to that church for school. The church was up there by the cemetery, St. Paul's cemetery.

(Do your people still bury in St. Paul's cemetery?)

Uh - huh (yes).

(Who were some of your teachers at St. Paul?)

My first teacher, I forget what his name was exactly. Buy my second teacher, as far as I can remember, was Katie Gaines. She lived over at a place called Blockers. Katie Gaines, and George Gaines, was her husband. She used to drive a buggy there to school.

(How did you get to school?)

Walked. It wasn't too overly far, about as far as Old Bainbridge Road (from their present house). Do you know this Winn Dixie (Store) right over yonder? It was about something like that, we lived about that distance to the school (less than half a mile).

I know all of them (children in the family) went to school at St. Paul Church. But I don't know if my oldest brother went or not. They said when they first started going to school they had to go where Willie Mae (Carter) came from - over to Shepherd. But after then, they started teaching over to our side. I never did go to Cotton (school). The first teacher I remember was Hernan or Herdon or something,

that was when I first started to school. I was somewhere around five or six I imagine.

Mattie Charlton:

Five. I was five when I started to school.

Clipper Charlton:

We always had a Christmas program at the school. I don't know (remember) my speeches, though (for the programs). They'd give out little gifties. They had someone playing Santa Claus. Santa Claus would give to the children, scare them half to death, some of them.

Plantation Life:

Clipper Charlton:

(Are the two of you, and Ephraim, the only Charltons who worked for the Phipps family?)

Lloyd worked a while for them, too. He and Ephraim worked on the yard for a long time.

Mattie Charlton:

They drove tractors on the plantation. They (the Phipps) had a big farm, corn, soybeans, tung oil trees.

Clipper Charlton:

(Did anyone you know work in the tung groves?)
I worked in them awhile. Most what we did, they had them (the trees) so many feet apart, they wasn't close together, so the tractor did most of the work, and then what we did, we'd work around the tree. I don't think I ever helped them pick up the tung oils (nuts). They used to pick them up in buckets and give you so much a bucket to pick up a bucket full.

(Did you work in the spring, cultivating, to get the weeds from under the trees?)

Right.

Mattie Charlton:

I don't think I did (work in the tung groves). I can't remember.

Clipper Charlton:

(Having been a cook, did you keep any of your recipes, did you have any favorites?)

No, not very much.

(What kind of meals did you do for the Phipps?)

Not too fancy. I didn't do too many fancy dishes. To tell the truth, I couldn't put them together right now. I worked awhile (there) before I started cooking. Which I didn't want to do. We had James Tookes. That was the cook when I first started working there. I sure didn't (want to cook). I think I never done so good, but they'd say is was all right. Mrs. Phipps would do the planning of the meals. I'd just try to cook whatever she said. But I sure didn't want to do that. But they'd insist.

(Did Mrs. Phipps plan all three meals for each day?)

Most usually. Just a common breakfast. Cereal, bacon and eggs and grits. A light lunch and a heavy supper. For lunch we'd have cold meats or some sort of egg dish or some sort of macaroni dish.

(How did you spend your time when you weren't preparing the meals?)

I could do some things for myself. Wash and iron, I'd do that for myself. A lot of times, I'd be trying to get the other part of the meal together.

Mattie Charlton:

(My main job) was doing the laundry. Luberta Smith worked there when I first started, then she had her first child. I first started going upstairs a little bit, then after she (Mrs. Smith) got disabled to go upstairs, I went up there. Then after she had the baby, then I mostly did nursing for her baby. Then after the baby got big enough to do for itself, then I started doing laundry. I had to wash and iron, keep up her (Mrs. Phipps') clothes, special. When

she wore something I had to go over them for spots, if there were any wrinkles I had to press them out.

Clipper Charlton:

(What were the Phipps like to work for?)

Lovely. Everybody like them as far as I know. They weren't no hard people to get along with. We had pets, not when we were living in the house with them, but we had some when we were in the trailer. We had a dog, and I believe that's about all. Because the chickens were left at Mama's house. She had chickens and things, but we just had a dog after we moved in the trailer together.

(Other people who lived on the plantation said that they weren't allowed to have dogs or cats because Mr. Phipps was afraid they would eat his quail.)

Yes. Well, he did say, time and time, he didn't want them to have none. Because so many of them (the people living there) had so many dogs, they'd stray across the plantation and things like that. And he was scared they're going to eat up the birds and the eggs, but we always had a dog.

EDUCATION:

Clipper Charlton:

(When you finished school, did you have some type of special program?)

Well, I guess you would say so. They'd give the children some school work to do for that special day. I'd guess we'd call it a little program. They'd have something special and at the school closing, the parents would come out. It was a little school. At the school closing day, the parents brought a few little baskets with dinner in it. Then the parents and the children all ate together.

Mattie Charlton:

When I graduated, I marched to the Old Lincoln School. I didn't go to school there, but that's where I marched, after I finished St. Pauls. There were some more schools there (to march) but I don't know what schools. They had a speaker but I don't know who it was. I don't what year it

was (that I graduated), but I know I was sixteen years old. I was born in 1927. Leola Carter, I marched along with her. That was Matthew Carter's sister. She was going to Cotton to school. After graduation, I was best lady when she married. I used my same dress what I marched in. (Maid of Honor?). Right.

Clipper Charlton:

(You mentioned baskets. Did people make their baskets or did they buy them?)

They bought the baskets, but they put the food in them. There used to be some straw-like baskets and they usually be about like that, and about that high (gestures with hands). Some of them (Baskets) had a lid over them, some of them (people) would put a towel or something over the food after they put them in the baskets. I don't know what become of ours, the one Mama had. Of course, that's been so, so many years. She bought the baskets, she didn't make them. People were making some, but she bought hers because she never learned how to make them.

RECREATION:

Clipper Charlton:

(Matthew and Willie Mae Carter remember going to a park where there was dancing, and ball games, down on the Lake. Do you have memories of things like that?)

Well, I imagine that's her granddaddy's place. He had a place he used. His place was about the most comfortable place we ever went. There might have been a few more, but that's about the only place we ever went on the Lake, Willie Mae's granddaddy's place. (His name was) Johnny Rollins.

(Was it like a club house or community center?)

Well, yes. It wasn't too big, either. It was out on the Lake, there was an open field out there, so that's where they played ball.

(Was there a 20th of May celebration that you went to?)

Yes. Sometimes they'd let us go - my daddy and mother. Sometimes just a few of the family people would get together and have a little one (Celebration), but after we got a little larger, we'd just cook a little something at home, and the children would want to go and be around the place that the Rollins had. Most of them went there, so they stopped having anymore, a little celebration in the family.

(Did anybody ever tell you why you had this day?)

Yes. They said it was something about the world war and something about slavery. Now, we used to have May Day at the school. We called it May Day and teachers would put up a tall pole and put crepe paper, different colors, all the way around the children would go round and plait the May Pole.

(Was that done on May 20th or May 1st?)

I don't know which one it was. I know they'd have a May Day and I don't know which day it was. We'd have a good time that day. They had some food at the school. The parents would bring food at the school that day and they'd have lunch. They'd have different games and things, playing ring play, we called it. We'd all get in a ring and sing, or make a run or two with your partner.

(Sort of like a square dance?)

Right, something like that. Swing your partner.

(How often did you get to town when you were children?)

When I was a child, not very often. Every once in a while, like if they'd want to buy me a dress or some shoes or something like that, they'd take me to town. But not just for pleasure, until I got grown. About three times a year. When I got big enough, my second oldest brother, and the third oldest brother, they could drive. They had a car. I've never been in one a wagon. I rode to what they call the gin house, I guess that's the right name - you know after you pick the cotton and carry it and sell it, I got a chance to ride on the back of the truck on the top of the cotton.

(Where was the gin house?)

They going to, what they call that place, was it Lamont?
Some little place.

Mattie Charlton:

In the 40's, a long time ago, they had a gin house
downtown.

SEWING AND QUILTING:

Clipper Charlton:

(When you were children did you learn to sew? Did you
mother make your clothes?)

No, my mother didn't sew very much. She would mend them.
One of the cousins, Bessie Richardson, she used to do
sewing, she made a few things for some of the children.

Mattie Charlton:

You (Clipper) made some of my little dresses. She done a
little sewing. She just doesn't want to say it.

(Did you quilt?)

Clipper Charlton:

Well, they used to quilt, but I never been bothered with
quilting.

Mattie Charlton:

Mama did.

Clipper Charlton:

Mama made them. Matthew's mother and the Richardson's
mothers. There'd probably be about four of them, and each
one would have a corner. That's how they made the quilt.
They'd finish the quilt and put it together, then they'd
quilt it. There'd be four of them, usually. Matthew's
mama, Jim Richardson's mama, and my mother, those four
would usually make quilts together. Seems like they'd be
enjoying it.

Interviewed:

3708 Carrington Place
Tallahassee, Florida, 32303
April 24, 1996

ANGES CHARLTON

Ayavalla Plantation Cook and Maid
Wife of Ephraim Charlton
Ayavalla Plantation Gardener and Butler

Family History::

Agnes Charlton is my name. My age is 71. I was born July 22, 1925. My parents were Otha Golden and Frances Golden. Born in Leon County. I have one sister living. There were six of us, but all of us are passed, gone, except myself and my baby sister and brother. There's three of us living. The oldest one was named Otha Golden. I'm the second child, my names Agnes Charlton. My sister is Georgeanna Smith. My baby brother is Willie Golden, and the second I mean, the knee baby boy, was David Golden.

Before I moved here (to her present home), I used to live up here on the road, on highway 27. Before I moved there, I used to live on the Phipps Plantation. I was born on the Phipps Plantation, well, the Phipps didn't own it, but they bought the place after I was born. I don't know his real (full) name, but Mr. Fowler owned it before Mr. Phipps bought. On this side over here, Dr. Gwynn owned that.

Education:

When we went to school we walked from home out to Kirksey. After you finished out there, you went to Lincoln High School. Go down the Meridian Road (to Kirksey). That's where I went to school. After I finished out there, I went to Lincoln High School (When I left Kirksey I had completed) the 9th grade. Mr. Porter (was the principal at Lincoln). We stayed with some people downtown. My aunt, Elisabeth Wilson. I can't think of the number. She was living on Dover Street. I had two aunts who lived on Dover Street.

(The teachers who were at Kirksey School) Eunice Carter was one. Mrs. Allen, I don't know her first name. And my Aunt used to teach at Kirksey, Elizabeth. Mrs. Emma Booker.

Life on Ayavalla:

(During the time you lived on the Phipps Plantation, what did you do?)

I worked there for a little while, not long, maybe two or three years. Just maid work. I cooked sometimes when the other cook wanted to be off.

I was born on the Fowler place. They bought all that land, the Phipps. I was living on his property then, when I was born.

(Did your parents work for Mr. Fowler?)

My mother did.

(What did she do?)

Washed.

Was your house on their property?)

Yes. It was just a house. It was a wood house. After we moved on the Phipps place they built us a little block house. Me and my husband. My mother and father lived where Mr. Fowler had the place, first, and then Mr. Phipps bought it, so they lived on both of them. They lived in a house on both of them. It was just an ordinary house, though.

(Did it have fireplaces?)

Yes, It had double fireplaces.

(How many rooms did it have?)

Four rooms. We had a wood stove. (My mother) she cooked on that. (Outside) we had somewhere to put your corn and stuff. A crib, they called it. That's the only outside house we had. We might have had a place where you put sweet potatoes. I don't know. They used to plant a lot of sweet potatoes during that time. They had to have somewhere to put them.

(Do you remember your parents keeping a garden?)

Yes, we had a garden. We used to farm.

(Did you sell the vegetables?)

We mostly just canned them or ate them. We had some of everything. Greens, peas, butter beans, okra, you name it, they had it.

(How old were you when you married Ephraim Charlton? How did you meet him?)

I'll tell you the truth, I don't hardly know now. Sometime before I went to Lincoln School, Mr. Matthew used to give socials and things out there. He was a teacher and he would give socials on Saturday night, and Mama'd take us out there.

(What did you do at the socials?)

We danced.

(Was there food?)

No, we didn't have no food.

(Wen did you marry?)

I don't know, but I've got the certificate, I think, somewhere, if I could find it.

(When you got married, was he (Ephraim) already working for the Phipps?)

No.

(What was he doing?)

I really don't know. He was working to FSU, in the dining hall, someway.

(When did he go to work for the Phipps?)

Let's see. My oldest child was born in 1945 - he worked there in the 50's, I think.

(Is that when you moved onto to the property?)

Well, when we first moved out there, they didn't build us a house, we just moved out there. But after we stayed there awhile they built the house for us.

(Where did you live before you had your own house?)

I was downtown, going to school.

(When you moved to the Phipps property, before your house was built, where did you live?)

Well, I lived not far from the church up there. That was in an old house.

(Did that look like the house you grew up in?)

Yes.

(How long did Mr. Charlton work for the Phipps?)

About fifty years.

(What were some of the jobs he had?)

Well, he first went there and he drove a tractor. He helped build the house out there. And after, they worked on the tractors awhile, breaking land. He was working on the yard. Then from the yard into the house. . He worked in the house as a butler.

(Did he like that job?)

Yes, I think so. I think he did.

(Mainor Poppell told about a time that Mr. Phipps got so angry with some of his workers that he blew up a dam and flooded Meridian Road. Do you remember any stories like those about the plantation?)

No, I don't remember, but it weren't nothing for him to get mad. He'd get mad in a minute.

(Did he stay mad?)

No, he'd cool off. Mrs. Phipps would say, "He barks a bad bark, but he won't bite." She would tell us that all the time when he was upset about something.

(Were your children born on the property?)

All of them was born on the property up there.

(Where did you send them to school?)

Lincoln High. They went to Griffin (School) some of them. As they grew up, they first went to John G. Riley (School) on the hill up there, and then they left there and went to middle school, Griffin, and then to Lincoln.

(Didn't they go to school out in the country?)

At that time they had buses (to town).

(What was life like on Sunday afternoons, on the plantation?)

We'd go to church, some Sundays. At St. Paul. Other Sundays, we'd come downtown to see people.

(How did you get to town?)

My husband had a car.

(Matthew Carter told us that he had a new car every year. Was your husband like that?)

No, he wasn't the same.

(Is Matthew Carter related to you?)

Matthew is related to my husband, not me. Matthew's daddy, and Ephraim's mother, was brother and sister.

Interviewed:
Tallahassee, Florida
August 14, 1996

MAINOR S. POPPEL, JR.
Employee of Ayavalla Plantation, 1936, to present and
WILMA POPPEL

Personal History:

Mainor Poppell

I'm Mainor Poppell. (I was born in) 1916. I'll be 80 years old in August. Then, all of the land here, most of it was tenant farmers. All on the plantation were tenant farmers. They'd farm a little bit and of course, they were supposed to pay a little rent, most of them. But nobody asked them for the rent. If they paid it, all right, if they didn't, it was all right. Just let it go. The plantation wasn't interested in that little thing anyway. They maintained that plantation, it was for quail. Of course, the tenant farmers, with little patches all around, it was for quail.

(Do you know what the farmers raised?)

Mostly cotton was the money crop then. Of course, they grew corn to feed a few hogs and they'd have a cow or two for milk and butter. They'd have a garden, grow all kinds of vegetables, like collards, turnips, peas, beans and so forth. They'd have a few sweet potatoes.

(Do you remember specifically about the Phipps Plantation and any of the people who were here?)

They was there ever since the Phipps have been here. They was quite a few families. I guess we can start right over here, there was quite a few Williams, there was several families of Williams. The Charlton family and Landers.

Wilma Poppell

What was the one that got drowned?

Mainor Poppell

That was Lester Richardson. And Carter, Grant Carter.

(Did all of these people trade at your father's store?)

Back then, a long time ago, they all came out to the little old country store. He had a blacksmith shop and they'd bring their plows and tools there for him to repair.

(Exactly where was the store?)

About a half a mile right up this road. Do you know that two-story house up there, that's where he lived at. That shop there, my brother-in-law runs a lawn mower place now.

(Where Miller's Landing Road "T's" into Meridian Road?)

Yes. It was mostly just a grocery store. Mostly lard, sugar, coffee, salt and pepper, stuff like that. Most all of the necessities.

(Was the blacksmith shop separate from the store?)

It was all in the same building. My father was the blacksmith. He was blacksmith, store keeper, mechanic, a jack-of-all-trades.

(Did both African-Americans and plantations whites trade at the store?)

There wasn't any whites out here then, we was the only white family out here. You've heard of black families in a white neighborhood, well, we were a white family in a black neighborhood.

(How did it come that your family settled here?)

When my dad and mother got married, he moved off over here, up there north at a place called Blockers and he put in a little store there and a cotton gin. Blacksmith shop there, too.

Wilma Poppell:

He was over in Gadsden County (before moving to Leon County).

Mainor Poppell:

He stayed there two or three years and then moved down here to Tallahassee on what they called the Quincy Bicycle Road. Do you know where the college president's house is *Current day Florida State University president's house) right on top of that hill there? That's where we lived. My father had 18 acres, there was a good sized wood frame house. He didn't stay there very long. About two years is as long as he stayed there. Then he sold that and we moved out here.

(Did he have a mill?)

Yes, he had a grist mill, a corn mill.

Wilma Poppell:

He had a saw mill, too.

Mainor Poppell:

Yeah. He had the grist mill the whole time he was out here. The saw mill, that was in the latter years. I think he started that in 1930-something, I don't remember the exact year, probably 32 or 33. He kept it on up to about the early 40's or the late 30's.

Wilma Poppell:

It was in the latter part of the 30's.

Mainor Poppell:

Then he sold it.

(What year did he move to this property?)

In 1920. He had the grist mill right after he moved out here. The grist mill, he sold that.

(Who did he sell that to?)

Really and true, I don't know, I don't remember. I know he sold the saw mill to, they called him Buddy Peterson. I don't know his first name, but Buddy Peterson. He lived out on the Jacksonville Highway. The Peterson family was an old logging family. He bought the saw mill and I don't know who bought the grist mill. They moved them (the mills).

(Did everyone who lived in this neighborhood carry their grain to your father for grinding?)

Right. For home use. Every Saturday was grinding day. They'd all bring their corn and get it ground for meal, and the next week's grits.

Wilma Poppell:

Didn't he make some to feed the little chickens with?

Mainor Poppell:

Oh, that was just kind of cracked up a little bit. They'd have some cracked a little coarser and they'd sift that and use it for the crits. Back in the 20's and early 30's, that was back during the Depression. There wasn't no money much, floating around. A dollar was a lot of money. Anybody had a hundred dollars, he was a rich person. The average wage then was about forty or fifty cents a day. If you had a job at all.

Plantation Work and Ways:

When the Phipps came in here, they came in 1936, I believe, an average wage, around Gadsden County and around over in there, they paid about fifty, sixty cents a day. Mr. Phipps would start off at a dollar and a half a day. About three times what the rest were paying. Some of them got so upset with that, that they come over and talked to him about it. Because he was paying so much, they thought the rest of them would have to raise up and pay that, too.

(Did he demand a lot of the people who worked for him because he paid high wages?)

Wilma Poppell:

No.

Mainor Poppell:

Started to work later over there. Then, most of the people around about here, where you worked at, you worked from daylight to dark, or sunup to sundown. But generally with him, he started to work about 7:30 or 8:00 and knocked off at 5:00 pm. You didn't work but about half the hours they were working in other places.

(Did the people who came into the store tell you stories about their hunting or farming or hog killings?)

We'd hear all kinds of stories. You could hear a lot of stories about the Phipps, I reckon. After the Phipps came in here, about everything around here was centered on the Phipps, more or less. They was the only ones doing

anything. He did first one thing and another and finally he started in the cow business and farming himself.

Personal History:

Wilma Poppell:

(Wilma, where are you from?)

Gadsden County. I was a Poppell and married a Poppell. We've been married fifty-eight years.

Mainor Poppell:

In 1938.

Wilma Poppell:

We moved here in 1948.

Mainor Poppell:

We lived in different houses on the plantation.

Wilma Poppell:

We lived over in the yard on the plantation, first year. This (Current residence) was part of the plantation. This was Colin's place. When he sold the part out here to the City, this was reserved out. This is ours till out dying day. A lifetime estate. I worked for Joyce and Colin when their children were little. The oldest son, we kept him about half of the time. This was home, and where his mother and dad lived, that was the house.

Mainor Poppell:

I started to work for them in 1936. I worked for them a couple of years before we got married.

(What did you do for them?)

General everything. General handyman, I guess you'd call it. Then afterwards, they put in a hay dehydrator - it didn't work out - I operated that while it was running. Maintenance. I worked for his father, Mr. J. H.'s father,

I worked for him some, too, up in New York. He used to have race horses and I'd haul the horses from place to place.

Wilma Poppell:

Child care is what I did. I would go over and stay at Mrs. Phipps when they'd be gone. With the nurses. When Gene and his wife would be gone, I'd go over and stay with the maids so they wouldn't be there at night by themselves. Finally, I went with Joyce and Colin. If they were gone, I'd go over there and stay or gather them (the children) to the house.

SOUTH DAVIS PARCEL:

(Are you familiar with this parcel that is now the park?)

Wilma Poppell:

Oh yeah, that used to be our hog farm.

Mainor Poppell:

We had a little hog farm here on our own. Oh, good land, time passes so fast. We've been out of that twenty years or longer. Its been a number of years ago. They put a soccer field out here, and that's been twenty years ago, when Colin had a soccer field out here. I retired, I say retired, I still go over to the plantation a couple of days a week. Fifteen years ago, (when they put the soccer field in), would have been about 1980. It must have been about 1980.

(When did you start your hog farm?)

It was about 1954 or 1955, somewhere along in there when we started dabbling with hogs. It was just small.

Wilma Poppell:

We had as many as 200 hogs out there. If you've got to tend to them, it's a lot. We had a big old male, I rode him like a horse. I'd go down on the back side of the field, I'd get tired and I'd call him. He'd come down and I'd jump on him and I'd ride him back to the house.

Mainor Poppell:

(How many acres did your hog farm take in?)

About ten or twelve acres.

(Do you know what took place on the rest of the parcel? Were there crops, was it in timber?)

Wilma Poppell:

It was just woods, back to the lake.

Mainor Poppell:

Yes.

(Was there ever any pasture? Did they run any cattle in there?)

We did put cattle in there in the winter. On South Davis, we ran cattle on the western part in the winter. This Meridian Plantation here belonged to Davis. The Davis family sold it to some relation, Beadle, Griscom Beadle was his name. Then Mr. Phipps bought it from them, and sold part of it to a Shaw, I think. And they kept the rest of it. And of course, we got to calling it South Davis, over there. It's like down the road here - there used to be a white barn up there about forty or fifty years ago. We still call that White Barn, the barn has been gone for fifty years. Like Junius Hill's place over there. We know what we're talking about, but nobody else would.

(Did Junius Hill live on the South Davis parcel?)

No, he lived, a long time ago, on the old Mayberry place. I remember when Mr. Mayberry lived there. He was white. Mayberry sold it to Kinberg. Then Kinberg died and Mrs. Kinberg married a Martin and they sold it to Mr. Phipps.

(Did the house become a tenant house? Was Junius Hill a tenant of the Phipps?)

Yes.

Wilma Poppell:

He (Junius Hill) had a mule and wagon he drove to town. The woman who worked for me would go with him. He'd stop and pick her up and she'd go to town with him.

(What was her name?)

Mary Cofield.

SOUTH DAVIS FAMILIES:

Mainor Poppell:

After the Phipps got it, there wasn't but one family that lived on it, and that was Walter Walker. He was just a kind of happy-go-lucky fellow.

Wilma Poppell:

There was somebody that lived below us, where we lived in the first little house we lived in.

Mainor Poppell:

That wasn't on the South Davis, though.

Wilma Poppell:

No, it was over on the other side of the road. Over there on the same side that Junius Hill lived on.

Mainor Poppell:

Well, we're talking about the South Davis parcel now. Walter Walker was the only one who lived over in there, and he was a kind of happy-go-lucky kind of fellow, he'd work a day or two here or yonder.

(Did he work for the Phipps?)

I believe he did work for the Phipps a little bit. Not much.

(Did a family named Thompson live on part of the parcel?)

Thompson, that was an old, old fellow, a long time ago. In fact, it started off, old man Pope, see he was a white man and I don't know whether he ever married the black woman or

not, but anyway, they lived together and had several children. They he gave them that land out on the lake out there and eventually they traded it to Mr. Phipps for some out there at the club.

(Was that the Thompson family?)

Yes, the Thompson family.

(So as far as you know, Walter Walker is the only person who lived on South Davis?)

Yeah.

(Do you know what time period that was?)

Well, it would have been from the time the Phipps got it, right on until he died, about fifteen or twenty years ago. He must have died about 1975 or 1980, somewhere in there. He was getting pretty old, too.

PLANTATION FAMILIES:

(What was the name of the family who lived across from you?)

Wilma Poppell:

The ones that lived down there in that two story house. They lived back in yonder. We lived up on the hill. Douglas.

Mainor Poppell:

It wasn't no two-story house. It was just an old house that he lived in at that time. Rollie Douglas.

Wilma Poppell:

Yes, because his wife got sick one night and come up to our house and we got up and went and carried her to the doctor, way in the night.

(Were they farmers on the Phipps Plantation?)

Mainor Poppell:

Yeah, they were tenants, too.

(Are there any descendants of these people still living?)

Wilma Poppell:

Well, they all have moved into town.

Mainor Poppell:

All that ain't dead. All of the older ones are all passed away, and some of the children, the children are like me now, they're getting pretty old, too, most of them. Ephraim Charlton, he was one of the Charltons, he worked for the Phipps for years and years. He was a yard man for years and finally the butler for a number of years. Then he retired and now he's dead. Grant Carter, he worked for years there. He had cancer and died. Eluster Richardson, he got drowned, he had retired. Jack Smith, he was an old butler, he had cancer, also. That's when Ephraim started butlering, then.

(Are any of their wives still living?)

Grant Carter's wire is still living, but she's in a nursing home.

(What is her name?)

Wilma Poppell:

Annie, isn't it Annie?

Mainor Poppell:

No, it isn't Annie. Oh, I never can call it. Lester's (Eluster Richardson) wife, she's still alive, she lives with her daughter in town.

Wilma Poppell:

Jack Smith's wife is still living.

Mainor Poppell:

Yes, her name is Luberta. She lives on Colorado Street.

Wilma Poppell:

What was his name that lived up there in Blockers?

Mainor Poppell:

Robert Brown. He worked for years, then he retired and he's dead now, too.

(Do you know who Luberta Smith's people were? Who her father was?)

No, I don't, I don't know who her father was. But I know Jack Smith, his father lived on what would have been, well, it was farm ground, it was Phipps, Gabe Smith, years ago. That belonged to Lapsley then. Then Davis, and then Phipps. That was a long, long time ago. Jack Smith, he had kinfolks, I never did know them too well. I know Jack real good. Me and him were good friends.

(Can you describe the houses that the people lived in and what their farms looked like?)

Well, they was mostly just rough houses, then. Maybe two or three, or about three or four rooms, just roughed in more or less. Didn't have any ceiling or anything, no plumbing, no nothing back then. None of them had it back then. That was the way of life back then, so nobody missed it. You don't miss anything you never had. Most of them, they got their water out of a spring or creek that was nearby.

(Who built the houses?)

The plantation would get some fellow to rough them up. I know a long time ago, when I was real small, some of these women's clubs around Tallahassee - Tallahassee was real small then - they go all upset about these people getting water out of a creek and getting water out of a spring and all that. Impure water, they called it. So, they came around and got samples and had it analyzed and it analyzed purer than the city water did at that time. A good running creek, unless there's something pouring into it to pollute it, ain't no purer water you can get than that. Running water purifies itself every few feet anyway. They didn't know that and didn't realize it until they come out. It was purer than the water they were drinking.

(Did people have wells?)

No. There was one or two wells. James Landers, there was a well at his house.

Wilma Poppell:

There was another family that lived over there, back of us.

Mainor Poppell:

That was Napoleon Williams that lived over there, back of us.

Wilma Poppell:

The one that lived back down, in behind us, and his made me two or three cakes. Remember she had a cow and she'd churn and make the butter. She made me two or three cakes.

Mainor Poppell:

Cofield?

Wilma Poppell:

Yeah, Albert. No.

Mainor Poppell:

No, that wasn't Albert. That was George Cofield.

Wilma Poppell:

And his wife, Mary.

Mainor Poppell:

No, his wife wasn't named Mary. Albert's wife was named Mary.

Wilma Poppell:

His wife was named Mary, Too.

MEMORIES OF MARY COFIELD (MRS. ALBERT COFIELD, SR.)

(Who went to town with Junius Hill?)

Mary Cofield. One time I was sick. She worked for me here, after we moved here. She hadn't seen me, so she went into town that morning, and she said she told him, "Now, when you get to Mr. Poppell's driveway I want you to stop. I've got to go check on my lady." So she come to see about me, and I was in bed. She says, "Well, I've got to get in that kitchen and get your dinner fixed." So she came in here and fixed dinner for him and the two children. She cleaned up the kitchen and then he took her home.

Mainor Poppell:

She called our children, her children. We had a jeep at the time. My son got to where he could drive the jeep, and him and the daughter, they'd go over there and get her.

Wilma Poppell

They loved that woman, and she loved them. I was working for the state, over at Killearn Gardens, and he was traveling for Mr. J. S. On Sunday, when I had to go to work, I'd let them take me and then they'd come back to the house. They were very good children. They didn't ramble or nothing. They came back and stayed right at this house. So that afternoon, they were going to surprise me and have dinner ready when they come to pick me up. They went out there and got them two chickens, two fryers, and killed them. They couldn't get them picked. They picked and they picked, and they couldn't get them picked. Bobby said to his sister, "Betty Ann, let's go over and get Mary. She'll come help us." She (Mary) said she'll come help us. She (Mary) said she seen them coming, said she was sitting on the porch, her and Albert. She said, "Something's gone wrong. I see Bobby and Betty Ann coming." She said she met them out at the car. She said, "What's going on, children." They said, "Mary, can you come go with us to the house. We want to surprise mother with dinner tonight and we can't get our chickens cleaned. She said, "Let me get my hat." She went and got her hat, she come and dressed those chickens, she had it all cooked and ready to set on the table when they come to pick me up. She called them her children. Says, "Where's my children."

Betty Ann and Bobby both married. There's eleven weeks between our two grandchildren. Mary says, "I want you to

bring those girls and let me see them. I can't see them, but I'll feel of them."

Mainor Poppell:

She went blind.

Wilma Poppell:

She says, "Now Betty Ann, you're going to have a little boy." Sure enough, she did. So I told Bobby, "We're going to take Franny over and let (Mary Cofield) diagnose her". And Mary says, "you're going to have a little boy." And she did. Bless her heart, she couldn't go to town, couldn't do nothing. But she sent to town, by somebody, and bough a dozen bird's eye diapers for each of them. She said, "Now this is for my babies." We'd taken them over put them in her lap and let her hold them. She loved that more than anything in the world.

Mainor Poppell:

Bobby and Betty Ann, as long as she lived, every time they had a dinner, or (would) go anywhere to dinner, they'd always pick a platter and go take it to Mary.

(Did she still live out here?)

No, she lived in town. She'd moved in town and was living with one of her daughters because she was blind and couldn't get around, and her husband had died.

(Where was her house on the plantation relative to your house here?)

Wilma Poppell

Along up the road, in behind the church up yonder.

(The Poplar Springs Church?)

Yeah, over back in there.

Mainor Poppell:

That old house, its gone now. All of the houses, just about, around on the plantation, are gone now.

(Albert died before she died?)

Yes, she died too. She would have been over one hundred years old if she was still living.

Wilma Poppell:

She had seventeen children.

Mainor Poppell:

Not that many.

Wilma Poppell:

That is exactly the words she told me.

Mainor Poppell:

I think about thirteen.

MARY COFIELD'S HOUSE:

(What did Mary's house look like?)

Wilma Poppell:

Just a quaint little house. She had got in there and papered it. She could have that much fire in the fireplace and it stayed as warm as toast.

Mainor Poppell:

Newspaper and one thing and another. Made it air tight. It stayed warm.

(Was it two rooms?)

Yes.

(Did she cook in the fireplace?)

Wilma Poppell:

No, she cooked on her stove in the kitchen. A Wood stove.

Mainor Poppell:

One room was her kitchen and dining room, another room was her living room and bedroom.

Wilma Poppell:

I went over there many an evening, when it would be cold, and go in and sit with her, to sit there by her fire. I loved the fire.

(Where was the chimney?)

In the middle of the house.

Mainor Poppell:

What we called a stacked chimney. You'd have a fireplace on each side, and have a fireplace in two rooms.

(Were there a lot of other houses around like hers? The two rooms with a middle chimney?)

Wilma Poppell:

I didn't go in the other people's houses, like I went into Mary's. But I'm sure they wasn't much bigger because they just didn't have that much area around them. Two to three rooms.

(Did they have porches?)

Yes.

EDUCATION:

(What did the children do? Where did they go to school?)

Wilma Poppell:

I think it was right down here, at Macon, where the school was. Its been gone for years and years. Its right where that church is down there. The school house was in the back. They just moved the school house last year. They've taken it to some where to make something else out of it. I'm pretty sure they went to Macon School down here.

(Where did your children go to school?)

Mine? They went into town.

(How did they get there?)

On the bus. Mine didn't stand by the road, he (bus driver) would blow (the horn) when he came over the hill and they'd go from the house down there. And if they were going down to the road, they'd drive the car down there and sit there in the car until the bus come.

Honey, where would Mary's children have went to school? At Macon?

Mainor Poppell:

Mary Cofield?

Wilma Poppell:

Yes.

Mainor Poppell:

There was a school here called Cotton.

Wilma Poppell:

Oh, that's right. There was one in yonder.

Mainor Poppell:

Back between the Lake. Down Miller's Landing Road. Area over there, they called it Cotton. I don't know why they called it that. There was a church in there, an old church. They built the church down beside the road now. But the church used to be back up there in the woods.

(Is that still called Cotton Church or does it have another name?)

They call it St. Matthew's now.

(Is that where the Carters go to church?)

Everybody around there. Carter, Williams, Landers, and everybody else.

(What about Shepherd School? Was there another school called Shepherd Schoo in the community?)

Not between here and town. Macon. Then there was one down there off Highway 12.

Wilma Poppell:

There was one right up yonder, Archipond (Orchard Pond) Road. There was a school there where that house is, setting up there. I can't remember the name of it. The hunters used to hunt in up around that school.

(How long did the children go to school then, the Cofield kids and others?)

Mainor Poppell:

The schools then, about 6th or 7th grade was about as high as they went out in the country. Then the ones that could go to town, a few went to town and went to high school.

Wilma Poppell:

She's (Mary Cofield) got one son that's just retired from the police force. Johnny Cofield. That was Mary's son.

Mainor Poppell:

If you'd mention us to him, he'd remember.

(Are any of her other children living in Tallahassee?)

They're scattered everywhere. We've lost track of them. We never was really close to the children. Only Inky, the oldest girl, and Johnny.

(Did they go to local schools?)

Yeah, they went to these local schools.

Wilma Poppell:

When the Phipps first came down here they built on what they all Brill's Point. That old house is gone, its been torn down. They lived in that house and we lived over the hump of the hill on the other side, right there in the yard. Then, we moved from there over to a little log house, over on the other side of the yard.

Mainor Poppell:

We moved from there to a log house up on the river, it was an old camp. It was real nice, that log house up on the river.

Wilma Poppell:

Beautiful little home.

(On the river?)

On Orchard Pond Road.

(Are any of those houses still there?)

Mainor Poppell:

No, they're all gone.

(When did you move to this house on Meridian Road?)

Wilma Poppell:

In 1948.

(All of the families you were talking about, the Cofields, Walter Walker, were they all living here in 1948?)

Um-hmm (yes).

(You said they weren't really tenant farmers because they worked?)

Mainor Poppell:

Walter wasn't at all. The rest of them, they were tenant farmers back years past. Grant Carter, he worked for the Phipps. Lester Richardson, he worked for the Phipps. Salter, he worked for the Phipps.

Their parents were tenant farmers. Well, they'd (The Phipps) never make anybody move. You could live out here as long as you wanted to, you know. If you wanted to stay in the house, you could stay there. Some of them moved away.

Of course, the older ones died. The Phipps built houses for the ones that was working for them to live in.

CEMETERIES:

(Where were the people who lived in this community buried? Do you know where the cemeteries are?)

Some of them were buried over there where the church was, in the middle of the land, there's a cemetery there. Some of them came out and buried there. On up in years, when the got to having cemeteries around town there, down at what they call Southside, one or two other around there.

Of course, they are kept up. Then there's Memory Gardens and first one place and another around. They all bury in them, now.

(Now hey are buried in these places, but earlier, were they buried in little plots or by the church?)

Yeah, little country cemetery. Some of those country cemeteries you can't even hardly tell where they were at. Very few of them put up any kind of permanent marker. Put up a wooden marker and it would rot away, and they'd never put anything else.

GOING TO TOWN:

(You mentioned driving a mule and wagon. Is that how most people got around?)

Back in the 30's and early 40's, yeah. The road then, it was just a dirt road. I have walked from (here) to town and not seen a soul.

(when you went into town with the mule and wagon, was there a place you went to?)

You know where the City Hall is at now? That used to be where they parked their mules and wagons. They called it Rascal Yard. I don't know, they'd get to drinking and trade horses and mules, that's why its named Rascal Yard.

(What about Buzzard Roost? Was there another one across the street?)

No, that was the place there is. It was a big area then. Room for everybody's mules and wagons there. Everybody was good country people. They'd go to town and get them a pint of moonshine.

MOONSHINE:

(Where were the moonshiners? Were there any here?)

We had a few moonshiners around. Everywhere just about then. I never did mess with moonshine so I don't know too much about it. You'd hear some stories about some old big-time moonshiner that used to be up in the London, Georgia area. He was a Collins. You'd hear quite a few stories about him.

I know they tell about a time there was a Revenue Man, they used to call him Pistol Pete. He went around in a horse and buggy or horseback. Collins was the kind of fellow, nobody messed with him or his family. But Pete got him a search warrant to go back down there because they said he had a couple of whiskey stills back there on the river. Had him a search warrant and he come up there, walking around in front of Mr. Collins. Mr. Collins was setting up there on the porch and he said, "Mr. Collins, I've got a paper here that says I can go back here and search your place." He (Mr. Collins) said, "Yup, let me see it." He got it and he looked at it and he said, "Yup, yup, yup. But, I don't see no word on here that says anything about you coming out."

There was one (moonshiner) lived over here on Lake Jackson. What they called, I don't know what they called that big building, the Moose Lodge, or something, right across from the liquor store on Lake Jackson, just before you get to the truck route.

Wilma Poppell:

That used to be the opera house.

Mainor Poppell:

Yes. Well, anyway, it was a long time ago there was a little store and all there. And over the hill, across up there, was a big two story house. This family lived in it. He was a bootlegger. Everybody liked him. Back then, that

was in the late 20's, if anybody'd get sick, he'd have the doctor to come out and doctor them, they needed to go to the hospital he'd send them to the hospital and pay the hospital bill, if anybody died he paid the funeral expenses and everything, around in the whole community.

(Was he white or black?)

He was white.

(He took everybody in the community, white or black, under his wing?)

Yeah, and he took care of them.

(What was his name?)

Well, he probably wouldn't want me to tell.

(Is he still living?)

Well, some of his children are and they're pretty respectable families now.

(But he was taking care of families?)

Oh yeah. He'd buy groceries and go around to the houses and unload the groceries.

Wilma Poppell:

They (his children) should be proud of him, shouldn't they?

Mainor Poppell:

But he was a big-time bootlegger. He hauled moonshine all over North Florida and Georgia, Alabama, and there. He was a big-timer. He had a couple of sons and they'd go to town every Monday morning and buy a new car. Each one of them bought a new automobile every Monday morning.

(What did they do with the "old" ones?)

Traded in for whatever they could get for them. They'd be pretty well used up in a week's time.

MEDICAL CARE:

(Who doctored sick people then?)

We didn't have many doctors then. I know you've heard of Dr. Campbell. A. O. Campbell. He was a real good doctor. At that time he was one of the most noted doctors in the south. He and Dr. Foote up there at A and M College. He was a black doctor, too. I remember I had a Dr. Ausley. That was the only white doctor I knew, Dr. Ausley. There wasn't too many white doctors around Tallahassee then.

(Did Dr. Foote and Dr. Campbell come out here to doctor?)

Oh yeah, they'd go around. A long time ago, they came out in a horse and buggy. Then, finally got a few people around who got old T-Model Fords and somebody would bring them out or they got one of their own and they'd come in it. Then, most of the doctors went to the house, made house calls.

Wilma Poppell:

Then he'd go back with two, three chickens, a bunch of eggs, that's the way the people paid him.

Mainor Poppell:

I know the old Johnson Sanitarium, they called it, Johnson Hospital, right off of Gadsden Street. That was the first hospital, they called it Johnson's slaughter house, about everybody that went there died. Back then, people thought if you went to the doctor you'd die, so a lot of times people would wait till they were so far gone there wasn't anything they were able to do for them.

(What about childbirth? You mentioned Mary Cofield loving babies so much. Was she a midwife?)

Wilma Poppell:

No.

(Were there any midwives among the families here?)

Mainor Poppell:

Yeah, they had a midwife that lived over there, she was a Williams. She delivered all of the babies all around here.

(So, the women didn't call doctors, they used her instead?)

She delivered most all of the white babies around about, too. She's been dead for years. Most all babies were delivered by midwives. I was born with a midwife.

(Were you born in Gadsden County?)

No, I was born in Leon County, what they call Blockers Settlement up here.

PLANTATION LIFE:

(Tell me more about the farms. Did they have gardens?)

Oh yeah, they all had a garden. That was a necessity then, a garden.

(Did they have other buildings, like barns, or smokehouses?)

They'd have a little old shed or barn or some small place that they'd use for a smokehouse to keep the meat. Of course, they'd all grow a little patch of cane, make a little syrup. A potato patch, grow some potatoes. They'd plant peas and butterbeans, save them, eat a few in the winter, dried beans. Really, the same thing you go to town now and buy, dried beans and dried peas, that same thing.

But as far as living, most people lived, as far as eating, they just about always had plenty to eat. Just (that) nobody had no money, didn't have maybe very good clothes to wear and didn't have no money. Cotton didn't bring 'bout three or four cents a pound, three, four, five cents a pound. By the time they made a bale of cotton, a bale of cotton would bring twenty-five to thirty dollars, if that much. A couple of bales of cotton, by the time they bought everybody an outfit of clothes, that money was gone.

IN TOWN:

Clothes were cheap then. I know you won't believe this, but I have gone to town, when I was young, fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, eighteen years old. I'd have a twenty dollar bill - didn't get very many. I could buy a suit, get two pair of pants with the suit, a shirt, a tie and a pair

of shoes, back then you had to have a hat, a hat and everything else, and still have a little change left over.

(What store did you buy your shoes from?)

There was a fellow called Sam Robbins down there. Everybody traded with Sam Robbins. Then there was two or three other stores around there, one or two other Jews.

(Did the Jewish people in town have most of the stores?)

The dry goods stores. That's where the country people mostly traded. Hoffman (?) Brothers was there at that time, too. A long time ago, years ago. And that's where the most higher class whites went to, places like that but poorer class couldn't afford it.

(Do you remember a cigar factory being downtown?)

Yeah, a packing house and everything. I believe there's some kind of lighting place in there. McGowan's. At one time that was an old cigar place. (He is referring to the Wahnish Cigar Factory and Tobacco Warehouse)

(Did you go in there?)

Not while they were doing their tobacco and all, but I had friends that grew tobacco around here. Over here, where Timberlane Road goes out, that used to be a big tobacco arm out in there, on this side of the road (north). At Market Square there used to be two or three big barns right where they cured the tobacco in. Shade tobacco.

RACE RELATIONS:

(Do you think race relations were better then, in the 1920's and 1930's? Did people live more easily with one another? Is there any difference now?)

I had never heard of race until I got grown. I played with blacks, as children. They'd come over there (to his father's house and store) and we'd play and choose up sides and me and my bother and one or two of my sisters, we'd be on teams with the black children, playing. Of course, the schools were separated. I went to school, there was nothing else but whites, but when I got home there was nothing but

blacks around. I played with them and we all got along good, we ate together and did everything else.

(You never questioned that you went to one school and they went to another school?)

That's the way it was.

Wilma Poppell:

I know over at Concord (School, in Gadsden County), there was an elderly lady, well she wasn't real old. She and her husband, they adopted this little black girl. She was pretty as a doll. She had long hair and they'd plait it, it'd be in great big plaits.

Mainor Poppell:

They'd dress her up. They were proud of her.

Wilma Poppell:

They brought her up to Concord School, that was all white. I'm telling you, talk about people coming, they came. They told them that she wasn't going to that school, there was a black school on down the road and if they wanted her to go, that's where she could go. I got so mad about it, I wanted her to go, because I wanted to play with her. There was a lot like us, but you didn't overrule the older people.

(What do you think the Phipp's attitude toward the black people who lived on their property was? The first Phipps people who moved here?)

The Phipps were racial or anything like that. They don't make no distinction between black and white, or anything like that. Of course, they are higher up in society and there are blacks and whites down a little lower in society. As far as the Phipps, they are the only Yankees I ever worked for, but you couldn't find any better people in the world to work for, the Phipps.

Interviewed:

4500 North Meridian Road

Tallahassee, FL 32312

May 22, 1996

COLIN S. PHIPPS

Owner, Meridian Meadows

Son of Elinor Klapp-Phipps and

John H. Phipps

PERSONAL HISTORY:

I am Colin Srinagar Phipps; Srinagar, nice name. It was a joke. My name should have been Shaffer, but I was conceived in the capital of Kashmir, India, so it was Srinagar.

HISTORY OF USE OF SOUTH DAVIS PROPERTY:

The South Davis property....Father bought it for quail shooting. It added a one day shoot or course to what he had already bought to its north. I believe Dwight Davis, of tennis fame, was one of the previous owners, but I do not believe he is the person Dad bought it from. The land, obviously had previously had tenant farmers and free holders on it. When I got involved, John Austin still owned and lived on the property within South Davis. There was also a fellow called Walker, who lived in a house in an area we called the Chimney Field. I don't know if his real name was Walker, but I remember distinctly that he had a drinking problem and you always saw him walking down the road with a bottle in a paper bag.

Dad traded the South Davis property with me for some muck land that I owned in South Florida. After the exchange the land sat relatively unused for a number of years because I was away. However, Father still shot on it. The property was managed by controlled burns, similar to Ayavalla and other plantations in the area. Father, before the swap, had used it to run cattle when quail season wasn't in. Now that I think about it, the property was used in various ways, for along with the burning, there was corn cropping and plot plantings to encourage quail. The cattle was put on between seasons so they would not hurt the crop or the quail nesting, , but I remember having to watch the cattle while walking up to a point.

The site where the farm/stables presently sit, and where the present city baseball fields are, used to be tung oil groves. Later, the baseball field area was put in planted pines and the present stables was, at one point, the biggest egg producing facility in the southeast, if I have

my facts right. In fact, the office I use now was their office and included an air conditioned room for holding the eggs, until they were shipped out.

When I came back from South America in the 70's, I became interested in using Paso horses (now called Paso Finos) as plantation shooting horses. A gentleman, Dave Jones, and I designed and built the present fields and paddock area and imported some 80 mares, and a couple of stallions, from Columbia, South America, to start a Paso horse brood farm.

At one time, we had close to 170 horses on the property. I have been out of that business quite a number of years. That came about because I got married and my now ex-wire was extremely interested in show hunters and jumpers.

The rest of the property, after my return from South America, was used casually as a low-key hunting plantation for hunting with friends, some timbering, etc. Fletcher Braswell rented most of the fields for agricultural pursuits, mostly planting corn, the property was just home and land that I love. I will say that Mr. Braswell took very good care of the property. He was the only person who rented the land for farming that really took care of the property, fertilizing correctly, etc. He didn't try to rape the land for everything he could get out of it.

At one time we had a hay operation on the property. The hay field was where the soccer complex is; the Meadows Soccer Complex. We did do some reforestation, by row planting, however, I mostly relied on nature regeneration.

Again, the property was maintained mostly via controlled burning.

There were a few years in the 80's that I rented most of the shooting rights to my cousin, Guy de la Valdene. He eventually bought a place over near Quincy. He is an author, among other things, and mentions the property in his book titled, *For a Handful of Feathers*.

Lake Victoria was built in an effort to attract ducks and other water fowl as well as to have a private fishing and swimming hole.

The egg farm consisted of a number of very long, open sheds, with at least three double caged rows in each shed. It was quite an extensive egg producing operation.

The earlier cattle operation, of my father's, was almost a free range operation, with only fencing on the boundaries. The cattle roamed wherever they wanted until roundup time.

On Ayavalla, Father got into Charlois and really had a top notch herd. He was the first person to bring in pure bred Charlois from France and at one time, may have had the best breeding herd in North America.

TENANTS AT THE PLANTATION:

I can't remember when I bought the Austin Property but I bought it in two phases. The first was most of the land, the second was the house. Winn Peebles presently lives where the Austin house was.

Mr. Walker just lived in an old tin-roofed tenant house. I don't think it had more than two rooms, but it had the traditional front porch, and the ground around it was swept clean, like all tenant houses were in those days. I am not quite sure why that was done, possibly so one could see snakes.

Mr. Austin's house was tin-roofed, too. It was more or less tongue-and-groove, drop-siding. Of a lighter color, painted. It must have had a fire place or a pot bellied stove or something. Something must of kept it warm. There wasn't any other building on the place.

Tenants obviously did not have electricity and water was drawn from wells. Many of the tenants still carried water jugs on their heads in transporting it to their houses.

The greater plantation, Ayavalla, which my family owns, north of Miller Landing Road, included land that was Orchard Pond Plantation at one time. Orchard Pond was bought by Grandfather Phipps so he could be next to Father. There were a lot of tenants on the property in those early days. The majority worked on the place, but there were a few who did not. I can't remember their names. Then, there were some who worked on the place and lived on their own property. An example would be Buff Snead, who had property by the gas pumping station where Rhoden Cove Road

starts. Buff ran Orchard Pond for my grandfather. Burt Hadley, still alive, worked there also.

I remember lots of faces but I can't put a name to them. There was Mattie London, Junius, Preacher, Gardener, the Charltons, the Thompsons, Jack and Luberta Smith. Zeta Mae, she did not live on this piece of property, but she did live on the place and she'd get her water from a pipe in the ground. Theny, every body literally carried water jugs and everything on their heads. I don't know what Luster's last name was, maybe Richardson. There are a number of them still alive.

Cassius Thompson still lives up there and works for WCTV. He was basically raised, and still lives, on the place. He was one of fifteen children, I believe. His father, Louis Thompson, worked for us for years.

Part of my failure to remember names is because I went off to Boarding School in South Carolina in the third grade and only had vacations at home. Sometimes, only for part of the summer, since we spent part of the summer up north or traveled.

Back to tenant houses, other than being swept clean, they all seemed to have china berry trees planted around them. I was told it was to keep witches away - kind of like the Rowan Tree in Scotland, which is actually a mountain ashe, but anyway, they were always planted around dwellings for the same reason. China berry trees, other than shade in the summer, looking good and fast growth, aren't really good for much. The wood has no value or use, they produce no edible item, and they are brittle and rather messy.

The tenants had corn cribs. I don't really remember too much gardening. Not on this section (South Davis). Corn cribs were a fairly common thing. In the very early days, across the road, they did quite a bit of cotton. Now that I think of it, there was a lot of cotton and sugar cane grown by tenants on the place in the early days. Chewing sugar cane was a favorite pass time along with rolling tires with sticks down the dirt road and watching ant lions at work.

PHIPPS FAMILY HISTORY:

Dad bought his first property in Leon County in 1936. We moved here in 1937. He also gave a number of roads to the county so people could get to Carr Lake and Lake Jackson. Examples are Miller Landing Road, Cedar Hill Road and others, north and west on Lake Jackson.

Our residence was on Brill Point. The Brill House consisted three buildings, one that Mother and Father lived in, one that was a kitchen, and the main house comprised of a living room, dining room, and children's rooms upstairs.

After building the residence on Ayavalla, I think somewhere between 1940 and 1942, Aunt Betty and Uncle Clinton (Colonel Brill) moved into the house and that is where Brill Point gets its name. That building is torn down now. It was just a plain wood structure. Down below there we had a barn.

I don't remember much about living there except my brother and our pit dogs seemed to find a lot of skunks. Also, that my brother liked to be daring by jumping in the pen with a goat that charged him with enthusiasm. I was always amused when Gene didn't make it over the fence in time. I was too small and too chicken (to do that). The goat seemed like a monster to me.

ACTIVITIES AT AYAVALLA:

One of my fondest memories was when we had plantation events; activities where all the people who worked on the place, and their families, participated. There were games and we tried to shimmy up greased poles, catch greased pigs, etc. Then, there was burning season and rabbit hunting where groups of us would go out with the dogs and sticks to run down rabbits. A rather primitive activity, but it was an exciting adventure and fun for this young man. Besides, we did eat them.

Another fun adventure that entailed a lot of people and boats were coot shoots. It involved the boats spreading out across the lakes and driving the coots into corners so that they would fly back over and into the guns. We'd pole those boats. The lake was a lot weedier then, so we poled instead of paddling. The coots would be in flocks. There were always boats behind to pick the birds up or chase down cripples. Most of us didn't eat coots, but it was good

food. If you know how to cook them right, coots are a lot better tasting than you might think

The late Ed Kamarick used to say that he could fly over the Tallahassee and Thomasville area and tell you which were historically plantations and which were free hold farmer's land. I'm sure he could have, by the farming patterns. Plantations in the quail hunting era, which continues today, traditionally use smaller fields and plots. This type of agriculture practice leaves quite a bit of edges, which is environmentally friendly to quail. Fields left fallow for a year are also conducive to the quail habitat.

Cotton is very hard on the land and is probably why farming has shifted to other crops or to timber operations. In the 1930's and 40's there was still a lot of cotton planted.

Lake Jackson, having gone dry, and then been at flood stage a couple of times during my life, has created some nostalgic moments. There were times you could catch fish with your hands as they tried to flop across the road and times where there were a lot of floating islands when you could walk across the lake bottom and peer into the sink holes.

A few years ago, when we had such wind damage from Hurricane Kate, my brother and I were rather startled to see the new look of Ayavalla because it looked so treeless in comparison. However, we soon realized that it really looked quite similar to what it looked like in the 40's. Then the land was just reverting from cotton, there was an awful lot of red clay showing, lots of broom sage, not as many thickets and not anywhere near as many trees. The land has changed and improved greatly since the switch from cotton planting to quail and timber management practices. There is a tremendous change in the landscape.

Dad moved here because it reminded him of Thika, north of Nairobi, where he and mother went on their honeymoon. He wanted to live there, but finally his father got him to come back. Dad just loved this type of life. Somebody told him about the Tallahassee-Thomasville area. He moved here because it was like Africa. Of course, he didn't have the veldt, he lived in the rolling hills.

Another fun thing we used to do was go on coon hunts and opossum hunts at night. That was fun, to listen to the

dogs. Dad had bear hounds at one time. He used to all over the place to Tate's Hell and everywhere else to hunt bear. I don't know if they (the dogs) were blue ticks or whatever. The type of dogs we had were pointers, not too many setters. Dad liked German Shorthair Pointers. They were house dogs. And we always had American Pitbull Terriers. We used to go pig hunting with them. That was another big activity. I remember, as a kid, one of big entertainments was getting a wheel and a stick and knocking it down the road, running it back and forth. Life was pretty simple. We learned to make up our own games.

Interviewed:

The Farm

North Meridian Road

Tallahassee, FL 32312

November 7, 1996

APPENDIX

*1988 INTERVIEW NOTES
AND
MAP LEGENDS*

COMPILED BY

JEFFREY PHIPPS

Jeffery Phipps, grandson of Elinor Clapp Phipps and John H. Phipps interviewed several elderly African-Americans who had lived on Ayavalla Plantation and/or worked for his grandparents for a number of years. The following reproduces his hand-written notes of these interviews, with his comments of September 1996 given in bracketed italics.

INTERVIEW

BUFF SNEAD AND JACK FORD

August 6, 1988

Jack Ford's GP (grandpa) named for Fords Arm (on Lake Jackson).

William Ford (Jack Ford's grandfather): Union Soldier in the Civil War, colored, from Washington D.D., fought at Natural Bridge.

Where was the mill for Mill Branch?

"Longwater Branch" down from the Junior Food Store.

"Strauder Branch" down by Waverly Hills. Billy Macon or Henry Macon mortgaged 300 acres to Mrs. Strauder after the Civil War. (*I know there was another mill at what we call Turkey Branch, next to Poppell's house at Meridian.*)

Henry Macon, father of Billy Macon, paid for it raising cotton. A hard working man.

Lake Elizabeth is "Loch Lizzie", where they baptized, Elizabeth Poplar Springs Church. (*I believe this is in the Rose Hill Plantation or Metler*).

Poplar Springs is down by Harris Hammock

Turkey Branch used to be Harris Hammock.

Jim, James Bolden (Golden?) rented Ruby Diamond's daddy (A broker) who advanced people money for cotton. Sydney and Ruby Diamond's father, Jules Diamond. "Money man" lending it to poor folks until they ginned it up. (*Jules Diamond must have owned the Gin*).

Graveyard, Solomon Paramore last man to be buried there.
"Walnut Hill Graveyard". (*Non-fenced graveyard within the interior of Ayavalla - Jeff Phipps.*)

Mr. Maclay land bought and incorporated into Moore's Pond.

"Balis Slew" (Baylis Slough) comes out of Lake McBride and crosses Thomasville Road.

Midyette Moore bought some property from John S. Phipps. Buff Snead fence along Thomasville Road. And fence from Cedar Hill Road up to Meridian Meados in 1973. (*Buff probably built these fences. There were numerous tung oil orchards of Ayavalla, and some may have been by Davis previously -Jeff Phipps*).

Meadows used to be a poultry farm, belonged to John S. Phipps.

Dwight Davis, secretary of WWII went wild putting in tung oil orchards. (*There were numerous tung oil orchards on Ayavalla and some may have been around by Davis previously.*)

John S. Phipps bought Orchard Pond Plantation in the fall of 1940.

One Cotton Gin.

Cotton Gin just down from Mainor Poppell's (Buddy) on the branch there. This mill blew up and killed somebody. Run by steam and it was a cold morning and they tied down the governor cause they had lots of cotton to gin that day. Found pieces of the gin while farming some two miles away. Killed four men, crippled a bunch.

October 22, 1905 had seven or eight gins. 1913 was when it blew. Cassius('s) mother would remember (Cassius Thompson).

Thomas B. Carr place where houses are now close to the road.

Entrance to Luna Plantation that belonged to Lloyd Griscom Kerval (?)

Story:

Hubert coming down.
Ground was stiff with cold
Coming down on the coast line
To Thomasville
Straight Eight Buick
Mrs. JSP in blanket
Sleeping in car, wrapped up.
Didn't wake up even with horn.
Hubert knocked on door, woke him up.
"Told him I was sleepy headed"
Don't need as much (sleep) as you get older.

(Hubert was a brother to John H. Phipps. Buff was recounting his trip to pick up Hubert from the train station in Thomasville. He drove John S. Phipp's Buick and fell asleep in the car curled up in a blanket. He didn't hear the train whistle, Hubert knocked on the window to wake him up.)

Made a raft out of inner tube and cut chainsaw. Two man saw out and cut the tree, cleaned up buck pond, mostly sweet and tupelo gum trees. *(Explaining how they cleared a swamp by hand).*

Ask about Elizabeth and John Thomas.

Mike shot, that bird must have been whistling down at two hundred miles an hour, it would do you good to just watch Mike Phipps. *(Memories of Mike Phipps shooting duck).*

Buff taught older sister, Nonie, how to shoot quail and gave her first bird. The released birds (quail) taught the native birds how to go into the trees, the "witches".
("Witches" are birds that fly into trees.)

Dr. Andrews passed away a long time.

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS POSSIBLY FROM AN INTERVIEW WITH EPHRAIM CHARLTON, NO DATE. THE NUMBERS LISTED REFERENCE THE LEGEND NUMBERS FOR A MAP COMPILED BY JEFFREY PHIPPS.

- 5 Cliff Charlton
 - 6 Arthur Dickey
 - 7 Ben/Cleveland Brown - South of/next to Rose Charlton
 - 8 Jerome Henderson - next to Otha Golden
 - 9 Annie Golden begot Otha Gold, Francis, wife of Otha Lilly Robertson
- Wash McCormick - Pecan Orchard
Doke Chambers - Blind Man - Ephraim Henderson
Charlie Richardson - close to Rabbi Allen
Baseball Diamond next to Garfield Alexander
Julia Herring up hill from Willie Carter by Big Oak Blockers Fork
Rett Bottom Mrs. Rett up hill at kudzu thicket from Meridian Road corner gas and power line.
Sis Brown then Luster Richardson on the Lake.
Go to Sunflower field.
Store George right across from Church on Miller's St. Matthew's Church, next to Junius Hill old house Buzzard Corner?
X1 Dr. Gwynn Camp
X2 Tony Charlton above Lock's House.

Map information compiled by Jeffery Phipps - map is unavailable for copying, but the geographic names and places are listed here to indicate the types of information that will be available when Mr. Phipps has the map converted to AutoCad or GIS system.

Map Number House or Site Information

- 01 Shady Richardson (Luster's grandpa) next to pecan tree east of stables.
- 02 Planted oak tree? (See Luster)
- 03 Mock Henry
- 04 Basin Bottom
- 05 Cliff Charlton (Ephraim's Uncle) (Big Oak, Hickory, well)
- 06 Arthur Dickey (East of old N-S Road)
- 07 Maria Rollins ("Maria Field:")
- 08 James Brown (well)
- 09 Ed Thompson (Pope)
- 10 Preacher Brown

11 Gardner tract
12 Charlie Baker
13 Rose Charlton
14 Martha McCormick
15 Wash McCormick

Map Number House or Site Information

16 Patty Baker ("Baker Bottom")
17 Willie and Mary Jane Dickey ("Dickey Bottom")
18 Otha Golden
19 Annie Golden
20 Jim ("Large") Henderson (cattle gap)
21 Manuel Robertson
22 Dave Wilson, also Robert Brown
23 Jim Henderson, also Burdock McCormick and
Willis Dickey
24 George Brant
25 Buck Henderson
26 Lot Brighton
27 Solomon Taylor
28 Aaron Charlton (Ephraim's uncle)
29 "Little Peets (Cooter) pond"
30 Clint Brown
31 Water Hole
32 Cane Patch
33 Willie Dorsey
34 "Three Covey Corner"
35 _____ Dorsey (Willie's Sister)
36 Ganz property
37 Saul Gardner
38 Ruby Johnson (Plum Trees)
39 Doke Chambers, also Ephraim Henderson at old
cane mill
40 Saul Gardner, also Charlie Richardson
41 Syndicate
42 Old Tung Grove
43 Woody and Eliza Johnson at Milk Dairy
44 Ephraim Henderson
45 Green Johnson "Woody" Johnson
46 Roll Douglass, also Woody Johnson
47 Abe Patterson
48 Garfield Alexander
49 Ephraim Henderson (Blind Man), also Henry
Sanders (White Man)
50 Aaron and Caroline Charlton, also Holland
Horton
51 "Old Man" Willis and Elanora Dickey

52 Hogan Williams
 53 Peter Richardson "Hill"
 54 Sam Horton (also 310)
 55 Laura Brown, also Sam Brown
 56 ? Mike Patterson, also Laura Brown
 57 ? Mike Patterson, also Laura Brown
 58 William Newborn, also Garfield "Ball" Brown
 59 ?Sam Brown (Gardner tract?)
 60 ?Wayne Harry (Herring?)
 61 Ghost Haunt "Haint" (in woods behind church)
 62 ?"Haint Tree"

Map Number House or Site Information

63 Lock Charlton (Ephraim's Dad)
 64 Lock Lake
 65 Dipping Vat
 66 Corral
 67 Landers "Lantern" Dam
 68 Will Carter House
 69 Mattie London House
 70 "Cotton Grove"
 71 James Landers
 72 "Landers Bottom"
 73 Lawrence Williams
 74 Patsie Williams, also Tony Carter
 75 James Lantern "Landers"?
 76 Church
 77 Francene Walker (50 yards east of church)
 78 School House Site
 79 George Washington
 80 George Williams
 81 ?Junius Hill
 82 ?Junius Hill
 83 Tobie Hill
 84 Lawrence Williams (73)
 85 Polly Ann Williams
 86 "Chufa Field"
 87 Junius Hill Dam
 88 Nancy Cofield
 89 "Cofield Crossing" or "Second Crossing"
 90 Abbot (Albert) Cofield
 91 New Ground
 92 Henry Allen
 93 Henry Allen Field
 94 Walker Gate
 95 ?Abbot (Albert?) Cofield stayed here
 96 Pete Rollins

97 ?Abbot (Albert?) Cofield
 98 ?Turkey Blind (picnic area)
 99 White Barn
 100 Sandy Parramore
 101 Martha Parramore
 102 Sugar Mill
 103 Spencer Stevens
 104 ?South-North Oak Hill
 105 Small Woodberry "Snake Doctor"
 106 Cliff Charlton
 107 James Brant - No Name
 108 "Poor Boy Hill"
 109 L-Shaped Field

Map Number House or Site Information

110 Gene's Accident
 111 Dingle William (Williams)
 112 Tung Grove
 113 Grant Richardson, also Louis Thompson
 114 E. C. Freeman, also M.C. Jones (Children of Ed
 Thompson)
 115 Willie Thompson
 116 (Willie Carter's Mother)
 117 (Abe Patterson)
 118 "Bonnet Worm Ponds"
 119 Bob Brown
 120 "Hairline Point"
 121 Ervin Brown
 122-161 Gap in Numbers
 162 Ed Pryor
 163 ?"Hairline Lake"
 164 ?"Hudson Woods"
 165 ?"Piney Woods" Owned by Welsons (Sp?)
 166 Rabbi Allen
 167 Charlie Richardson
 168 "Crossing"
 169 "Sandy Corner" and "Dipping Vat"
 170 "Old Lady" Iola Pryor
 171 Sim Jackson
 172 William Baker at Big Oak
 173 Sim Jackson at Syryp Tanks
 174 Jack Pryor
 175 Bill Johnson Pond
 176 Dipping Vat
 177 Williams Baker
 178 Griffin
 179 Ella Wise

180	Carr's Graveyard
181	Baseball Diamond
182	Johnson Island
183	Baker Island
184	Mountain Hole
185	Grampa Lake
186	John Trench
187	Rett Bottom
188	?Robb
189	?
190	? Collins
191	"Buck Pond" (Buck as in Moonshine Buck)
192	Henry Hackley, also Charlie Hackley
193	Arnie Brown
194	Ruby Johnson
195	Pearson

Map Number House or Site Information

GAP IN NUMBERS

300	Celie Sanders
301	Joe and Florida Brown
302	Joe and Florida Brown after 1920 then Mark and Tina Brown, then Willie and Cloe Smith, then Wash Preston before Willie Smith
303	May and Cleveland Brown
304	Laura and Flemming Brown
305	Robert and Cindy Brown until 1930, then Eluster Richardson when he married in 1940's.
306	Hogar (sp?) and Jeff Williams
307	Bonnet Worm Ponds
308	Mrs. Purdy Store then James Sloan House in exact spot
309	Garfield and Rose Alexander (Blind Man)
310	Sam "Holland" Horton then Arthur "Mooney" and Stella Horton, then Ephraim and Zella Mae Brown, also 54
311	"Ephraim's Watermelon Patch"
312	Rookie Pond
313	Buck Carry then Matthew Collins (Rollins?), then Cecil Carry then Rufous Thomas
314	Ephraim Henderson (Blind Man, house burnt down)
315	Ganz Property
316	Wayne and Julie (Julia) Herring, then Saul Gardner
317	Josephine
318	Mulganey Branch (Orchard Pond drain)
319	Coleman and Annie Henderson in Goose Field

320 "Buzzard Corner" (Here's Buzzard again, but
this was over on Orchard Pond).
321 "Magnolia Point"

CONVERSTATION WITH MRS. MICKENS:

John Spenders married into Henderson Family. Phil Henderson, who owned here, across the road and down by Howard's house, at about 1900.

- 400 Henderson house seat/Phills (sp?) daughters
- 401 (Queen)
- 402 (Willie Mickens) (Fannie Spencer Mickens) (Mattie Mickens) house #2, born 1928.
- 403 Sheep Hill
- 404 Drying Kiln
- 405 (174) George Brant
- 406 (173) Sim Jackson lived there after the deceased.
- 407 Catching minnows then catfish when it (the Lake) went down, there is a delicious spring.
- 408 Brambly Briars (a natural barrier) Sim Jackson built fence on this side of briars then JHP planted roses.
- 409 Lake used to dry out every seven years until they filled holes in with cement.

- A Sunflower Field
- B Charlton Bottom Corn Field
- C Charlton Cane Patch
- D Tommy House (Tommy Louise?) Carter (Grant Carter)

Brian's house

- E Susie Patterson
 - F Syndicate - whole area east of Pearson
 - G Sugar Hole - Southeast of Porter Hole
- The only wet hole in (the Lake ?) just before the '49 flood. Lime Sink and Porter Hole have drains in them. Lime Sink would drain quicker than Porter, about every seven years. Juliette always had some water (One of the holes/springs in the Lake)
- Lime, Porter, Juliatt, Little, Sugar

There would be three big mills (referring to springs or holes). One was turning around, one was bubbling sand and one was just there.

There would be little ponds in the lake.

The game warden would let people dip the fish out before it got hot and the fish got sick.

Three times the lake went dry. It made a loud noise and they watched the water leaving the Lime Sink.

