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### Oral History Interview: Fay Ball

Fay Ball

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Fay Ball

- KH: The name of the person being interviewed is Fay Ball. Her address is route 1, Culloden, West Virginia. The date of her birth is March 28, 1904 and the date of the interview is July 6, 1974. The name of the interviewer is Karen Handley. Now I just want you to tell me about, uh, where you were born, and uh, how you all made a living, how you went about everything you did, how it was different from today.
- FB: Well I was born in Lincoln County and I was raised on a farm, and uh, we had cows and hogs and we had to milk them and feed the hogs and the chickens, and uh, we worked out in the field we got up at four o'clock in the morning did our milking and did our work up and then we went to the fields and worked until about seven in the evening when, in the summertime and come in. And back in them days we called it breakfast, dinner and supper. Now a days things has changed it's breakfast, lunch and dinner. But in our days we had to work hard and, and we washed on a board and heat our water out in an iron kettle with wood until I was thirteen years old before they came in and drilled gas wells and we had gas put in our home then, and uh, it was, things was a little better then, and then we draw our well, water from a well with a chain and a wooden bucket, and uh, that's the way that we had our farm life.
- KH: Were, were you farmers, was your father a farmer all of his life?
- FB: Well my father died he was a farmer all his life but he died when I was six years old and there were thirteen of us children and they were five of us left at home when dad left. Two brothers and the two sisters and I, and uh, we all had, mother never said go to the fields, she said come to the fields and we all had to work and follow, and follow my mother because she was a real working woman.
- KH: Did they make like, uh, did they make a distinction between like the boys just working in the fields and like the girls working in the house, you all work in the field?

FB: No, the gir-the boys did all the plowing and we all worked in the fields, we all took our hoes and when I was eight years old I had, we had cows, mother raised cows so she could sell the calves to, to my (break in tape), and uh, when I was eight years old I had my own cow to milk and take care of and then when I was nine I had to go to the fields and, and thin corn before I got to using it, but we all worked out in the fields.

KH: Is that over on Coon Creek?

FB: That was on Coon Creek.

KH: Uh, when you got older like, you know, in your late teens early twenties did you work more in the house like?

FB: When I was sixteen years old I got married and had my own home to take care of.

KH: Oh (laughs). Did, did you live over there too then?

FB: I lived on Coon Creek, and uh, until, uh, my husband died on Coon Creek, and uh, then, uh, I remarried and moved out to Culloden Cabell County. And I never worked in the field anymore.

KH: When, when you lived over there on the farm like that, you know, back in the hollow like that did you ever feel like you were isolated from other people?

FB: No we enjoyed that, that was our life and we really enjoyed it.

KH: Uh, when you went, you know, you went back to work and stuff, you know, like everybody on the Creek, you know, they have worked together and everything, did you ever, you know, get together?

FB: Yes we got together and when, uh, the thrashing machine would come around and they, they thrash the wheat why us women would all go to the other women's house and, uh, and help um cook for the, uh, thrashing machine

men, uh, but the last time that they come the men were all away a working at, at the gas field and the women had to help in the thrashing, they worked their wheat, with the wheat and stuff.

KH: I don't think I've ever seen one of those, thrashing machines.

FB: Didn't ya?

KH: Hm, mmm.

FB: Well honey they had um back in our days, they thrashed their own wheat and everything.

KH: Uncle Jack, I know they still do that, you know, they, they all get together over there and everything like that over at grandmother's and all the women cook, you know, like, like bringing the tobacco.

FB: Um, mmm. Now we did, uh, we would, uh, we would change work back and forth just women when the men would be gone and while we would work out one crop you see our corn and tobacco then we'd go to the others. And so we would help out.

KH: And everybody would contribute.

FB: Yeah, that's right and we had barn raisings then and people, the men would come in and help raise, fix your barns up you see and we'd have a caller to working, and then they helped one another back in our days.

KH: Was there any thought of money?

FB: No they was no mention of money or anything like that, they just come and we just help out and if you got sick they would come and, and help out. They would work your crop out and help out when you were sick, and uh, and it was so much different then course it was hard but we enjoyed it.

KH: I think it's still that way in a way, you know, from the farm, the farmers they're still their route like that.

What kind of, uh, you know, besides the workings what kind of social events did you have where everybody get together? You know, like, uh, the churches, school. . .

FB: Well the, uh, we, uh, didn't uh, have no, uh, church, it was so far away when we went to church they had our Sunday school and church in the schoolhouse. We always went to the schoolhouse and then when we were children, uh, my mother and them would take us to the schoolhouse to Sunday school, well then the neighbors, the neighbor women would go home with my mother and we would have our dinner and then after dinner the women got out in the yard and we played "ring around the rosey" and "drop the handkerchief" and that's the way we spent our Sundays. And we enjoyed that, we looked forward every Sunday for the, to visit backwards and forths with my mother and then, and the mothers would get out and play with us and we thought that was wonderful. For children now a days, and when I was a child on Christmas I got a little china doll for Christmas and then, uh, I would take, uh, there was a big rock and I would take rock and make, take moss and make my, uh, doll beds and I'd bake in broken dishes and I'd just have a wonderful playhouse, and, and I thought it was wonderful and now children has everything, but I, that was my playhouse on a big rock with moss and broken dishes.

KH: Probably enjoyed it more too (laughs).

FB: Well I did, I enjoyed it cause when I got to play that was wonderful and I just work hard and fix really pretty little beds out of moss and I really enjoyed that.

KH: How, uh, what was schooling like back then?

FB: Well we had six months schooling then, just had six months schooling.

KH: Was it, you know, the one room schoolhouse?

FB: One room schoolhouse, what they called the Upper Coon School and the Lower Coon School and they was all one and they divided and then part of the creek went to

the Upper and part went to the Lower you see. Cause we had to walk and then, and back in them days the snow got deep, it wasn't like it is now. And even the ice would freeze over the creeks so they would cut the ice and put it in the, get us, where the sawmill was they get the ice and, and my brother would and he put in a house with that and we'd have ice up in till way late August and some to make ice cream with all summer long.

KH: Wow [FB: Yeah.] I didn't think it'd last that long.

FB: Yeah it did, you put it in sawdust and the ice was thick then but now they's no ice anymore on the creeks over there that will do that.

KH: Is it one of the schoolhouses, is that where Raymond Clark lived, I mean, you know that, [FB: Yeah.] that school out there?

FB: Yeah they, they have, that's where one of um but I went down to the Lower route where Max Stowers and them. If you was ever. . .

KH: I don't think I've ever been down that far.

FB: Now that's where I went to school at down there.

KH: Where, did you lived there where Uncle Ernest lives now?

FB: Now I lived back, that was my daddy's farm he got the old homeplace, and uh. . .

KH: How did you go bout your housework after you got married, was there much difference?

FB: Oh yeah, it was alot different, uh, my housework was, uh, a lot easier and everything and then you see I was married eight years before I had any children and then after I went and move and got married and moved up there why then I had these two children, uh, my daughter and son and my work was alot easier because, uh, then we had, uh, he got a core plant and then that

made our electric. And then we had gas you see and he had to, the water put into the kitchen and my work was alot easier up there.

KH: What was the core plant?

FB: Well it's, uh, uh, well that's what they called those like a generator now they started, you know, he had it out in the building, it was like what he called the core plant then. And it was like a generator, was a great big, way down in a building and he'd go out there and start that up you see and that would make our electric to fix things with and, so I, cause we didn't have electric over there then. But he fixed that up.

KH: Did you ever have gas lights before you had electric?

FB: Oh we had gas when we went there [KH: Oh.] you see they had drilled, come in when I was thirteen years old on Coon Creek and drilled all those gas wells everybody had gas then and had their gas lights and out in the yard and everything, and uh, made it so much handier.

KH: I remember, uh, Lottie and Charlie McGinnis they still have gas light, I think until they died just years ago, [FB: Um, mmm, um, mmm.] they never did put electricity in their house.

FB: Hm, mmm.

KH: Did you do alot of canning and. . .

FB: Oh we, we done alot of canning, we made our apple butter out in a big kettle, our catsup and stuff, and out in kettles in the yard and oh honey we done, we c-we saved everything. When you raised it you tried to save it (laughs). And uh, yeah we canned, we had our cellar we always had it full of food.

KH: How, how'd you go about making catsup?

FB: Well we would just, just like anybody else makes catsup only we did stir it with the, uh, apple butter stir,

you know, we'd make a big lot of it and me and my daughter-in-law and we would stir it out there just like it would be apple butter. And we made our catsup out there, in the, in the yard.

KH: Did everybody get together like when they made apple butter, did everybody get together and help make everybody else's?

FB: No not mostly in our apple butter, now it was me and my daughter-in-law who made ours, now we, they didn't get together on that and we just made it ourselves. And did our own canning, we worked together, and uh. . .

KH: I never even thought about making catsup (laughs).

FB: You never? Well that's the way we made it over there.

KH: I just take it for granted you go to the store and bought it (laughs).

FB: No, we made, we had our, we made, you see we raised so many tomatoes and things it would have been a shame not to've made it you see. And we made our own catsup and fixed our own pickled beans and pickled corn and, and stuff like that, we had everything, come wintertime we had it in our cellar.

KH: Did you have to buy, buy very much at the store?

FB: Well of course we bought our sugar and stuff like, course we had our own wheat we kept, you know, have our own flour and our meal and, but our sugar and, and we had our own hogs for our own use that, it wasn't too much buying, and uh.

KH: Where'd you get your money like when you had to go buy things like that?

FB: Honey you raised tobacco.

KH: Oh.



FB: We raised tobacco and sold that wheat and, and you see you'd raise it and you'd sale alot of wheat and then we raised hogs and we'd kill, we killed the hogs and we'd sale some of our hogs you see. Our meat because it'd be more than we need, and then, uh, we raised, uh, when our calves come we always sold our calves in the spring of the year. And we always managed and then my husband worked for the gas company you see [KH: Um, mmm.] and course he, he draw his money that way, and uh.

KH: Well you all were better off than most people then, weren't you?

FB: Yeah we was and I was the first one to have a refrigerator on Coon Creek (laughs).

KH: Before that did you use the ice box?

FB: We had an ice box and, and we used that.

KH: What was, uh, your church life like, did you all have alot of revivals and. . .

FB: We had alot of revivals and we had wonderful times and they'd have what they called a homecomings in the summer-time and they all take their lunch and call it, you know, on the ground, [KH: Um, mmm.] and uh, yeah, back them days they, they had a real nice time at church.

KH: How long did your revivals last?

FB: Mostly two weeks.

KH: Did you set dates of how long they would, uh, when they would end?

FB: Yeah they set dates when, uh, that we would have our revival, when the revival would be, and uh, and they mostly was just, uh, two weeks revival, and uh. . .

KH: Was it at a certain time of the year or?

FB: No they didn't set no really certain time of the year

just when it would be the best for the farmers you see, they arranged it so it would be the best when they'd have their crops lay by and things like that so they could attend, you know, and uh.

KH: Was the way that you raised your tobacco was that much different than what they do now?

FB: No it wasn't any different. Only, only we had, uh, horses to plow with where they have tractors now (laughter), now that was [KH: That makes a big difference.] different. You know that made a big diff-yes in a way it was because they used the horses, you see, we didn't have no tractors and they have their harves and their plows and thing like that. We didn't know what tractors was then (laughter).

KH: Uh, what were your marriages and your funerals like?

FB: Well my marriage was an awful happy marriage and my husband when he'd taken sick and had cancer, course he didn't live long it was a very sad one I can tell ya. And I was left with the little girl was ten and my son was eight and it made an awful sad life out of it.

KH: Did the depression make much difference in your life?

FB: Oh yes the depression was really hard on us, it was hard on us.

KH: Uh, did you have many, uh, like parties or anything like that when. . .

FB: Yes (laughs) when I was, uh, after I was married, uh, on Saturday night we had square dances and it was, and we all went to a neighbors house and they'd fix a big meal at twelve o'clock and it was just a family get together and we square danced on Saturday nights. That was our entertainment.

KH: Did, what kind of music did you have?

FB: Well we had the violin, and guiter, and the banjo.

KH: Was there certain people in the community that could play those instruments?

FB: Oh yes, yes we did have um, and uh.

KH: What, when you were kids what kind of games did you play?

FB: Well we played, uh, "blindman" and things like that, "Aunt me over" we would take a ball throwed over the house and we, you know, how, you know, to play "Aunt me over" don't ya?

KH: Hm, mmm.

FB: Well what, one gets on one side of the house and one on the other, a bunch of us get really and then they throwed the ball and you get it you go around and hit the other one and it was out and it would have to go to the other side. You see they joined up together and teamed up, you know, and they called that "Aunt me over." And that was just play the ball, throw it over the house and "blindman" and, and "nay hide" and things like that that's all we played when we was kids.

KH: What's, what's "nay hide?"

FB: Well then one would hide his eyes, you know, and the others would all go hide then he'd have to hunt um all and when they catch the one they catched he would have to hide his eyes and the other go hide.

KH: Oh (laughter) we played that, I didn't know it was called that (laughter). Did, did you play baseball or. . .

FB: No, I never did now the others they would on Sunday, the men did, but uh, us girls never played, uh, baseball. The "Aunt me over" was the only ball we played and the others played that. They had a field the young boys did, you know, they'd go and play baseball and things. Course alot of times we'd line up on the banks and watch them [KH: (Laughs).], sit on the banks on Sunday evening and watch them (laughter).

KH: Be cheerleaders (laughter).

FB: Yeah (laughs) we were, and uh.

KH: What was school like, uh, did you just have one teacher all the. . .

FB: Yeah one teacher for all the children.

KH: Did they have eight grades in it?

FB: Yes they went on up to the eighth grade, uh, huh.

KH: What kinds of books did you have?

FB: (Inaudible).

KH: (Laughs) well your teacher was, I mean how was she educated, was she very educated, did she go to college or anything?

FB: Uh, no they didn't go to college back then they just went to the eighth grade, and then our teachers was, well of course some of um in these towns went but in the country they.

KH: What were your funerals like how'd you go about that?

FB: Well, they uh, funerals was, uh, just about like any of the funerals now that they had. Course they didn't, now my dad wasn't embalmed, nor my sister, they, they had, they took um to the church and they preached their funeral and just about like they did, only they just didn't embalm um honey.

KH: I've heard my grandmother talk about that, uh, she'd help lay people out she called it.

FB: Yeah they layed um out, and uh, but they didn't embalm um, and then they you see like that they died, uh, tonight well day after tomorrow of course they had to go into to Milton to get the caskets and the, the box and everything and then the next day they'd have to bury um because they weren't embalmed you see.

KH: You always bought your caskets, you never made um?

FB: Oh no, no we had to buy our caskets at the funeral home name Heck Funeral Home in Milton, and uh, and uh, so they'd go in with wagons and get the casket which would take um all day to go, you know, to Milton and get back with the casket.

KH: Ummm. Bout ten, ten to fifteen minute drive (laughs) back now.

FB: Yeah I know it.

KH: It's strange now.

FB: Yes it is.

KH: I've heard my mother talk about my grandfather, you know, he had made this trip to Milton, how often he would go but it would take him all day and he'd always bring back some each, bring back something for the kids.

FB: Um, mmm. Yes it was an all day's trip when you started from Coon Creek to Milton in the wagon.

KH: And the roads weren't so good either were they?

FB: Oh no the roads were bad.

KH: When was it that you had cars, first people had cars over there?

FB: Well let's see, well our T Model was our first car and I don't remember just what year it was in but we got the T Model was our first one and we thought we really had something when we got that T Model (laughter).

KH: How much did you pay for it?

FB: Three hundred dollars.

KH: Really (laughs)?

FB: Yeah all we paid for it was three hundred dollars. And

honey then that was lots of money.

KH: Yeah, well compared to today.

FB: Yes.

KH: Were they all black?

FB: Yes they was all black, uh, huh.

KH: What did the older people think of the new cars?

FB: Well they were pleased with um and, uh, the next car we had was a Pontiac, our next new car was a Pontiac, and uh, we bought it, uh, bout two years fore my husband passed away, and uh, we had a new Pontiac.

KH: Did everybody want to ride in it (laughs)?

FB: Everybody wanted to ride in it, that's right honey. But by that time nearly everyone on the creek had a, a car of some kind [ KH: Um, mmm. ], they was nearly everyone had their own cars, and uh. . .

KH: Did, did, how come you didn't get a truck like instead of a car, wouldn't a truck be better like on a farm?

FB: Well it really, it would have been, but uh, my husband just saw this and he wanted it and it's what he got.

KH: Uh, when you, uh, what about raising your children, did you raise them much different from the way you were raised?

FB: It, well I don't believe I did because I was raised to mind and when I spoke (laughter) to my kids they minded, they knew (laughs) it. And children now a days generally tells their parents what to do, but my children, uh, was raised like I were because we had to, uh, to mind mother, and uh, that's the way I raised mine.

KH: Does, does it seem like to you, like, uh, that you all felt like you had a greater responsibility to mind

because you knew it was so important, you know, to get the work done and everything and the kids today they don't have to do anything so they don't feel any responsibility around the house?

FB: Well we, we felt that we should mind our mother because, uh, she, she was the one that was taking care of us and we all minded her, and then when my children came along why I tried to, to teach them the way that I was raised and to work.

KH: Did, uh, now do you do, you know, the people back in that day they, uh, place, uh, good emphasis on work you do?

FB: Yes they. . .

KH: If you could work that was what was the most important thing.

FB: That was right honey, and uh. . .

KH: As far as character goes I suppose. Well I guess they still do that today (laughs). Uh, what was your children's education like?

FB: Well my children finished their education, they finished the eighth grade on Coon Creek and then I remarried and moved to Culloden and they went to Milton High School and they both graduated from Milton High School. And then my son was sent to the army and he went overseas and then he came back and remarried, he married, and uh, moved to Huntington and then my daughter she went to business school and she has worked in an office for twenty six years, in an office. And the, so they, they got a pretty good education, she didn't.

KH: Did you stress to them the importance of getting an education?

FB: Yes I did. And I told them they better get a good, good education but I wasn't able to send um to college and my daughter worked one year and got the money to go to business school and then when she got out of

business school why she got this job, and uh, and she's worked with them for twenty six years, and uh, but my son passed away when he was 39. And he left, uh, a little daughter she's fifteen now.

KH: Do you think, uh, you know, when they went to school over there on Coon Creek do you think, uh, was their education about the same as what you got?

FB: No I think it was better because the teachers was better educated, and uh, and their, their schooling was better, and uh.

KH: Did they still have the one room school?

FB: They had the one room school till they finished the eighth grade on Coon Creek, and then they started to high school.

KH: Did they go to the same school that you went to?

FB: No, they went to the Upper Coon School and cause we had moved and went up the creek and they went to the Upper where I went to the Lower, and uh.

KH: Did they play the same games that you played, did you teach them the games that you played when you were growing up?

FB: Yes they did when we was on Coon Creek, they, they played the same games that we did.

KH: Did it change when they moved out here, when you moved here?

FB: Well, uh, they really then they didn't play so much, they uh, seem liked they were more interested in other things, they went to movies at Milton, you know, and different things that were different things then for them to go to. And they went to, to Camden Park and places like that you see where, and, but they had a different interest in things than what I did.

KH: In a way that made a big change in your lives.



FB: Yes it did honey.

KH: They, they didn't have farm work or anything like that did they?

FB: Uh, no they didn't have to do no farm work, but now I taught um to cook, my son could cook just as good as my daughter and then he could do housework just as good. Now they worked in the house and did the, uh, they helped with the washing and ironing, my son could just iron and press his clothes and take care of himself just the same as my daughter could. Oh I taught um to work even if it wasn't farm (laughter) they had to work at something.

KH: Unless, uh, you taught um the independence that most West Virginians have, [FB: Yeah.] be able to care for themselves (break in tape), doctor or to the hospital.

FB: Well I had to go to the hospital in '64 for cancer and I was operated on in '64 and I've been doctoring cancer ever since now it's in my bones and, uh, but I'm thankful that I am doing as well as I am. And I have to go to the hospital every year for a check up and I go to the, the uh, doctor bout every two weeks.

KH: Uh, back when you were a girl, uh, did people go to the hospitals, to the doctor very often?

FB: Didn't know anything about a hospital when I was a girl and my mother made our medicine and we had a, a old man named Doc Ball that would, if we'd get real bad they'd call him and he would come give us stuff like for fever something like that, and I never had any, uh, measles or anything until after (laughs) I was married and I never did have the, uh, mumps. I've still got to go through that I reckon (laughter). And I certainly hope I don't have to do that (laughs).

KH: Uh, he was, this Doc Ball he wasn't a real doctor was he, he was just . . .

FB: Well I don't know why everybody called him Doc Ball and everybody called him he delivered all the babies

and things like that and he doctored for fever and stuff like that, and uh, and he was the one that delivered me, and uh, but fore as hospitals was concerned I didn't know anything about that until I was, was married. And I never was, never went to Milton until I was twelve years old, and I, and I thought that that town of Milton was something when I saw that and we went in a wagon, my brother took my mother and my sister and we went to Milton and we'd taken our lunch and oh I thought that was something I'd got to go to Milton, and I was twelve years old.

KH: Back, uh, in those days did the old timers have much faith in doctors?

FB: Well I, I don't think they did have too much because when, uh, my dad took sick, he was sick a good bit before he went and then he went to Huntington and he had to come out and go on a train to Huntington and then when they told him he had cancer why he, uh, then Dr. Martin in Milton would come out once a month to see him and that was as often, and before he died he had to sit in a chair for one year, the big cancer knots was under his arms and all and he set up for one year before he died in a chair he couldn't lay down.

KH: I know my grandfather still, he's close to ninety now, and he still doesn't, uh, trust doctors, he won't go.

FB: Well of course the doctors then they didn't have the education and things that they have now and I don't think the, the older people they mostly made their own, they dug herbs, you know, and they made their own medicine, they doctored their own kin.

KH: What, what types of medicines did you all make?

FB: Well bone fed tea and, (laughs) and she would get morn in the fall of the year, and, and life everlasting and willer and cherry and, and make what we call a cough medicine and then she would put that on all these herbs and boil um and she would strain it and then she'd put it in another kettle and put sugar and then, uh, and sweeten it up and that was our cough medicine for the

wintertime. And it was just mostly like that something like that she would fix us and, but seems as though that we weren't as sick as the children now a days is. Children now a days, then seemed like were more healthier. Now the diptheria came around and course that killed my, my brother and my sister, and uh, and when the diptheria come why then they called the doctor then, but uh, and of course I had diptheria but I pulled through, and uh, but that was the worst we had was diptheria. Then of course then the flu came around that was bad too, but then, uh, it was so bad over in there you couldn't get a doctor, they wouldn't come over in there and everybody was sick you see, you just had to doctor yourselves and of course I lost my sister in, in the years of the flu, and uh.

KH: Uh, did any of the, uh, older women did they ever help, uh, deliver the babies?

FB: Oh yes, yes they were several of um that, uh, delivered the babies.

KH: Uh, as children were growing up what types of methods did you all use to punish them?

FB: Well I tell you there's a little willer limb (laughter) and that's what they used around their legs, and that stung and it done them more good then all your paddles and all your belts, (laughter) was that big willer switch (laughter).

KH: Uh, you said that you didn't go to Milton until you were twelve, uh, after that did you ever take any longer trips?

FB: Oh yes.

KH: When did you go to Huntington?

FB: Well we went to Huntington and then we, uh, would go to Ohio, I had an aunt in Ohio. After we got out T Model we made several trips in Ohio, we'd visit in Ohio and, and places like that and oh I thought honey I'd went a long ways when I got into Ohio and the first

ferry boat that I rode on I thought it was wonderful, we drove our car down on that ferry boat there in Guyandotte, went across the river and out next to Scottown, Ohio that's where we went to to visit my aunt. And uh, and I thought that was wonderful and then course my sister moved into Huntington and we would make regular trips down there then.

KH: How long did it take you to get there when you first got your car?

FB: We drove it in bout an hour, course we didn't drive very fast, it took about an hour to drive.

KH: Uh, when you went to, to visit people did you ever plan your visits like say well I'll come and visit you on a certain day a certain time or did you just go when you felt like going?

FB: No we would always write and, and tell um and ask um if it was convenient, you know, for us to come, we would write um, and.

KH: How bout the people that, you know, lived close to you like you visit on Sunday or so did you just drop in?

FB: Well when we went to Sunday school they would, uh, the mothers would get together, you know, and talk us kids didn't have anything to do with that then they would plan where to, where they was going to go, and now when I was a kid, uh, we would uh, on Saturday was our day off and my older sister would do the washing, my youngest, uh, the next sister would do the sw-the mopping and things in the house and my mother would do the baking and she baked those fruit pies and stack um and bake a big cake and I didn't like to work very well and I took the yard, we didn't have a lawn and I swept the yard to get out of all the work I could (laughs) and I'd get the broom and sweep the yard.

KH: You didn't have grass?

FB: We didn't have the grass in our yard, we didn't have it like a lawn, you know, we'd sweep our yard and, and, and

that's what I'd do, I'd get out and I'd sweep so I could play a little and the others would do the, one would do the washing and mother do the baking on Saturday, and then they would iron, you, you know, they had the irons they'd have to heat on the stove and they, and my, my older sister and mother would iron I've known them to iron till one and two o'clock in the morning, on Sunday morning for us to get our ironing done because on Monday morning we had to get to the field you see and that was our one day off, was Saturday. And we had that day off.

KH: Uh, what methods of farming did you all have, did you use fertilizer?

FB: Oh yes they used fertilizer and, and they got the manure from the barn drippings scattered over their field, used that alot and.

KH: I just heard my grandfather say recently that they use to plow their corn when it was already been in roasting ears. They, they'd be plowing it.

FB: Well we didn't plow that big, you know, and uh, we had a certain time we let it by we come and go cause we had some (laughs) so much to do we couldn't get, but uh, that the way it was.

KH: Uh, did any of your sisters ever go away or the girls that you knew ever go help live with other families and help them?

FB: No.

KH: Say if their mother got sick or. . .

FB: No, no my sisters didn't do that.

KH: I think my grandmother said that she use to, she stayed with someone.

FB: Well now they would go to my other sisters and help out and, and take care of the babies when they was born my, my sister next to me would stay with my old-

older sister and help with the baby there but to go out in the neighbors home, they didn't, they just help one another, just sisters backwards and forwards.

KH: Uh, as far as the church went, when you went to church, uh, what was the, what was the church like, what was the sermon like?

FB: Well it's just like they are today, they just preach today like they did then.

KH: Did they prepare their, like write out a sermon or anything?

FB: Well now I couldn't answer that question cause I don't know what they did, but, and uh.

KH: Were they, were the preachers, were they self-ordained?

FB: Yes they were, um, mmm.

KH: Uh, how, how did they pa-pay the preacher for his services?

FB: Well now I couldn't answer that, but I think though, seems to mean like they always took up a collection on Sunday mornings, and uh, and I know we always throwed into our Sunday school class you see, we'd always take and throw into that every Sunday, and uh.

KH: Was he, uh, just one of the other farmers FB: Yes. on the creek?

FB: Yes, yes he was just a farmer on the creek.

KH: Was there just one church that everybody attended?

FB: Well now no honey, sometimes they would have it at the Upper Coon School maybe and then sometimes they would have it at the Lower, and they, they changed it bout many, many, you know, different preachers would come in, uh, you know, in the country, in the neighborhood and maybe they would be closer to the Lower Coon School and they'd preach there, and then the ones up, and then the

one up the Upper Coon School would, of course they would preach up there you see. But they wouldn't have um at a certain, same nights honey [KH: No?] cause there wasn't enough people to go, they'd, you know, they would know and divide that out.

KH: What was the church music like?

FB: They just had singing there wasn't no music.

KH: Uh, did you read from hymn books or did you already just know the song?

FB: No they had their song book and my mother was a wonderful singer, and uh, they all sang and, and, but that's all they had was their song books, and uh, and they sang their songs.

KH: Before you had, uh, your car, uh, how'd you get around, did you walk or what besides having, uh, the wagon?

FB: Well we walked most of the time and, uh, one time I went to my sisters to stay all night and a girlfriend, she was older than I was, and I was only fourteen, and uh, she, her brother was going to church and it come a real, oh it was a real bad time the ice was on the, uh, trees and I wasn't even dressed to go to church and she loan me her skirts and rolled them up around my waist and put my coat on where they wouldn't hang and her brother he grumbled of us a going cause he had a date and he said, "Now I'm not a going back with you girls cause I got a date tonight." And I said to my girlfriend, and I said, "Well," I said, "the first boy that asks us to go home with him," I said, "let's, uh, tell him he can go regardless of who he was." Well we went into church thinking that we was going to get a boyfriend, we come out of that church there wasn't a sole ask us to go home with us so here we was left with a lantern starting up the road by ourselves, in a moment here Bubby catch up with him, with us 'directly well we would hold to the limbs and we would fall down when we'd come to a bank and we'd slipped down that hill faster than we went up it. Well we had an awful time, well finally her brother caught up with us and we had a great big

mountain to go over but when we got home the next morning it was three o'clock because we had went, we'd slid back down the hill faster than we could go up it and he would just stand and laugh at us. Well I fell one time and I dropped my lantern and I said, "Oh grab the lantern if we lose that we can't see." Well I was scared over the lantern but we got our lantern and me and her had fun, well if my sister had of known that willer switch would have went around my leg but I never let her know it (laughs) until after I was married (laughs), fore she found out that I had slipped off and gone to church over here on Upper and that was a good little ways for us walking and the ice was something terrible and oh it was slick as just nothing but just a glare of ice, the road was and we shouldn't have gone but we thought it would be so much fun and we was going to get us a boyfriend, we didn't get any boyfriend honey (laughter).

KH: She didn't even know you'd left?

FB: No see I'd went to stay all night with my girlfriend the next house above her and we slipped off and I, I was afraid to tell my sister I'd gone, but we had fun (laughs).

KH: In those days did you do alot of courting at church and after church?

FB: Honey, uh, uh, not too much (laughs) I'm a tell ya (laughter). Our boyfriends, uh, we'd go to church maybe sometimes we'd get a boyfriend and maybe we didn't and so, uh, but when we went to dating we dated at home most of the time.

KH: The boys just came to your house to visit?

FB: Just come to my house and that was it on Sunday evenings, cause we wasn't allowed to date through the week, it was just on Sunday afternoon.

KH: You had to work through the week. . .

FB: Had to work, had, had to work through the week and, and we had to get all the rest we could and there wasn't no



boyfriends through the week and.

KH: Uh, in your family, you know, you said you had both brothers and sisters, were you both treated equally?

FB: Yes we was all treated just the same.

KH: Uh, what were, what were the boys life like, uh,  
[FB: Well you see. .] when they were growing up?

FB: Our boy, uh, that my brothers were so much older than us girls you see. See my brother was in his thirties before he ever married. Well he, he was a real worker he just had his mind on his work and his farming and course he dated but he, he would date on Saturday nights and on Sundays. And then my younger brother he, uh, he dated a good bit, course he had him a horse that he could ride, you know, and he'd work in the field and that would sort of upset my older brother and he didn't like it very well but he couldn't stop him. He'd get on that horse and away he'd go and then he'd get to the field the next day and he's working pretty hard thinking well he'll stay at home tonight but it didn't make much difference with the younger brother course he was much older than, than I were but then he, he dated a good bit, and uh.

KH: Uh, what kind of meals did you have, what kind of foods did you cook?

FB: Well uh, of the morning we had ham and eggs, and uh, and our biscuits of the morning and then for our lunch we just had cornbread and, and alot of times we'd be so tired we'd just eat milk and bread and then my mother would come in what they called a big sponge cake, she'd bake that of the night and we'd have that and, and our butter and we'd eat that of the night because we all worked hard and, and we didn't cook too big only on Sunday was where our biggest meal. And my mother always baked and fixed cakes and pies and fix us a big meal on Sunday. But we always had an awful good breakfast caused we knew we was going to have a hard day but alot of times we eat milk and bread honey.

- KH: Uh, how, how did the boys, how did you all make, did you make your clothes, sew them?
- FB: Now, well of course the boys bought their clothes but my mother's clothes and our clothes were made honey. They bought the material and made our clothes.
- KH: Did you buy the patterns too or did you just. . .
- FB: Yeah, they, they, uh, they had patterns they went by and they made their clothes. My sister was a good hand to sew, and uh.
- KH: During the winters did you go in for alot of quilt making?
- FB: Honey in the wintertime it was to strip your tobacco and get it ready and we didn't, my mother made all the quilts, she done all the mending of our clothes, and uh, and she made the quilts, but the most of the time when you come in the fall of the year you had to start in stripping that tobacco and getting it ready for to go on the market and, so then when that was done it was to fix your tobacco beds and, and get ready for the next crop and, but mother made the quilts and, and all the mending.
- KH: Uh, when you made an outfit did you do it by hand?
- FB: No, my mother had a machine.
- KH: The treadle type?
- FB: Yeah the treadle type, old sing-Singer sewing machine. My step-son and his wife's got it now.
- KH: Uh, when, uh, boys and girls were both babies did the boys wear dresses too?
- FB: Well I don't remember that now, but I don't think so cause I think I've heard my mother talk about making the little pants and the little blouses. Now they made a, a little blouse that come out over their pants most of the little boys them, you know, and the big collar

that they wore, and no I don't think the boys wore the dresses I, cause I heard my mother talk about it. And uh, you see the, when I come along the boys was great big boys and (laughs).

KH: Uh, how, did they work anywhere else besides on the farm?

FB: Well my younger brother, he left home and he was gone for about three years to East Liverpool, Ohio and worked in a factory there, and uh, but my other one never left home until he was married.

KH: Then did he get his own farm?

FB: Oh yes he had his own farm before he was married, he bought his own farm before he was ever married.

KH: Did uh, he own the money from like a certain share of the crop?

FB: He, uh, when he was sixteen years old he begin to bank his money and he raised his own tobacco and he raised his own potatoes and some of his own wheat and that went in the bank for him. My mother didn't get any of that. He would plow for mother but then what his, he picked out his field and I never knew him to ever borrow a dime or any, and uh, he had his own, own money he bought his own farm.

KH: Uh, when, uh, your parents died how, how was the property divided up?

FB: Well when my mother died, uh, she had sold her farm and my husband deeded her 15 acres of ground, and uh, she build a house on it and when she passed away it was give to my step-son, see that was the way he give it to her, you see, that was his son and he told her that he would deed the 15 acres if she would leave the property to his son and she did, she left everything to him. But she had sold her farm to my younger brother.

KH: Uh, what part did you girls get?

FB: We didn't get anything, nothing [KH: NO?], we didn't get anything, there wasn't nobody got anything but my, uh, step-son and that was off of the property that we had bought (break in tape).