

Marshall University

## Marshall Digital Scholar

---

0064: Marshall University Oral History  
Collection

Digitized Manuscript Collections

---

1998

### Oral History Interview: Lillie Heaberlin

Lillie Heaberlin

Follow this and additional works at: [https://mds.marshall.edu/oral\\_history](https://mds.marshall.edu/oral_history)

---

#### Recommended Citation

Marshall University Special Collections, OH64-577, Huntington, WV.

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Digitized Manuscript Collections at Marshall Digital Scholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in 0064: Marshall University Oral History Collection by an authorized administrator of Marshall Digital Scholar. For more information, please contact [zhangj@marshall.edu](mailto:zhangj@marshall.edu).

### Release Form

#### Deed of Gift to the Public Domain

I, Lillie Heaberlin, do hereby give to the Oral History Collection at Marshall University the tape recordings and transcripts of my interviews on April 25, 1998.

I authorize the Oral History Department at Marshall University to use the tapes and transcripts in such a manner as may best serve the educational and historical objective of their oral history program.

In making this gift, I voluntarily convey ownership of the tapes and transcripts to the public domain.

Crystal Mill-File  
Agent of receiving organization

Lillie Heaberlin  
donor

4/25/98  
date

Crystal Mills-Lilly

Sociology 432

Interview and Transcription

Interviewee: Lillie Heaberlin

April 25, 1998

Dr. Lynda Ewen

0577

Crystal Mills-Lilly  
Lillie Heaberland  
April 25, 1998  
Description Paragraph

Lillie Heaberland talked about living her early life on a farm. Later, how she's helped the Stella Fuller Settlement since she came to Huntington. She discussed her children and their lives. She talked about Gospel singing and how much going to church means to her.



Interviewer: Crystal Mills-Lilly

Interviewee: Lillie Heaberlin

April 25, 1998

CML: State your name please.

LH: Lillie Heaberlin.

CML: My name is Crystal Mills-Lilly and I am the interviewer and she is the interviewee. Ok lets go over the Release form. And it says I, Lillie Heaberlin, do hereby give to the Oral History Collection at Marshall University the tape recordings and transcripts of my interviews on April 25, 1998. That's today. I authorize the Oral History Department at Marshall University to use the tapes and transcripts in such a manner as may best serve the educational and historical objective of their oral history program. In making this gift, I voluntarily convey ownership of the tapes and transcripts to the public domain. Do you agree to all that?

LH: Yes.

CML: Ok then we can get started. What would you like to talk about?

LH: Well I'll just state my father and mother's name and where I was born. And raised on a farm in Lincoln county and I done everything on a farm that anybody knowed to do but milking a cow. And I couldn't milk the cow. I bit her because I couldn't milk her and she kicked me down, and that stopped the cow business. And so I went on from that. And I was fifteen when I come to Huntington I got a job during the war at the dress factory. Worked there ten year. Well wouldn't making enough money to please me. Left that job and went to Means & Company, and stayed there 28 year. So then when I retired I went into a lot of Social work, free. So then I met the Fullers, 47 years ago and they was like a mother and a father to me. I was like you, I come to town ,no relatives. So they just took me under their wing and then I started a helping them all down through the years. Then we, as the years went on we had a big fire and it burned us out, and we had to

Interviewer: Crystal Mills-Lilly

Interviewee: Lillie Heaberlin

April 25, 1998

go back to scratch, the bottom and build up again. So and as the years went on we started helping all the needy we could and feeding like 250-300 on all occasions and have to sit down and peel 300 pounds of potatoes with a knife. But then we had us a modern kitchen built and got it fixed real nice now. And it's not so hard but still, it took a lot of work getting where we are at now. But they've helped a lot of needy people, do a good job yet, but the Fuller's is gone but it's still run by the board but they still do a lot of good things for people. And I enjoy being there because, on an Easter morn or a Christmas morn, set down at a table full of good food, see children set down and smile and glad that they got a good dinner and everything like that, breakfast, whatever it might be and that's good. And then we'd go on and get into gospel singings and cook food and sell it. And bought us a new carpet and new drapes and all that and we bought us a new PA system have the very best gospel singing and all like that. And as the years go on we just keep on doing something else, something else and then if we go out a lot of places we sing in the nursing homes and things like that. And then we finally bought us a bus, me and the preacher, Clovis Shepard. And we all went out on the road. Went far and near to sing and everything for a long time. And then things got turned around, my eyesight got bad and I didn't want to go on the road no more so we sold the bus out. But we still go out and sing a lot of places yet and I was supposed to went tonight but I had this with you and I wouldn't call you and tell you. But still yet, everything has been so you know, work, work, work for me in my life. And I just had the one child. At 19 he went to Cleveland, Ohio. He went to school there. Then he went in business when he was 21, for hisself Now he's 55, got two boys in Ohio State college. Doing real good and that's my little family. And I got two grandchildren, a little girl, 3, and a little boy, 1 month, and that's

Interviewer: Crystal Mills-Lilly

Interviewee: Lillie Heaberlin

April 25, 1998

my great-grandchildren and I'm really proud of them. And that's one good thing in my life and another good thing in my life is I've always every night when I go to bed I pray about it and thank God for good people in the world. My rooms need painting and I have lived on a fixed income and the Marshall students and a preacher I forgot his name but they go to a Methodist Church. They came and painted my rooms for me. And I thought that was one of the best. I'd always been used to doing for the other person. And that being done for me I think that was the most satisfying thing could about near ever happen to me. I just was tickled to death with them Just loved them, bought them stuff to eat everyday and everything. Just like family, just like I'd be with you. Just my way of meeting people. I never see a stranger. And so from that then I done a lot of going to the State Hospital and helping out there and we went there and sung lots of years. And so now, Bob and the old woman has passed on that owned the Settlement. But life will go on and we'll always keep it open. I hope when I go somebody will step in, in my shoes and keep going with my part. But you never know about just work at something like that for the needy and seeing their faces light up when you do something to help them and everything. And then go to the hospitals and visit them in the hospitals. Every thing like that. And So I've had a long life. I'm 80 years old.

CML: That is a long life.

LH: And hard work I think and being kind hearted caused me to live this long life. I really believe it. And I never done no mean things real mean like a child I might have been mischievous. But I've always lived a good clean life and be good to everybody. When children was down and out here in this town, while my husband lived. We had the basement and we had beds and everything down there. They'd come along froze to death

Interviewer: Crystal Mills-Lilly

Interviewee: Lillie Heaberlin

April 25, 1998

down and out no place to stay. We had families in there three winters straight without a penny of money. And then since he's past away I have took two boys in They had no place to stay and they was from Venice, Wales. And going to college. And I let them stay down there two winters I guess it was And so I just try to do for the other person but it's still getting back to kindness. It'll always pay off down the road somebody's gonna do something for you kind. Just like them kids come, and they just sung gospel songs and that just suited me. I sang right along with them. And it was two good days that they was here. I'd love to get their names and all and have them all in for Christmas, and things like that. Have a good time. So up to that , that's about it I guess or should I go on?

CML: Well what more do you want to say?

LH: Well I don't know, that's about all I guess I can say. That's all I can think of right now. And since my husbands went away I've stayed here 10 no 12 years by myself keep my house up and my yard up. Whatever's to do and stuff like that. It's hard but I try to do it. And my eyesight's so poor I can't hardly see. But God makes a way. As long as you put God in the picture you'll never go wrong and everything and you just thank God bless God for everything that's happened in your life and giving you a long life and everything like that. So good I was just thinking about the band children today. I kept band children I guess 8 years in my home and this is the first year I've done without my band children. The parade children uptown. Somewhere they'll call me some of them don't have places to stay and I'll say oh yeah I'll keep 4 . Well I wind up with 6 then he's got 6 and they've got 6 partners and I wind up with 12. So we just have a good time, they help me cook and help clean and everything I just get along with everybody. So and that's all I can think of right now, would that be enough or should I think of something

Interviewer: Crystal Mills-Lilly

Interviewee: Lillie Heaberlin

April 25, 1998

else.

CML: Well it was supposed to be you know about an hour long and it hasn't been an hour yet

LH: yeah well ok

CML: How has Huntington changed?

LH: Oh since it got Marshall built up everything's changed here everything. When I moved here on this block, just talking about progress, they was houses. Well now I've got a Doctor on that side of me, a chiropractor and one across the street. And everywhich way you look there's something new went in and change and we had one bridge across the river when I come to Huntington and now we've got three. And so lots and lots of changes. Then getting back to Marshall, they've built it up great big all them big stadiums and ballparks all kinds of things and that's good and then we're getting a big hotel a going to be opening up right away and that's nice for Huntington. And everything and of course we've got that big mall too. That's still close. You can go to that everyday of the week if you want to and stay all day.

CML: Yeah, you can.

LH: And that's nice. Lots and lots of things they've done lately. And Mrs. Dean ,our mayor, I love her. And the one before her Bobby Nelson. You might not know'd neither one of them but I did. And I've worked with Bobby Nelson, and he come and helped us serve food, she's not done that but he always would, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter. Then openings, we had that whole big block up there in play areas. They'd be maybe 1,000 people there. And we'd give free hot dogs and everything openings and everything. And he was right there, him and Jay Rockefeller come a lot and I met a lot of

Interviewer: Crystal Mills-Lilly

Interviewee: Lillie Heaberlin

April 25, 1998

people like that down through the years through the Settlement and all like that. Cecil Underwood I don't know how many of them, judges, magistrates. All of them come down to help out with dinner, breakfast whatever we was doing. We'd get in that kitchen and get on some good gospel singing and just sing up a storm and cook. Really nice. It's a pity though the family had to die off, now there's none left. Is that the end?

CML: Nope, still going. I had to check it cause you know there's only 30 minutes on each side so I had to make sure it wasn't clicked off and I didn't know it yet.

LH: But going back when I was a child then you didn't have much to do with, you went to school and you had a pencil and a tablet. and of course you bought your own books then too. In a little one room schoolhouse. And I went to the 9th grade and had to quit. I want to go back yet lot of times and see whether that little old school was.

CML: Have you seen the one on campus? There is a model basically of a one room school house, that the history department built. And they use like desks from old one room school houses.

LH: No I've not seen it.

CML: It's all antique furniture.

LH: Well I'll have to go see that

CML: Yeah it's right, where is it on campus? It's right on 5th avenue. You can see it from 5th avenue I'm pretty sure.

LH: Them little old desks and a big blackboard plum across the building them little one room things and the teacher would write on the board your math and all of that what for you to do. And then we had a little corner built off for a woman who would come and cook beans and things like that for lunch. But now if we had a lot of them today I think

Interviewer: Crystal Mills-Lilly

Interviewee: Lillie Heaberlin

April 25, 1998

that children could learn better , the small ones anyway.

CML: I think it must have been really hard for one teacher to try and teach you know everybody of different ages.

LH: Yeah that was, it was.

CML: Because I mean you know,  $2 + 2$  for a ninth grader is just going to bore them to death but you know  $9 \times 6$  is going to confuse a kindergartener. And so it's not like, their assignments , there would have to be so many different assignments.

LH: But Lord there wasn't as many children then as they are now.

CML: It's true that it wouldn't be as many to grade afterwards but you would still have to set up so many different things.

LH: Yeah see same amount. My son graduated from East High, and of course we sent him on to Ohio state and then he met a girl and married her there from I forgot her homeplace oversea. They just had the two boys. Now you say some words and get me started again.

CML: Now let me think. we've talked about Huntington, Weve talked about the Settlement.

LH: And I've talked about the bridges and everything and our preacher that I've went to church with years and years of professional singer and he's bought his own church now and everything. Elsewhere out on behind the stake house on 5th street west, and I guess that's east southside yeah over there. So he's doing real good too. He's just an old country boy like I was He was raised next door to me up there. So we come to Huntington and we've been together all down through them years. Singing here and singing there, and he's back in Lincoln county tonight singing.

Interviewer: Crystal Mills-Lilly

Interviewee: Lillie Heaberlin

April 25, 1998

CML: Have you done any other traveling? Like did you normally ever go far away from here ever or did you spend?

LH: Well I've spent most of my life here, but I've traveled too. I've been in lots of other states just visiting, vacationing. Oh, I've lived in Cleveland, OH too. But other than that, I've lived right here in Huntington ever since I moved here in the 50's. But I lock up sometimes and live in Cleveland a year because my son was going to school up there. But other than that I live right here, and I wouldn't want to live nowhere else now. It's been good to me Huntington has. I know we've had ups and downs but it seems like we have a lot of good things too to overturn the bad ones

CML: I think so too, my father always asks me you know when I am moving back to Logan. And I'm like I'm not. And he's like why not what's wrong with Logan, and I was like there's nothing to do in Logan but get in trouble.

LH: Just like my son, mom I never, I've already give him my house and stuff here and my other one up on 25th street and 5th avenue. And he says I'll never live in West Virginia again and when I bury you I'll never come back. But of course but we've done paid for all our arrangements in South Point Memorial Gardens, our grave lots, our head stones and our vaults and everything's already there. And all I have to do is put my date on them when I'm gone. We done that too 27 years ago. That's your last thing you can do. So we done that. But no if I was young again I think I would have went to a bigger city but I didn't and I guess I'm happy I've stayed. But I like Cleveland Ohio too real well.

CML: My husband wants to go to Cleveland sometime but we don't have a car so we can't just drive up anytime we feel like it.



Interviewer: Crystal Mills-Lilly

Interviewee: Lillie Heaberlin

April 25, 1998

LH: After my eyesight went bad I can't drive, nor nothing either. I depend on Grover (Vance) to take me anywhere but I've got one grandson that comes and gets me a lot and I stay a week or two. They are all in business and he bought a, my son bought one of them big pontoon boats. And he's getting it out on the water today and he said he'd be after me in two weeks to stay a week or two and boat ride with him. I've never done it.

CML: I like going out on a boat.

LH: I've never got to go on one.

CML: I've been on several of the boats that go up and down the Ohio the river boats like the one that sank a couple of years ago.

LH: yeah that was nice.

CML: and then I have an uncle, it seems like for as long as I can remember he's had a boat. For a while he kept it at Summersville Lake, that was where he kept it. And they would go there for vacations but when he got divorced and remarried. And now he and his wife have a second home in Tennessee, and it's on a lake in TN. And he has built his own dock there, a big one and he has three boats there I think now. And one of them is a pontoon boat which he bought for his grandson because it goes slow. He's got a speed boat too.

LH: My son's got a speed boat too. We ride on Lake Erie. I mean That's where we'd be riding. He lives real close to Lake Erie. But I've been out there and watched them and everything like that when he had the smaller boat I was too big of a chicken to get on it. But I've went down to the docks and sit there in cherry blossom time, and they have a big lot of professional singers come in and sing. It's just a big thing and I go out there and sit and listened at all of them while they boatripe I like doing that. Have you ever went

Interviewer: Crystal Mills-Lilly  
Interviewee: Lillie Heaberlin  
April 25, 1998

down to the little Camden Park here?

CML: Oh yeah I've been there.

LH: You like that?

CML: I haen't been there in a couple of years which is strange since I live here in Huntington. But I used to like it a lot when I was a kid.

LH: My grandchildren love it.

CML: As I got older I kind of got tired of it I think because for a long time I was going you know every summer and they really don't ever change the rides. So since it's always the same rides after a while you just get tired of it.

LH: They were used to going to Cedar Point when it was so crowded all the time.

CML: Yeah that's true the one thing you don't have to worry about is Camden park being too crowded I mean and you can go through the whole park in the day that you are there and sometimes you can get through it a second time before everyone else is ready to leave. And the way it's set up is really nice because you can go all the way around and you don't miss anything. Where as I've been to Cedar Point and King's Island.

LH: I have too, all of those.

CML: And there's another place near Baltimore, that's called Wild World. And I've been to it and I know it because I've been there 4 or 5 times.

LH: I just hope some day I get to go to Dolly's

CML: Oh you want to go to Dollywood?

LH: Yeah I've always wanted to go there, and I wanted to go through Elvis' mansion too. I've never made it there but I'd love too. I kept my tickets I'd bought them when he was going to come to town here to the civic center. And I kept my tickets as a souvenir.

Interviewer: Crystal Mills-Lilly  
Interviewee: Lillie Heaberlin  
April 25, 1998

I gave my grandson all of his golden records. I had money tied up in him that you wouldn't believe. I give them all to him last year on his birthday, 16th birthday. I sure liked to hear Elvis sing. He was my favorite singer in the whole world, he was. He was a little poor boy too starting out. I reckon that's the way I like children. You know to see them little and down and out and then come up and be famous or something. It makes you real happy.

CML: Yeah it does.

I've met up with a lot of little children running out of Logan. Through my times, lived there and moved down here, and they say oh it's like Christmas here everyday. But they don't know it all it's like work work too to get there to have Christmas. Is the hour up?

CML: I don't think so.

LH: Still going.

CML: Yeah it looks like it's only about half way done on this one side, Well maybe, it's getting close because well no there's 45 minutes on each side of a 90 minute tape. So whenever this stops it'll be 45 minutes.

LH And it ain't stopped yet? We just got 45 huh?

CML: No I needed an hour at least.

LH: Oh, heavenly day. (laughs)

CML: But it looks like it still has a while.

LH: Like you can say something too can't you?

CML: Yeah I can say some but most of this is supposed to be your interview. What more to talk about? Well you have birds in there. Are you like a really big animal lover or do just like to have a few different kinds? I mean you said you grew up on a farm so.

Interviewer: Crystal Mills-Lilly  
Interviewee: Lillie Heaberlin  
April 25, 1998

LH: Oh yeah I loved everything you know every kind of animal they are.

CML: Except the cow.

LH: But the cow, me and the cow couldn't get along. But I was 15 when I went on the farm you see, didn't know nothing about cows. Boy she learnt me quick. So I've got three birds and two dogs. And my dog came from Hussein's Island you know where the Desert Storm was? My nephew went and stowed her away on the bus, no not a bus, a ship and brought her to me, I was just keeping her for him a month while he was on vacation, furlow and he went out and got killed. And I've got the dog yet. Named her Sugar. And then the peoples dog next door got over. She's had a baby pup then, and I've got it

CML: She just had one?

LH: Scared me to death, I run her to the hospital. And everything else, now I care just as much about my animals probably as people does about their children.

CML: I understand. I have 4 cats and one of them is the kitten of one of my other cats. I always try to make sure I take really good care of them.

HL: Now Grover's got a beautiful cat.

CML: He always has cats

LH: He gets mad at it and says he's gonna bring it over here and set it down on me. Now that's something else. But now that's mostly how I met him when he come to Huntington. No place to stay and I helped him get situated.

CML: well see I didn't know how he got here to Huntington, because I knew he had a heart attack and he was sick for a while.

LH: OH he's here a lot, the reason he's here right now is on account of St. Mary's Hospital. And they didn't have doctors in Logan to perform surgery and stuff. I think he

Interviewer: Crystal Mills-Lilly

Interviewee: Lillie Heaberlin

April 25, 1998

got in Charleston one time and was amongst strangers. Down here he had learnt us, and he knowed some of us would be there to see about him everyday and stuff. Finally he gave up, he couldn't find him a place to live. But I didn't know it he didn't come and tell me He went back to Logan then he come back this time and he stayed he got the house he owns the house he's got it I think about 7 years ago. But I helped him with a lot of things he didn't know about. When you work in charity in a place like Fullers you learn everything all the give away places and everything else. And how to get his medicine free and all that. See I know all that stuff. And I pass it on too. If I know somebody's down and out and needs it and can't afford it, I'll let them know where to go and how to get it. That's another thing that's good to help somebody when they are down and out. I was thinking one more thing maybe that I could think of. But now I've lived right here 30 years in this house. I own one up on 25th street but it's rented out. But I've made it all to my son at the end of my death. And you've just got the one brother?

CML: Yeah, he'll be 18 this December.

HL: They was 10 girls and 10 boys of us in the family.

CML: I know what you mean, my father was 1 of 13 children he has 6 brothers and 6 sisters.

HL: So I learned to cook when I was 9 years old, getting up to cook breakfast for 10, 12 all together with my father and my mother. That's how I learned I reckon to accept and go on and do. Having to do for a big family. And you didn't have washing machines then. You had to wash them on the washboard. I've done that all day long a many a day, skinned my hands. But thank God for everything that's modern today. Push buttons and go on. I went out at daylight and hoed corn too til dark, and everything else that a farm

Interviewer: Crystal Mills-Lilly

Interviewee: Lillie Heaberlin

April 25, 1998

has on it. Dig potatoes, plant corn, cut corn. Everything , help kill the hogs

CML: I don't think I could do that.

LH: Oh I cried cause I had to but I had to help my dad. I never wanted nothing killed, no chickens nor nothing.

CML: My mom had helped raise a pig. He was the runt, and that's how they got him.

Because They were just gonna kill him anyway so she offered to help raise him. He got to be huge, he was as big around as this little rug. He was just huge and he was so tame.

She could get his bucket that she fed him with and say come on he would just follow her around. As long as she had that bucket. So if he got loose, out of his little pen she could just get the bucket and lead him back in. And you know most of them aren't that tame.

They don't like people as much. Well a lot of people are afraid to be that close.

LH: My dad went to some kind of trading market and they had this old horse, real old and skinny. And the old man he didn't want to take her back home. He was just going to leave her along the roadside where ever it was at. And my dad here he come leading that old horse home. Well he told me, he said I'm gonna give her to you. Said she's about starved to death. If you feed her and take care of her she'll be yours. Get her fat and you can sell her. Well I thought oh that's a big deal. Well I went to feeding that old horse, Every morning I'd get out and go get the brushes and things. Brush her and work with her. One morning, dad told me he said you go and get the cow off the hill, I went up that hill to get the cow, she wouldn't come down and I had to go up there and get her. Then when I got up there, that old horse had a baby colt. Oh that tickled me to death. I broke and run and forgot about the cow and everything. Got off of the hill and Dad said well it's yours that was your horse So I petted and raised it to a year old and then lightning

Interviewer: Crystal Mills-Lilly

Interviewee: Lillie Heaberlin

April 25, 1998

came down a big tree and killed it. Well now you talk about somebody crying, and almost to dying, I did. I never wanted to go up on that hill. Dad would make some of the other kids go up there, because he said you know he wouldn't want me to go up there after it was killed. But that tree I have to pass. And I'm telling you it was a beautiful thing. I'd pet it and I could tell it to lay it's head on my shoulder and it would. Just a real pretty little thing. So many things grows up on a farm pretty then they have to be sold or killed or something. I never want to go back up on another farm to live. I'd like to get up there and ramble around, pick cherries and stuff yet. We did that last year, me and Grover did. We went up on the farm and picked cherries. We canned a lot of berries and cherries, plums. Went up there on the farm and got them. You cold?

CML: No.

LH: I was gonna say I could turn the fan off but are we about to run out. Just peep and see, yes or no.

CML: Not really.

LH: Ain't one side yet?

CML: No

LH: Oh Lord what can we talk about next? Think of something for us to talk about.

CML: I'm looking for something interesting to ask you about. The birds like to talk when we stop.

LH: Yeah that's George. When we quiet down he goes to talking.

CML: Yeah animals are like that they like to make noise.

LH: But we'll have to find something.

CML: Yeah, you've told me a lot.

Interviewer: Crystal Mills-Lilly

Interviewee: Lillie Heaberlin

April 25, 1998

LH: Yeah but it ain't a tape full.

CML: It didn't take very long for you to tell me a lot.

LH: I've been used to talking fast too. I've been a shopsters for a Union for 28 years or so. I learnt to talk fast. Try to get ahead of the bosses. Now buddy I've had some hard times working and some good times too. But it's when you quit though you really miss all them good friends and all that. I thought I'd never live over it, but being up there with the Settlement. They just give me more hours there. And I fit right in with that bunch cause I was already involved with them in lots of ways. So I just took that as my home mostly. I used to get up and go up there at 9 o'clock and come home at 5 and 6, 8 or 9 or 10 at night doing things. I wished you could see in there sometime. We've got a great big gym built with big long tables. We go the day before the big meals like Thanksgiving or Christmas put the special occasion tablecloths all on them and flowers for the occasion and everything. It's more fancy than any cafeteria you'd go in and set down and eat at. I mean, it's kept up better. And it's all free. Never have to pay a penny for nothing. So you're here going to college on Thanksgiving, come down and have dinner with us.

CML I normally try to go home for the holidays. That makes my mom happy.

LH: I used to love to get up on Sunday morning or Saturday and go home too when my father and mother lived. But after they went, it ain't home no more.

CML: I imagine I'll feel the same way. Hopefully a long, long time from now.

LH: Yeah my mother lived to be 83 years old. My daddy, though, died at 76. Because he worked in the coal mines and got that cement, no it ain't cement, coal dust all over his lungs.

CML: Oh so he had black lung?



Interviewer: Crystal Mills-Lilly

Interviewee: Lillie Heaberlin

April 25, 1998

LH: Yeah and he died younger than she did. But then my husband worked in concrete, worked all the time and he got cement on his lungs.

CML: He got white lung.

LH: Yeah and it killed him, cancer. Turned into cancer. Just everything in the world seems like was around the corner. But now after my father died we made it our business to go and stay with mom. Some of us, every weekend. Never left her alone, by herself, never. Some body was with her at all times. Then after she's went, we've not went back on the farm much, only to pick berries and cherries and plums and stuff. My sister lived there but she died last year. Now they's nobody lives on the farm. So I don't know. It's supposed to be divided amongst us all later. But I don't know how later. When that takes place, never can get us all together. Some's in Florida, Cleveland, and some's oversea one place and another. Never get us all home.

CML: Probably not. It's hard to convince everybody that they've got to be in the same place at the same time.

LH: That's a problem with big families, when they get scattered out and you need them for something like that. It's hard for them to just pull up and come anytime and everything. It's been there now, my mom died in '84. And it's been sitting there. My sister lived, moved on it. Now she died and it will be sitting there again. But that's on the farm too where we all growed up. That little old school house is on our farm too. And that's something else. Now you go in the schools and everything and its frightening. I mean you realize everything is going to change, and then twenty year from now, it'll look different to you.

CML: Yeah that's true.

Interviewer: Crystal Mills-Lilly  
Interviewee: Lillie Heaberlin  
April 25, 1998

LH: Just like me.

CML: Well it looks different, just a year after you leave that certain school. I mean I remember I was in the 6th grade you know then I moved to the 7th grade. Whole new building, three floors. I'd never heard of that before. The grade school was just all one level and then the junior high had three floors. I thought I'd get lost for sure. And then somewhere in the middle of that year I had gotten all used to that big building, big hallways you know cause the lockers on each side, you had to have enough room for everybody to do everything in the hallway. I went back to the grade school, and it looked so small. It just looked so tiny.

LH: Yeah and another thing I remembered is going out in the school house yard and had an old pump that you had to pump the water out with a pump handle and everything. No water in the school house. You had to carry it in there in buckets. But schools has come a long way. Now my son, was supposed to went to Huntington High but he wanted to go to East High so I had to pay then for him to go there. But I guess it's better for him, he thought so. Didn't matter to me. I wanted him to be happy where ever. I was only sending him for an education. And where ever he thought he could get the best, I was all for sending him there. That's how come in Cleveland he wanted to go there in Ohio to school. So I went up there and stayed the first year, me and my husband both did. And he got all straightened out and got to working part-time then I sent him money to pay rent and all that. Then he met this girl when he was 19, got married. So he's lived there ever since.

CML: He must like it there.

LH: Yeah he likes it there. He's got a big business there, too. He has a great big grocery

Interviewer: Crystal Mills-Lilly

Interviewee: Lillie Heaberlin

April 25, 1998

store, huge one, everything in it. And then he's got one of them places like Super America too. And last year he had a heart attack, had to have 5 bypass surgeries. But he's doing fine again, back to work. Course everything he's got, he's got it all on computers not nothing hard. Back when he started though they didn't have computers. All with pencil and paper and one of them little old adding machines or calculators, stuff like that. Boy now when he got in the hospital last year, them boys growed up real quick when they thought that it might fall on them to do. They went to work right now, stayed over of the night and worked late on his book work and all that stuff. Then after he got out of the hospital, 21 days he was working but they was bringing it to him at home. He's like me, he never wanted to give up. I never either. Just keep on going, going, going. I hope, one of my things that I've always wanted to do as I growed up a child, I think well I hope when I work hard all day. I'll go in the house and set down and just go to sleep when it comes my time to go and I just don't wake up. Now that's what I've got pictured out to go. How I mean I want to go. But you never get your wants there. But you never know what's in the future though do you?

CML: No.

LH: We just know the past, but we don't know the future. But I think through the hardship that I had on the farm and through jobs and everything like that. It was hard work but if I hadn't done it, reckon what I would have done? I've always wondered about it. Out of all of us 10 though, we all growed up and went to work. Some one place and some another. Course the five boys had to go in the service before they got off of the ground.

Interviewer: Crystal Mills-Lilly  
Interviewee: Lillie Heaberlin  
April 25, 1998

SIDE TWO

CML: A little while, I mean it won't take that much longer, at least 15 minutes.

LH: Oh, do you think we can get done in 15 minutes?

CML: I think so.

LH: Yeah well that's nice. Do you have to go home and cook?

CML: Well yeah but I was planning on fixing like Mamwich. Just fry up some ground turkey because I don't usually use ground beef. I think it's really greasy sometimes, so I use ground turkey. And just fry it up and then pour the can of stuff in there and put it on some buns.

LH: I hadn't eat today. Been helping the woman next door with the rummage sale. Oh if I don't get into one thing I can get into another. Never hardly ever see very much dull minutes. But they are just like family to me and I am to them. If they need anything that I've got all they got to tell me is they want it and they get it. So that's that. They're good to my dogs. I go off, they feed them, and my birds. I did have fish, but they died. Don't know what happened to them.

CML: Did they all die at once?

HL: No, no, no. They died. I had a lot of baby fishes and they was growing so pretty. And Grover went and saw a pretty fish and he bought it, brought it home and put it in the tank. And not very long, I guess it was a diseased fish. Right after that they all died. Just one or two at a time til they was gone. I think I had 28. But I ain't went out and bought me no more. Think I'll get in the flower business the rest of the summer and not get into taking care of fish. I'll do that of the winter. But before you leave I want you to see my beautiful snowball bush.

Interviewer: Crystal Mills-Lilly  
Interviewee: Lillie Heaberlin  
April 25, 1998

CML: Okay

HL: It's back in the back yard. Beautiful and all full of blooms. I did have a dogwood out front but the city took it down when they had to put in new meters under the ground out there. But can't have everything.

CML: I like dogwoods.

LH: Oh I do too. We've got a beautiful one at the head of my mother's and my father's grave. We got a pink one and a white one. And they are so pretty. They are in the country. But all of us has been buried in town. One town or the other, where ever they lived. And my son's grave plots will be in Youngstown, Ohio. Done bought them in the Memorial Gardens there. But something might come along and take us all out at once and we might not even be buried, you never know. I'll tell you there's so many people been run out of their homes this year. I gathered clothes til I almost stripped myself naked. Helped bundling clothes and sending them out to people that were under water. And all down through the years. Well Grover made 4 and I bought them off him. And then here these flood victims come along and I made a lot myself. And I've gived everyone of them away to the flood people that got flooded out. We went up at the Settlement, see we take in clothes to give out to the needy once a month. I went up there and helped get a truckload to Logan Williamson all up in there and Matewan wasn't it? Where they was all flooded out next to there around Ripley? Different places, we sent big truckloads. Every once a month then we give out clothes to people from Chapmansville, Logan, Lincoln County, Wayne County, Kentucky, Ohio, all around. People can just come and get them free. Of course they are used clothes but Lord have mercy back in my day I'd have been glad to get used clothes. Wouldn't you have?

Interviewer: Crystal Mills-Lilly

Interviewee: Lillie Heaberlin

April 25, 1998

CML: Yeah.

HL: Well I would. Ten of us. Lord, couldn't hardly keep 5 outfits was about all you got. That was one a day for school. Now you can have as many as you want. If kids goes to school here in this town for the want of clothes it's their fault, the mother's faults. And food, I hear them on television, telling about the kids starving. Why they couldn't be. Most all of them is on food stamps. Then they get their free lunches at school. Then when school's out they get set up right up here at the Settlement. They wheel in meals there for all the school kids to come there and eat. They're never, I don't see how they could be starving, do you?

CML: I don't understand it either, except that you know unfortunately, there are parents who don't care enough to take their children to get that meal there for them.

HL: OH yeah the kids comes by themselves.

CML: Yeah if they know how to get there. I mean you know a 4 year old sometimes can't.

HL: They get somebody with a bus to bring them if the mothers are too lazy to get up and get them out. The little kids will not starve. But there is so many mothers, not interested enough in their kids to get up and see them off. Why I'd have a fit if I hadn't got up and seen my child to school. Last thing I ever done was I hugged him and kissed him and told him I loved him as he went out the door. He does his children that way. It's how you're raised.

CML: There was a study I think that I read about in one of my Psychology classes that said that kids that get told good things before they go to take a test do better. If you get told something bad like if you have an argument with your parents before you leave that

Interviewer: Crystal Mills-Lilly

Interviewee: Lillie Heaberlin

April 25, 1998

morning. You have to take a test then you are going to do worse. So if you want your kid to do good in school, you've got to give them a little boost of the mornings

LH: Right, I knowed that.

CML: You've got to make them feel good. Or else they are going to go and be bored or be preoccupied.

HL: Your mind floating is what I always called it. No I don't know why I had that feeling but I did, I'd think well he's going out the door I just wonder if he'll ever come back. You always have that in your mind when a child and it's going. I did everyday, everyday, everyday. Every time my grandchildren comes and stays two weeks with me, I think oh you reckon this will be last one. Reckon they'll make it home alright, and I can't wait for them to call me back. Now I've been a loving caring person with my own child and his children and now my great-grandchildren. But I'm the same way, by everybody else. Now a family lived by me and I worked 9 and 10 hours a day and she was a mother and had 4 little kids and they went to school terrible. I'd get them and bring them over of the night and bath them, make them and outfit to wear to school the next day. Stay up to 11 and 12 o'clock at night and sew for them little kids to have clothes. Now one's on the police force. I was out there to Dr. Maleny's office. And I never noticed him and he put his big hands down on my head. I threwed my eyes up to see who he was and he said, "you can't see me you don't know who I am." And I said, "well I've heard the voice plenty of times, I don't know who you are behind me." And he stepped around in front and there was that great old big tall lanky fellow on the police force. I didn't know he'd got on the police force. But now I don't believe he would have made it. One time, I was there by myself, I got off work and got in and was cleaning my

Interviewer: Crystal Mills-Lilly  
Interviewee: Lillie Heaberlin  
April 25, 1998

yard. Put on one of my husband's big old shirts over my clothes. And that youngen fell in the fire. I had everybody in the neighborhood running. I got them to take him to St. Mary's. And you know that mother and father was gone. Five days later, they come home. And they made me pay the hospital, because I took that kid to the hospital and him burned 1<sup>st</sup> degree a lot of places. And the doctor told me to bring him home and give him 7-up all night long and watch him breath. I said, "he's not my child, he's a neighbor boy." And he said, "Where is the father and the mother?" And I said, "Your guess is as good as mine, they go away 5 and 6 days at a time. Nobody knows just the children there." I told him though, "I ought to keep him in my home of the night and then he can get up and take him over there of the morning before I have to go to work. And I did. And that's the one that's on the police force right now. So many things to see down through life when you go and try to help people. There's somebody always in bad of need. I never was a rich person, never wanted to be. And when somebody comes to my home, I want it to be comfortable. I want them to be comfortable. It's the way I want it. Just like you, if you was to ring my doorbell, and say "I have no where to stay tonight." I'd say, "well come right on in I'll see that you have a bed." That's just the way I've built my life, and I'm not sorry of it. One bit in the world, I'd do it all over again I guess if I had to. Or it would have happened that way. Is it about up now?

CML: I think so. I think we actually got a full hour.