

Mable House Storytelling Project
Interview with Mildred Merriweather and Gail Evers
Conducted by Beverly Center and LaDoris Bias Davis
September 16, 1999

MM: Mildred Merriweather
GE: Gail Evers
BC: Beverly Center
LBD: LaDoris Bias Davis

BC: ... and LaDoris Bias Davis are interviewing today, September 16th, 1999, Mildred Merriweather. And she is Ike Mathis' granddaughter.

Mrs. Merriweather, we know that you have spoken with some of the other people who are working on this Mable House project. For instance, Susan Smith, [inaudible] and Mary Cater, and we know that they got some of the statistics about you. I believe you are the granddaughter, you say. Who was your mother?

MM: Gertrude Parmes.

BC: Gertrude, what was the last name?

MM: Parmes.

BC: Parmes.

MM: P-A-R-M-S.

BC: P-A-R-M-S, okay. She was the daughter of Ike Mathis. Yes. We would like, if we could, for you to tell us something about Ike Mathis. We have some statistics, but we were in great hopes that he had told you stories when you were a little girl, or that your grandmother had. Things about them when they were little or when they were growing up or when they were young people on the farm. When your mother was a little girl, or when she was a grown woman. Any time during the time-

MM: He never did [inaudible] when I was in there. He was in bed or something like that.

BC: Was he?

MM: [inaudible]

BC: Was he sickly?

MM: Huh?

BC: He was in bed. Was he sickly?

MM: No. Just worked around in the yard and all. You know how older folk... When God come, they going to... [inaudible].

BC: I see. So, he wasn't one to [crosstalk]. He was a worker though, wasn't he?

MM: Yes, he was a worker.

LBD: Who did he marry?

BC: Huh?

LBD: Who did he marry? Mr. Ike?

MM: It was... Emma. Emma, I don't know her last name.

BC: I think it's Aycock.

MM: Aycock.

BC: Aycock, I believe that's what it is.

MM: Okay, Emma Lee. If you ever go out to Emma Lee, she would know.

BC: Oh. Now we didn't... Who is Emma Lee?

MM: One of y'all was out there last night.

BC: Oh, okay, then Mary. Must have known her and interviewed her.

MM: Because they live right [inaudible] each other. All the time.

BC: I see.

MM: See, and I was over there, and they was in Mableton.

BC: I see. Yeah. Well, we are the storytellers who are going to tell the story at the festival about Ike. We're talking about Ike and about another person who lived on the farm named Drew. We have some stories about Drew, but we didn't have any personal stories about Ike or Emma. We'd kind of like to have some of those.

MM: Well, Emma Lee could tell you because they was raised together. She was raised with them. I wasn't.

BC: With them?

MM: I was over here.

BC: You were over here the whole time. Uh-huh (affirmative). So, you never did get a chance to-

MM: We just went on a visit and drived back home.

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative).

LBD: So, you were around [inaudible]. Was Ike and Drew brothers?

MM: Yeah.

LBD: They were?

BC: They were. Uh-huh (affirmative). Did you know-

MM: Drew didn't talk too much. He, I don't know. He never would talk too much.

BC: Was he there? Did you see Drew?

MM: Yeah, I've seen Drew.

BC: You've seen him alive, uh-huh (affirmative).

MM: Just wasn't a talker.

BC: Wasn't a talker. No. Did you see him at your grandfather's house?

MM: Oh, yes.

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative). He would be there sometimes.

MM: He stayed with in the house up there though. The people that kept him live right in front of my grandfather. They was in just about the same yard, but they wasn't in the same house.

BC: Alex Mable, his house. Yeah. So, Drew didn't talk very much when you were there.

MM: No.

BC: But you did see him and he was just a half-brother, wasn't he?

MM: Right.

BC: To your-

MM: Something like that.

BC: To your father, grandfather.

MM: Uh-huh (affirmative).

BC: When you were there at your grandfather's, tell us a little bit about when you were there. What was it like?

MM: Well, we were just little, small children, right?

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative).

MM: Just talking. Mama and the grown peoples had conversation, and we just out playing [inaudible].

BC: Yeah, you'd be out in the yard playing.

MM: They just talking about all the time, what they done, and all like that.

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative). Did you ever overhear anything they said?

MM: Not really. If I did, I forgot.

BC: Oh.

MM: But like I said, we'd be out playing. They'd be in the house talking.

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative).

LBD: Did he have any, did your grandfather have any peculiar sayings, things that he would say -

MM: He wouldn't very much talk either. My granddad.

LBD: Oh, Mr. Ike wasn't either?

MM: Mm-mm (negative). Wouldn't talk too much. My grandmomma, she would talk.

BC: Yeah. What was she like? Your grandmother?

MM: What was she like?

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative).

MM: Like talking or what?

BC: She'd talk, and-

MM: She was a good talker.

BC: She worked for the Mables too, didn't she? At some time?

MM: I really, [inaudible].

BC: He did?

MM: I guess she did some things at the house too. Just like I said, we just go out there about once a month or something like that and visit and come back home.

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative).

MM: We just small children then.

BC: Yeah.

LBD: Who would you say that you all looked like? I see you and your daughter look a lot alike. Would you say that's from Ike's side of the family or Emma's side? So, he would have been [inaudible] tall [crosstalk].

MM: Emma Lee – You haven't seen - Emma Lee look like grandpapa's family. We look like [inaudible] look like grandmamma's family. We just like grandma.

LBD: Was he a tall -?

MM: Mm-hm (affirmative).

LBD: Slender, light-skinned man?

MM: Uh-huh (affirmative).

LBD: Was he friendly?

MM: Oh, yes.

LBD: Jovial?

MM: Mm-hm (affirmative).

BC: We understand he was very genteel. He had a carriage about him. He carried himself well.

MM: Oh, yeah.

BC: And that he must have been a proud man working hard like that.

MM: Yeah, he worked hard.

BC: Supported his family. His children.

MM: See, when I met his children, they was grown.

BC: They were grown.

MM: And away from home by that time.

BC: But they had all been to school, hadn't they?

MM: Oh, yeah.

BC: So, he and his wife, Emma, had sent all of them to school. Children in those days didn't have to go to school. They went because their parents sent them. Yeah. He could have kept them home and have them work on the farm, but he let them go to school instead.

MM: His children, they all – I think they left kind of early when he - They moved to Chicago. That's what [inaudible]. Aunt Dove, Aunt - Emma Lee's - She and my mama stayed here.

BC: Emma Lee was one of his children?

MM: His grandchild.

BC: Grandchild. That was it.

MM: Someone was over there to talk to her last night. I don't know who it was.

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative). I don't know. That may have been Mary. She must have gone there last night. She was here talking to you the day before that. Uh-huh (affirmative).

LBD: So, Ike was the one that Lovey and Dovey...

BC: Yeah, Lovey and Dovey were the twins, weren't they?

MM: They wasn't twins.

BC: They weren't?

MM: Mm-mm (negative).

BC: Oh, we thought they were twins.

MM: No, they just, they had twin names.

BC: Had twin names. Then there was Gertrude.

MM: Yeah, Gertrude was my mama.

BC: Your mother, and Clara.

MM: Clara was Emma's mom.

BC: Emma's mom. I see. Emma Lee's mom.

MM: Uh-huh (affirmative).

BC: Yeah, and then Lovey and Dovey.

MM: Yeah.

BC: That was all.

MM: Uh-huh (affirmative).

BC: They didn't have any boys.

MM: [inaudible] boy, I think. But I don't remember their name.

BC: Oh.

LBD: How many children did Grandpa Ike have?

MM: I really don't know. Emma Lee would know because she was raised out there with him.

BC: Out there with them. Uh-huh (affirmative). She was raised, in other words, Clara lived near there. Was that it?

MM: Yeah, they lived together.

BC: In the same place?

MM: Walking distance.

BC: I see. Yeah. Well, that's good. We can find out more from her. But what I'd like for you to do if you can is just tell me everything you can that you remember about going. Did you go in a car? Your family had a car, and you would go...

MM: My daddy had a car. We went by car.

BC: Which day would you usually go?

MM: On weekends. Sundays.

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative).

LBD: For Sunday dinner.

BC: Sunday dinner.

MM: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

BC: Did you go to church with them?

MM: No, we didn't go to church with them.

BC: No.

MM: We would leave our house after church and go across the river, as we say.

BC: Across the river to the farm. Uh-huh (affirmative).

MM: Then we'd come back home.

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative). What was it like out there at that time?

MM: It wasn't anything but farms and houses. [inaudible]

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative).

MM: When they [inaudible].

LBD: And all the grandkids come in?

MM: The church.

BC: The church, that Little Bethel.

MM: Uh-huh (affirmative), Little Bethel.

BC: Baptist church.

MM: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

BC: Where they're both-

MM: I mean, I hadn't been out there in so long, I don't know, have they improved it? I know they've improved it though.

BC: We drove past there not long ago. It's very small. It's still small. Unfortunately, the kudzu has grown.

MM: Oh, yeah.

BC: Quite a bit.

MM: That's where they are buried, right there.

BC: They're buried there.

MM: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

BC: Did you go to the funeral?

MM: Mm-hmm (affirmative), I went to the funeral.

BC: You did? Did your grandmother die before your grandfather?

MM: Mm-hmm (affirmative), yeah. I can't think how many years. A good little while before, because grandpa came over and stayed with us a little while, after she passed.

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative).

MM: He was real healthy and strong.

BC: Yeah.

MM: Wish I had some of that strength.

BC: Oh, I know. Well, about how old were you when she died? Do you remember?

MM: When grandpapa died?

BC: Grandmother.

MM: I guess I might have been in my 30s, early 40s. Something like that. I was good and grown and married.

BC: Grown and married. So, would you say that was about the time of World War II? About that time?

MM: [inaudible] after World War II.

BC: That was in the '40s.

MM: Yeah, 'cause [inaudible] have a daughter, I have a - My oldest son was 60-some odd. What, this is, what is this? '98?

BC: '99.

MM: '99. It was along in the '40s because Wilbur would be about '63 if he was living, '63, '64. That's my oldest child.

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative). He had been born. Was he a baby at that time?

MM: No, he was good and grown.

BC: He was grown already.

MM: Mm-hmm (affirmative). That must have been almost the 50s when...

BC: We know that your grandfather died in the '50s.

MM: Uh-huh (affirmative).

BC: I think we have a record also of when your grandmother died. They got that from certificates. But I just wanted that for us today.

MM: Oh.

BC: Because we are trying to fit it in when your grandfather lived with you, and then when he went to Chicago. He was an older man then, wasn't he?

MM: Oh, yeah. I mean, [inaudible] grandpapa going to Chicago.

BC: They said he went to Chicago for a few years.

MM: He could have. [inaudible].

LBD: Stayed with Lovey and Dovey.

MM: Yeah. He could have.

BC: Yeah.

MM: So then, you know, didn't get too much information.

BC: Yeah.

MM: Wasn't no telephones, and nothing like that.

BC: We heard that he came back from Chicago after a while because he just couldn't stand being in all those tall buildings.

MM: I know that's right.

BC: He just wanted to come back to the land.

MM: Land.

BC: Yeah.

MM: [inaudible] Weren't too much... You couldn't call, you just had to wait until you got there and come back and like that.

BC: Yeah.

MM: Weren't no telephones or nothing like that.

LBD: Your mama wouldn't have taken [inaudible] a letter? Would he have written? [inaudible]

MM: [inaudible]

LBD: Yeah.

MM: Just about.

BC: Then he went to work for the Williams and stayed, when he came back from Chicago. We understand he went to work for the Williams family [crosstalk] then got there on the land.

MM: Uh-huh (affirmative). Emma Lee would know that.

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative). Because she would have been over closer. Yeah. They thought an awful lot of him.

MM: Oh, yes. Everybody was crazy about Ike Mathis.

BC: Yeah. I know the Mable family all thinks a lot of him. They said-

MM: [crosstalk] some of them saying that?

BC: Oh, yes.

MM: Oh, really?

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative). Edith Mable, I talked to her, Edith Mable Cole.

MM: Uh-huh (affirmative).

BC: Now, she's the granddaughter of Alex Mable.

MM: Oh, she is. Uh-huh (affirmative). They used to bring grandpapa by to see us. But [inaudible] I haven't heard from them in years.

BC: Oh.

MM: Like on Sunday, they going for a ride, they used to bring him.

BC: Oh, bring him around. Uh-huh (affirmative). Oh, the Mables did?

MM: Uh-huh (affirmative).

BC: Is that right?

MM: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

BC: Well, that was nice of them to do that. There was a woman, Janie Williams Ayres.

MM: I don't know.

BC: Mrs. Ayres. She used to drive him around some.

MM: I probably know her face. I might just don't remember her name.

BC: Do you remember the Mables? Which ones they may have been that brought him over here?

MM: No.

BC: No.

MM: You have to check Emma Lee.

BC: Yeah. She would know. Yeah, they told us that Mr. Robert Mable, the first one that lived in that great, big house where your grandfather lived to start with, that he thought an awful lot of Ike.

MM: I know they did. They was crazy about Ike. It was a beautiful sight. I mean, the house was a beautiful place. Lots of trees, and then they had them a little house built on that. Nice little house.

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative).

MM: Drew stayed in the house with them.

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative). And with Alex.

MM: Uh-huh (affirmative). Not with Ike, with-

BC: With Alex.

MM: Uh-huh (affirmative).

BC: Alex kind of looked after Drew, didn't he?

MM: I think so, yeah.

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative). Drew needed a little help.

MM: Yeah.

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative).

LBD: Who was older, Drew or Ike? Do you know which brother was older? Ike older than Drew or...

MM: Drew, I think, was the oldest. I believe Drew was oldest.

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative).

MM: Grandpa was about 94. He [inaudible] 25-year-old boys [inaudible].

BC: Oh. [crosstalk].

MM: Plowing, doing everything.

LBD: He was plowing at 94?

MM: Oh, yeah, Mm-mm (negative).

LBD: Plowing.

MM: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

BC: Really?

LBD: You serious?

MM: He was very strong.

LBD: He was plowing little garden, he was plowing in the field?

MM: Field.

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative).

MM: He was still working out there. He loved that.

BC: He was plowing with a mule?

MM: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

BC: My goodness.

LBD: What did he die of? Just old age?

MM: Old age.

LBD: Then he wasn't ill.

MM: He was at our house when he died. I guess...

BC: He was at your house?

MM: Mm-hmm (affirmative). I guess because he couldn't get out [inaudible]. [inaudible] just had to sit and look and speak.

BC: Yeah.

MM: Nothing we could do, just...

BC: Just sort of gave up?

MM: Uh-huh (affirmative).

BC: Yeah. Well, he had to be in his 90s.

MM: Ninety, I think it was 95.

BC: 95. Yeah.

MM: Because he was still healthy and everything.

LBD: Did a lot of people back then live to be as old as him?

MM: Not really.

LBD: A lot of people grew to be real old? Seems like kind of looking at the history several people lived to be [inaudible].

BC: Oh, yeah.

MM: Drew health [tape break] He just grieved I guess himself to death.

BC: Yeah.

MM: He wasn't no big talker or nothing, so he [inaudible].

BC: You didn't know what he was thinking very much.

MM: Uh-uh (negative). He didn't talk too much.

BC: Did he ever talk about being a slave and what that was like?

MM: Mm-mm (negative), no, he wasn't a big talker [inaudible].

BC: Did he ever tell you about when he was shooting at the soldiers with his little squirrel gun?

MM: No, I never was around. Now, he might have talked to Emma Lee and them because he would be with them. He wasn't working, he'd be around them.

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative).

MM: We just around him, just visiting.

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative).

MM: And everybody trying to get in a word, you know how that is.

BC: Yeah.

LBD: So, your strongest memory of your grandpa was that he was a strong man.

MM: Yeah, he was a strong man.

LBD: Physically.

MM: Yeah. Pretty strong.

BC: And good.

MM: I don't know if Emma Lee found a picture of him or not. I don't have a picture of him. [inaudible].

BC: And he was good to his wife, I guess.

MM: Oh, yeah, they loved each other.

BC: They did?

MM: Grandmama, she would travel and go on, but he didn't like to leave.

BC: He didn't leave the house.

MM: He didn't leave the house. Not too much.

BC: No.

LBD: Why do you suppose that was?

MM: I don't know.

LBD: What, of your children, or your grandchildren. Do any of them remind you or have some of the characteristics that your grandfather Ike [inaudible]? Can you see that passed down? [inaudible].

MM: [inaudible] Let's see. Now Wilbur, he was my oldest boy. He would have been more like him than any [inaudible].

LBD: [inaudible].

MM: All of them work now.

LBD: They all have that strong work ethic.

MM: Yeah. [inaudible].

LBD: Have you worked, if that's not too personal?

MM: Have I worked? All my life.

LBD: What did you do?

MM: I worked at First National Bank in Five Points, you know...

LBD: Yes.

MM: ...downtown.

LBD: Oh.

MM: I worked there. I had come up with my mama got sick. I retired [inaudible]. I can't think how long I worked there.

LBD: You had to take care of your mama.

MM: Mm-hmm (affirmative). [inaudible]. My sister, my mama, and my brother. I had two brothers. I had a sister at one hospital and my brother at the other. I would get all my work in, on my lunch hour go see about my brother and go to the other hospital when I get off. In between, let me see. How many years [inaudible] When did I [inaudible]? It ain't been too long [inaudible]. Let me see, I'm 81 now, and I came off at [inaudible].

LBD: You're 81?

MM: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

BC: You don't look 81.

MM: Really? Gail! Now I know [inaudible]. I've been out about 30 years, I guess. I must have come off '60, '61. Because I made 30 year.

BC: Can I ask you, if it's not too personal, what you did there?

MM: I was a maid.

BC: You were a maid at the First National Bank at Five Points. Not Little Five Points, Five Points.

MM: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

BC: You were there 30 years.

MM: Little over 30 years.

BC: Yeah. Well, they must have liked you an awful lot. You must have had some of the traits of your grandfather and your mother too.

MM: I guess so. I would have retired, full retirement, but I had come off on account of they getting sick. Come off early retirement. I only had about two or three more years of work to get full retirement. It was just a little too much for me.

BC: Yeah.

MM: But my sister stayed next door. But my brother stayed over in Decatur. And then my mama was, I was in the house with my mama out there with her. So [inaudible] I didn't get any rest at all.

BC: Where were you with your mother?

MM: Out in Cascade.

BC: Cascade. Oh, I see. That's where your mother lived, where you grew up.

MM: Uh-huh (affirmative).

BC: How many brothers and sisters did you have?

MM: I had three brothers and three sisters. Maggie, Anne, and Emily, I had three sisters.

BC: What were their names?

MM: Maggie, Emily, and Anne.

BC: And Anne. Those were your sisters. Then you had three-

MM: Harold, Arthur, and... What's the baby boy name? Might think of it on today. [inaudible] know my brother's name.

BC: No, you're doing good.

MM: No, they all gone.

BC: They're all gone.

MM: Harold, Arthur...

LBD: You got Grandpa Ike's genes for longevity.

BC: Yeah, you have.

MM: Arthur, Harold. Howard.

BC: Howard. Okay. Good.

LBD: And where are their children? Are they in metro Atlanta? Your brothers and sisters, where are their children? Your nieces and nephews?

MM: Well, Emily got one son. He's in Chicago.

LBD: Do you all ever get together? Do they call you?

MM: Yeah, he come. He's sick now. He's been coming this year. But we call each other. Maggie didn't have any children. Annie had two. One of her girls - We don't know where one of her daughters is, but the other one died. We've been trying to locate her. But Annie died and her daddy died, and she just left Chicago. She lived in Chicago.

LBD: You all have family reunions?

MM: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

BC: Where do you have your reunion?

MM: Well, last year it was at Stone Mountain.

BC: At Stone Mountain.

MM: Uh-huh (affirmative). I don't know where it'll be next year. We didn't have it this year.

BC: You reserve a place out there and all get together? `

MM: Yeah.

BC: What time of the year do you have it?

MM: In September.

BC: September.

LBD: So, you just had it? Had it already?

MM: We didn't have it this year. They gave me a birthday party here.

BC: Oh, they did?

MM: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

BC: Oh.

MM: It supposed to have been a surprise birthday, but -

LBD: You knew.

MM: I knew. But it was beautiful. Everything was good out there. It really nice.

BC: Oh.

MM: My birthday was August 11th.

BC: I see. The family came. Did they bring food? You had a cookout?

MM: They had all kind of food, cakes. Everything.

BC: Some good cooks in the family?

MM: Yes, Lord. All of them cook.

BC: Yeah.

MM: They were raised [inaudible].

LBD: You get any recipes or specialties passed down from your mom and her mom?

MM: Yeah. I always could cook. She been baking cakes ever since she about six or seven years old.

LBD: So, your mom was a good cook, and your grandma?

MM: Uh-huh (affirmative).

LBD: What were some of their specialties, you think?

MM: I don't know, everything was special to me. I don't know what I used to love to cook. I used to love to bake pies and things like that, and Gail loved to cook cakes. But I can make most anything. I can cook.

LBD: But you don't cook much anymore?

MM: I don't do nothing. They got me on a diet.

BC: Oh.

LBD: You children or your physician? Both? The children have you on a diet or your physician?

MM: Physician.

BC: When you went to your grandmother's house to visit, your grandmother and grandfather's house, did you eat out there? Did you have a meal?

MM: Yeah, they usually have a little food out there. But we'd always eat before, you know, there'd be so many of us.

BC: Yeah, you'd have a Sunday dinner before you went.

MM: Uh-huh (affirmative).

BC: What would your grandmother serve you?

MM: I forgot. Country food.

BC: Country food. Did you have things like muscadines...

MM: Yep.

BC: Things like that you could eat.

MM: Mm-hmm (affirmative). I had a, that other one. What's that other one? I don't know what that one was called.

BC: Scuppernongs?

MM: Yeah, in my backyard.

BC: Oh.

MM: Had an apple tree. All them little kind of trees out there in Cascade.

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative). Yeah.

LBD: Did you grow up with a crabapple tree?

MM: I didn't have one in my yard, but it was some out on the street. I never liked them things. You like crabapples?

LBD: [inaudible] but they make good jelly.

BC: They make good jelly, and they make good little pickled crabapples. They're spiced ones, rather. They put spice in.

MM: They had persimmon, you don't see any of that now. Persimmon trees.

BC: Persimmons.

LBD: Or mayhaws.

MM: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

LBD: That's the best jelly in the world, mayhaw jelly.

MM: But I never can... You don't see none. They cut all the trees and things down. That [inaudible] little children, can't eat all that.

LBD: That's right.

BC: Yeah.

MM: Can't go to the store and buy those.

BC: Uh-uh (negative). No, you just go out when the stuff was ripe and fruit was ripe and pick it and eat it.

MM: Grapes, they be on them vines and things.

BC: Yep.

MM: It was another thing. My daddy worked for a doctor. He had a big old place. He had all those things around in his yard. We could go down there and pick there any time we want. We had a good life.

BC: Did your grandfather grow watermelons?

MM: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

BC: Did you ever have watermelon out at the farm?

MM: Yeah. Mm-hmm (affirmative). That about the first thing they would plant, wasn't it?

LBD: Watermelon and the peas.

BC: And peas, uh-huh (affirmative).

LBD: Right after the corn and the peanuts and the potatoes.

BC: Corn, peanuts, potatoes. Uh-huh (affirmative).

LBD: Because that was something that you could eat while you were in the field.

MM: You're right. Oh, that's the reason.

LBD: It was easy to find something to eat in the field if you're [inaudible] watermelons.

MM: That's true.

BC: Maybe it would quench your thirst too.

LBD: And kind of boost yourself [inaudible] being out there in the sun [inaudible].

BC: Yeah. I remember that from [inaudible]. Friend of mine, we'd go visit her grandpa's farm, and he would let us go down to the watermelon patch and pick up a watermelon and just drop it. Eat the heart out of it and [crosstalk].

LBD: [inaudible].

MM: Don't do that no more, do you? Watermelon don't taste like it used to.

BC: No, and one reason is because everybody freezes and cools it.

MM: Yes, that's true.

BC: And it tastes better when it's warm, doesn't it?

MM: Yes, yes.

LBD: [inaudible] hot house ones.

BC: That may be too. No. Chickens don't taste the same either, do they?

MM: Ooh, I'm sick of chicken, they just don't taste like chicken anymore.

BC: No. no.

MM: Fish either.

BC: Uh-uh (negative).

LBD: I like to go to the farm and fish out of a pond.

BC: I heard they had a fishpond out on the Mable house, and where they had fish. They would go fishing there.

MM: They might have. Been so long since I've been out there. Y'all haven't been through up there?

BC: No, this was when your grandfather was there.

MM: Yeah, I meant all back in there. We had some of everything back in there.

BC: Yeah.

LBD: Have you driven through there recently and you didn't-

MM: I haven't been out there in a long time. Now, Emma Lee, this other girl, she might have been out there because they lived out there. Their home was out there. I don't know if they've been back lately or not. But it was pretty. Had a great big, old white house. Lots of rooms and things. Then grandpapa and them had a house right behind. Then Emma Lee and them house was down the road, like to say a street, a little farther.

BC: A little farther down.

MM: Uh-huh (affirmative).

BC: Within walking distance.

MM: Yes, ma'am. And it was real nice.

BC: Did the Mables ever see you, or did you see them?

MM: Oh, yeah. Mm-hmm (affirmative).

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative).

MM: Yeah. They'd come over to our house. They'd visit us.

BC: They did?

MM: Uh-huh (affirmative).

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative).

MM: You know they come to see grandpa.

BC: Oh, yeah.

MM: Take him out for a ride and everything.

BC: Yeah. He was fond of them too.

MM: Yeah. He loved them.

LBD: He was kind of the center of attention.

MM: They were crazy about him. Wouldn't say nothing wrong with him, [inaudible].

BC: Yeah. They didn't want to hear anything bad about him.

MM: That's true.

BC: They didn't want to hear anything-

MM: I think they thought him more of his son than was ours.

BC: Oh. They did. Oh.

MM: Really had a nice place out there. I would like to ride up today.

BC: Well, they're having a reception for all the descendants next week.

MM: Oh, they are?

BC: I hope you can come to it.

MM: I hope so.

BC: If you need a ride to go, I'd be happy to come and get you. If Gail is working, or if your family can't take you.

MM: Okay.

BC: We'd be happy to take you over there. LaDoris and I both plan to go.

MM: I appreciate it.

LBD: They have a big Publix, whose land was that, where the big Publix supermarket is?

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative), that was the Williams.

LBD: [inaudible] Williams, they have a big Publix supermarket.

BC: Did you ever know the Williams family?

MM: I might have. I might be, I forgot.

BC: Did you know Trudelia?

MM: Oh, yeah.

LBD: That was going to be my next one.

BC: Oh, the next one.

LBD: Everybody knew Trudelia.

BC: Everybody, yeah.

LBD: No, no, no, I'm just saying, that was going to be my next question. Did you know Trudelia?

MM: Oh.

LBD: Because she's the part I'm playing [inaudible].

MM: Yeah.

BC: She's going to be Trudelia. That's her-

MM: Oh.

MM: Really.

LBD: Tell me what you remember about Trudelia?

MM: Oh, some of everything. She had a son and a daughter, didn't she? I know she had a son.

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative), James.

MM: James.

BC: And a daughter. Tut.

MM: Tut.

BC: Asalie, she called Tut.

MM: You'd have to come back to him. It's been years, but I haven't seen them in so long. Know Trudelia.

LBD: Yeah.

MM: Yeah. Do I know Trudelia.

BC: Well, tell us what you, was she older than you were?

MM: Oh yes. She much older than I.

BC: Yeah. You were age of her daughter, I guess.

MM: Somewhat like that.

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative).

MM: See, when I was running around out there, I was small and young.

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative).

MM: See, I done had so much, gone through so much since then I ain't got time to see.

BC: You do too. Well, did you play with Tut? Did you ever play with her?

MM: Oh yeah.

BC: You did?

MM: Uh-huh (affirmative). I used to go out to Emma Lee's and spend the weekend or something, maybe spend a weekend something. We'd all play together now.

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative).

MM: But been so long. I've been through so much since then. I would have to crank up-

LBD: Such a long, such a lifetime ago.

MM: Uh-huh (affirmative). I would have to crank up maybe so much.

BC: Well, would Trudelia come and visit your grandmother and grandfather?

MM: Oh yeah, she loved her.

BC: Yeah.

MM: Loved my mama too.

BC: Yeah.

MM: Mm-hmm (affirmative). I think Trudelia came- I don't know where she stayed. She used to have some people over in here. She came over and stayed near there.

LBD: In Decatur?

MM: Not over here but in Atlanta.

BC: In Atlanta. In Cascade?

MM: In Hunter Hill, somewhere over that way. But she was over this way somewhere. Emma Lee and them would know more about that than I because they were close.

BC: That was after her husband Jim died I guess. Jim McAfee.

MM: Yeah.

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative). But she would go back and work in Mableton didn't she?

MM: Uh-huh (affirmative).

BC: Did she kid around with people a lot? Was that- Trudelia?

MM: Trudelia. Yeah, you know, she had lots of mouth.

BC: She did?

MM: She just like to talk, right.

BC: Oh. Lots of mouth.

MM: Real -

LBD: Did she tell you stories? Everything was a story.

MM: Yeah I liked Trudelia. She loved my mama. She was crazy about mama.

BC: Yeah? What did they do together?

MM: Wasn't nothing to do but sit and talk.

BC: Yeah? They tell each other stories?

MM: No, wasn't nowhere-

LBD: Sit and talk and go to church.

MM: Wasn't nowhere to go. Nowhere to go.

BC: Did you ever get to listen to her or to them? Did you get to hang around and listen?

MM: Not much. Like, you always had something to do.

BC: Yeah.

MM: They be running their mouth just as you know, just talking.

BC: Yeah.

MM: Old times and all.

BC: Talking old times.

MM: Yeah, Trudelia real nice. Trudelia had a daughter, but I don't know what Trudelia daughter were named or nothing. Now what- Emma Lee and them would know, because they was out there. Seems like she came to our house once or twice. I don't know what Trudelia- I don't know where she still is, she could be still, no...

LBD: I think she died. What, '96 she died?

MM: Ain't been too long.

LBD: No, it wasn't too long ago.

BC: Not too long ago.

LBD: What did Trudelia do after she left the Williamses, after slavery was abolished?

MM: She came over here. I don't know what she was doing. See, I was running around with all my sick folks and all like that. And she, I don't know-

LBD: Then she visited, and she tried to keep in touch with you?

MM: Uh-huh (affirmative). She was at the church, she was secretary or something like that at the church, wasn't she?

BC: At the Little Bethel? Yeah, she took care of the money.

MM: Oh, I knew she something like this.

LBD: Janie was telling us-

BC: Yeah, that's what Miss Janie- We talked to Ms. Janie Ayres, Mrs. Janie Ayres, who was a Williams. And she knew Trudelia real well because, see, Trudelia worked for her family as a matter of fact.

MM: Yeah, I knew there was something Trudelia did at the church.

BC: And she was telling about that. Yeah, at the church that she did that. Sometimes she would let this little girl, she was then, go with her to help her count the money.

MM: Oh really?

BC: Did you ever go to that church?

MM: Yes, I've been there lots.

BC: Have you?

MM: That's where grandpapa and them was buried.

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative). And did they have good crowd at the church, to come to the church for -

LBD: About how many did it hold-

BC: Services.

LBD: Did it hold a hundred?

MM: No, I don't think it holds-

LBD: I didn't think so. It was [inaudible].

MM: Just like, I think they had church second and fourth for the first and third one and the Methodist church had -

LBD: How did the [inaudible]. The Methodist church shared that church?

MM: No.

LBD: Oh, okay. The Methodist church had their services on [inaudible].

BC: Did they use the same preacher?

MM: Yep.

BC: They did.

MM: I done forgot his name. I did know his name. Kept him for years. He ain't been too long left there. Reverend...

LBD: I wonder why they never expanded the church and made it any bigger? Surely the congregation wanted -

MM: I wanted. I guess they must have built some new churches or something.

LBD: It still kind of back down that little road?

MM: It is.

LBD: You got to really look for it.

MM: But that's where it's been the whole time. But it looked like they would have enlarged it [inaudible].

LBD: I'm surprised that it's still open because of where it's located.

MM: Yeah, because Mattie Lou tell me, she go down there some third Sundays or something. Y'all haven't met Mattie Lou Bennett? Mattie Lou -

LBD: Who was that?

MM: She's on this program somewhere.

BC: Yeah, I have heard her name. Mattie Lou Clowers?

MM: Clowers, yeah. She tell me she go down there sometimes during the [inaudible]

LBD: Would they have revival? [inaudible]

MM: Yeah. I don't know [inaudible].

LBD: I think there's a lot of spirit [inaudible] imagine?

MM: I haven't talked to Mattie Lou in a good while.

BC: Mattie Lou would be, let's see, her mother was a Bennett wasn't she?

MM: Yeah.

BC: And I guess they did go to that church. They worked around there.

MM: Around now.

BC: I'm not sure whether they worked for the Mables or not. I'm not accustomed.

MM: Mattie Lou on up there too. Mattie Lou pretty near 90 years old.

BC: Is she?

MM: Much older than I am. She was teaching when I was a little girl.

BC: Was she?

MM: She was teaching down there, you know the little schoolhouse down there by the church.

BC: Yes.

MM: That's what she used to teach.

BC: Oh. I didn't know that. I wonder if she-

MM: I think she going to be on this program I believe.

BC: And she might. They probably have interviewed her and talked to her.

MM: Like she said that she going to be on –

LBD: Are you coming to the program?

MM: I hope so.

LBD: When is it?

Speaker 2: Saturday. October-

BC: October 2nd. On a Saturday. October the second.

MM: Oh, good it's on a Saturday.

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative) and you just have to come. I hope Gail can come too. I'm calling her Gail. I should say Mrs. Evers. I'm sorry. I don't mean to be so familiar.

GE: That's fine.

MM: That's her name.

GE: Can I get you all a soda?

BC: I don't care for one. Thank you.

LBD: I'm fine, thank you.

BC: We do want to get your picture though, with your mother and your son.

GE: He's gone.

BC: Oh, too bad. We'll get it with you then anyway, if you don't mind.

GE: Okay.

MM: Yeah, I don't make a good picture because I'm looking like, I don't know. I never could take a picture.

LBD: You sound like my mother. But you know the most unusual thing about Trudelia. She looks a lot – Her picture that shows her, at the Mable house. She looks a lot like my grandmother.

MM: Oh really?

LBD: My mother's mother. Her little turban, her clothes. When I first saw the pictures, I'm like, "That's my grandmother!"

GE: Just let me know when you get ready.

BC: Okay. I told LaDoris I think Trudelia is going sound like, that LaDoris is going to sound like Trudelia too from what we've heard. She's a great one with the-

LBD: I got the right one.

MM: That's Trudelia.

BC: Yeah. You want to come on down now? Gail? We'll go ahead and get the picture in.

GE: We're going to sit down, right?

BC: Yeah, you can do.

MM: [inaudible] Aunt Deborah's son. The one in Chicago.

BC: Oh, he's still in Chicago?

MM: No, he's passed.

BC: Oh, he's passed.

MM: And his mama too.

GE: [inaudible]

BC: Yeah. Do you have other children?

GE: I have one daughter. That's her.

LBD: These are your grandchildren?

BC: Grandchildren. They live here?

GE: In Atlanta [inaudible].

MM: Who is this? I mean, they just put picture, [inaudible] right?

BC: Oh it's – Wrote it on the back.

GE: Oh, this is a friend of mine. This is [inaudible], and this is her.

MM: That's her sister's child.

GE: That's my sister's son's child. This is Charlotte's son's child.

LBD: Ms. Merriweather, what kind of relationship did Ike and Drew have?

MM: They were brothers.

LBD: With each other? I mean so far as getting along?

MM: Oh they [crosstalk]. Drew wasn't a talker. But they real close.

BC: They were?

MM: They stayed on the same plantation and everything.

BC: Did they try and help each other?

MM: No grandpapa was at work and I guess Drew just stayed around the house.

BC: Yeah, I know. He didn't work and do the jobs like your grandfather did?

GE: You said Drew stayed in the house.

MM: Around the house a lot.

GE: You said he stayed in the house?

MM: Yeah, he stayed in the house.

GE: Ike stayed in the back, right?

MM: Yeah.

BC: And that they had different kinds of work. I know Mr. Robert Mable, the first man there, the owner, relied on Ike to help him do a lot of things. Run his businesses, keep things going. And he trusted him a whole lot to do a lot of things. Where Drew was kind of playful –

MM: Drew didn't talk. I don't think he could speak language.

BC: He couldn't? Oh.

MM: But he never did just talk like we talking, but he would come in and may say a word or two and he's gone.

LBD: Did he sing? Some of the stories said he sang and he entertained?

MM: I never heard any.

LBD: And prayed out loud often?

BC: Yeah.

MM: I guess that must have been at home. When we went out there he'll come and speak to us but he was going back to the house.

LBD: So, he didn't [inaudible]

BC: Tell us what he looked like.

MM: Oh my. I'm not good at –

BC: I mean, was he tall? Like your grandfather, was he tall?

MM: Yeah, he wasn't tall like Travis. He about came to Travis' shoulder and you haven't seen a picture of grandpa have you?

BC: No, we haven't seen a picture of him. We're hoping we'll get to see one.

MM: He looked somewhat like grandpa, but grandpa was a talker.

LBD: Grandpa Ike was a talker?

MM: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

BC: Who did he talk to then?

MM: Anybody.

BC: Anybody?

MM: Anybody.

LBD: Is she a talker?

MM: No.

GE: She's not basically a talker but her sister, she's deceased now, is a talker. She would talk to you and talk.

LBD: And which one was that?

GE: That's Emily. She would talk to you –

LBD: She would have got along well with Trudelia.

GE: Oh, she would have talked you up a storm all day. My mother and her mother wasn't a talker. She was a learned lady. When she said something she meant it.

MM: Now Emma Lee mother and my grandmama, now they [inaudible] they was lots alike.

BC: Yeah.

MM: And my mama and my granddaddy were more alike.

BC: Oh.

GE: I'm hoping I have some pictures. I started looking last night and found some pictures of her mother, although my sister got a lot of the old pictures [inaudible]. She said she should have a picture.

LBD: Where's your sister? In Atlanta?

GE: She's in Decatur.

LBD: Oh, where is she in Decatur?

GE: She lives off McAfee.

LBD: Near me.

GE: No, she lives near –

LBD: I live off Valley Ridge. In the Toney Valley.

GE: She's right at Glendale and Toney.

LBD: Oh, that's right behind me.

BC: What's her name?

GE: Charlotte, Charlotte [inaudible]

LBD: We came that way.

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative). And what street does she live on?

GE: Glendale.

BC: Glendale.

LBD: It's right behind me.

BC: And that's your sister?

GE: That's my sister.

BC: Do you have a- your family all gets together for reunions and things. Have you made up a family tree?

GE: Pat started, one of our cousins, started. I don't know how far she has gotten but she did start. Did she ever give to Emma? I think Emma – Mary went over to Emma's to interview her last night. I think she did say she got one from her.

BC: Oh good.

LBD: Miss Merriweather how do you feel about all the interviewing and the fuss that's being made about your ancestors?

MM: Oh, it feels fine. Glad to hear it again.

BC: You know they have big plans for the Mable House?

MM: Oh really?

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative). At a tea that they had for the descendants, the ones they had found at that point back in, I think it was July, someone, I think he was with Parks and Recreation, announced that they were trying to make it into a living history museum and they would have reenactment then of all the things, the people who lived there, and all this. So that's one of the reasons why it's so important to get everything documented. They want to document this and they're thinking there may be a program, PBS might do a documentary on this, because this is a very unusual family. The families that lived there are very unique and it's unique that it's still there.

GE: Yeah. I went, well whenever I talked to you. It was amazing that she said it was just like it was when they lived there. It was just amazing.

MM: That's up in old house?

GE: At the Mable's.

BC: Yeah. The two big houses are still standing.

MM: Oh really?

BC: Yes. And your grandfather's house is still there.

GE: Still there, it's just amazing.

MM: Yeah. I haven't been through there in years.

BC: Now all around it-

LBD: Is changed.

BC: There's all kind of stores and everything, but those places are still there.

GE: She said they haven't actually touched it. They have put some siding on the outside, but the roof is still the same and I looked inside. It's amazing. And it's probably, no it's not even as big as this room.

BC: Oh really? You mean the house your grandfather grew up in? I mean, not grew up in, but had, he and his wife.

GE: It's amazing. I don't know how many of his children were born there.

BC: That is surprising.

GE: You all haven't seen it?

BC: Yes I haven't seen it inside. Only from the outside. We saw it from the outside.

LBD: It generally wouldn't have been big enough to accommodate cooking and sleeping. [inaudible]

GE: I'm just saying, I don't know how many children lived there. Because what, he had nine? [inaudible]

BC: We only knew about four.

GE: Four?

BC: Four children.

GE: Whose four?

[Unidentified]: How many [inaudible]?

GE: Well now mama had, his daughter had nine. How many- [crosstalk] No, mama's sisters. [crosstalk] It was Debbie. It was mama. It was Debbie. Emma-Lou, Emma's mother.

MM: They had two brothers.

GE: Mama. Mama. Talking about Mama.

MM: She had a brother. Mama, Aunt Love, Aunt Dovey.

GE: And Emma.

MM: And Emma. And Uncle- what is his name? Yeah, that's Emma Lee [inaudible].

LBD: So, there were two brothers?

MM: There would have been her mama's brothers at home. Emma Lee's mama's brothers. [inaudible] I think they died in Chicago. Emma Lee's mama's brothers.

GE: No, I'm talking about your mama. Your mama. Did your mama have some brothers? Gertrude, did she have some brothers?

MM: I don't know.

GE: If she did I don't know them. [inaudible]

MM: Did she have one live in Alabama?

GE: Mama? [inaudible] I call her "mother" and my mama "mama."

MM: I'm trying to. My mind don't function right. Somebody lived in Alabama that used to come up.

BC: Gail, did your grandmother ever tell you stories about when she was a little girl or about her father and mother when they were small?

GE: No. [inaudible]

BC: She wouldn't tell you, "Now when I was a little girl, we couldn't do this and that?"

GE: She just told me, "You don't do that."

BC: Oh. [crosstalk]

GE: She didn't tell you what she didn't do. She just told you what you don't do.

BC: What you don't do.

LBD: [inaudible].

GE: She was a [inaudible] lady.

BC: Did your grandmother seem like a proud person? Proud of herself and her family and everything?

GE: Very. She was a proud lady up until the time died. She really wasn't, didn't even get sick. She fell when she was about 101. And she died when she was 102. She really wasn't sick. I don't remember her ever going to the hospital or doctor.

MM: She went once down at, what that hospital down –

GE: Yeah, but she was almost a hundred then.

MM: Oh, she was hundred and sound.

GE: She went to Holy Family.

MM: Yeah, when they let her- [crosstalk]

GE Holy Family. That's the only time I ever knew [inaudible]

MM: She went down there two weeks, she full of soul. So, I brought her all the way from down there.

GE: She went to church up until the last. Until she broke a hip, she fell over, she couldn't go to church. Other than that, she was still going to church. Same church. I [inaudible].

MM: What church do you go to?

LBD: Cathedral of the Holy Spirit out in Decatur.

MM: In Decatur?

LBD: Yes ma'am. What are you –

BC: Big place.

MM: Under the- I can't even think of the church name. I'm trying to say which one you talking about?

BC: The one she goes to.

MM: Oh, yeah.

BC: It is a big, biggest church I ever saw.

MM: You haven't met a girl down there named- I can't, her name gone already. It'll come to me.

LBD: Where do you attend?

MM: Philadelphia out in Cascade. Been there all my days ever since I was a baby.

BC: Yeah.

MM: Eighty-one year.

LBD: Is that Baptist?

MM: Yeah.

LBD: And I was wondering, since- [crosstalk]

[Unidentified]: Who is her father?

MM: Who, your dad? His name is Levi.

GE: That's her mother [inaudible]. That's her.

MM: You got my picture? [crosstalk]

LBD: What was her last name?

GE: Parm's.

LBD: Parm's. Whereabouts was this taken?

MM: That was in Florida. I believe that was taken in Florida. Dr. Hammond owned an orange grove down in Florida, would go ever so much down there. I think that's what happened. I think.

BC: How old was your grandmother here?

MM: Oh, probably in her nineties in that one.

GE: She was in her nineties. Because this is where I used to live over on [inaudible], so she was in her nineties. Then that's the plaque that her mother received for being at the same church. [inaudible]

BC: This was your father?

MM: Uh-huh (affirmative).

BC: Oh, he was nice looking, standing up there.

MM: Yeah [crosstalk].

GE: This is '85. '84, '85.

BC: He looks so handsome here.

MM: Debonair and proud.

BC: Yes, he does. All dressed up there in his nice suit and hat. Yes. That's a good picture.

MM: Thank you. He went everywhere. He [inaudible] everything.

BC: He did?

MM: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

BC: This is when she was at her hundredth birthday. So, she was born in 1882. Says this is April 1982.

GE: Oh, okay.

BC: On her hundredth birthday.

MM: And you asked me mama was '82?

BC: Uh-huh (affirmative). That's it. 1882. [crosstalk].

LBD: That's pretty much the way Grandpa Ike was. [inaudible].

GE: [inaudible]

BC: I think you probably want to gather as many as you can and as much history of the family as you can and everything, so that if others come and ask you questions you'll- you may get tired of people asking you questions, but there may be others after us.

MM: I didn't think of that, forgetting we're talking. I can't think in time. [crosstalk]

LBD: [inaudible] because you said Emma –

GE: Emma's the talker.

MM: Emma, and my sister, Emily. [inaudible] I'm trying to think that child's name. [inaudible].

GE: Did you see the video? [inaudible]

BC: Mary Anderson?

GE: No, not Mary Anderson. [inaudible] mother, think it's his grandmother. [inaudible] And she said- Mary told me she had something do with the Mable family. So, I don't know she did.

BC: It is interesting. You may find he's in the family tree of some of the other descendants. They're trying very hard to find all the descendants of people who were slaves there because Robert Mable had eleven slaves, the one who bought- and they said he never would call them slaves. He always called them the workers. Or the helpers. And I think that may have been- a small farm, slaves would've been treated differently than they would've been on these great big farms. But I think that's probably the reason, one of the reasons, why some of them stayed afterward. Like your grandfather stayed and worked the land because he felt at home there. And he felt good about working for Mr. Mable.

MM: He loved it.

BC: Yeah. So.

LBD: I guess it must have been his family?

BC: It was family. They said they were all like family. That's the Mable family says, we were just all like family.

GE: Yeah I know there were very interesting [inaudible] As you're saying.

BC: As they do more research they will want more of your history as much as they can get, and the descendants and all of you so they can keep up with all of you. Because it's a living and ongoing history. It's not just been. It's a history of America. Yeah.

MM: Look like I had grandpapa's picture somewhere, but might be in, I hope it's in Charlotte's...

GE: [inaudible] I told Mary, I remember, one of the pictures it was a man with a farming suit on. I don't know who it was or [inaudible] who was this old person? So, I never really related, so I knew they do have pictures. It's just those [inaudible]

LBD: But now it's coming into focus.

BC: Do you know that Ike Mathis and Drew Mathis lived through the Civil War, the end of the century and the Depression that went after it. They lived through the First World War and then they

lived through all the change that came about after that. And then they lived through the 20s and then the Depression in the 30s. I mean that's a long span. They went through good and bad, good and bad, good and bad times and survived it all, lived through it and raised their families. Yeah.

LBD: How old did Ike - I'm sorry, how old did Drew live to be, because Ike lived to [inaudible].

GE: 98.

LBD: 98?

GE: Ike was 98.

BE: Ike was 98.

LBD: Did you figure out how long Drew lived?

BC: I don't know. [crosstalk]. They may know. I don't know exactly, but he was in his nineties, I think. Do you remember? I'm trying to think.

GE: He died before grandpa [inaudible].

MM: Yeah.

BC: He died before.

MM: Emma Lee. Emma Lee knew, probably know. 'Cause they were still out. Weren't they still out in Mableton? They were still going back and forth, weren't they?

LBD: Do you remember where he was when he passed?

MM: He was in Mableton.

LBD: Was he at home, or ...

MM: Yeah, he was at home. He was at the house you were talking about. That's where he lived and died. [inaudible]

BC: Drew, yeah. [inaudible]. Did you go to his funeral, Drew?

MM: No, I didn't go to his funeral.

BC: Did you know that Trudelia preached his funeral?

MM: Trudelia did?

LBD: According to the records.

BC: Yeah. The preacher was out of town.

MM: Where was I? I must have been sick when Drew died.

BC: You weren't born then.

LBD: [inaudible].

BC: No.

MM: I must have been sick.

GE: [inaudible] Depending on when you were born. [inaudible] Granddaddy, Great-granddaddy Ike when I was seven. So, I just [inaudible].

BC: When he died. He died in '55, didn't he?

GE: Yeah, he died in '53, I think.

BC: '53, yeah.

Shawna: And I was seven. So, when she was having babies, on back, [inaudible].

BC: Yeah, before you.

MM: I'm sure mama went. I must have been sick.

BC: But I think it was in the late 30s that he died. You wouldn't have been born. Yeah. But you may have had other children, or having other children. Young mother.

GE: [inaudible] born in the 30s.

LBD: Is there anything you want to add [inaudible]?

GE: So, did Drew have any ... so you all haven't found anything else about any children or anything? [inaudible].

BC: That Drew had?

GE: He didn't have any children?

LBD: There's no record –

MM: I never heard anything about his children. Just like I say, Emma Lee would know.

GE: Emma Lee [crosstalk].

LBD: Did he marry?

MM: Huh?

LBD: Did he marry?

MM: Never did see nobody with Drew. In fact, I never seen him talking to anybody. But the white people's house when we come out here, the people that he lived with. In fact, you couldn't understand what he was saying. He talked in a funny tone.

BC: Did he?

MM: You had to know what he was saying.

BC: You had to know him to understand.

MM: Understand, right.

BC: He had a speech impediment then?

MM: Yeah.

BC: Did he stutter or did he kind of slur?

MM: Kind of stuttered. You'd just read his lips. I mean, so that's the only ... you wouldn't know. If you just walked up and talked to him, you wouldn't know what he was saying. Somebody'd have to tell you what he was saying. And he would not talk too long.

LBD: Oh. Do you think he was embarrassed because he didn't –

MM: No, he was a good-looking man.

BC: Embarrassment was not something... He liked to entertain, we understand.

MM: Uh-huh (affirmative).

GE: I know [inaudible].

MM: Now his brother was a talker. Grandpapa was a talker.

BC: Yeah, grandpa was a talker. Yeah.

GE: [inaudible].

BC: Your grandfather?

GE: I guess I always thought he was Indian or something.

BC: Who? Your grandfather?

LBD: Mm-hmm (affirmative). That's why we were trying to find out the parentage of Ike and Drew.

BC: Yeah, we had heard that Drew said he was half Indian. Half Cherokee.

GE: I think I've heard that, because Granddaddy Ike looked like... His hair was just ... I think he was probably ... Emma would know more about that [inaudible]

BC: His hair was straight.

GE: Straight, yeah. [inaudible].

LBD: Did Drew look the same?

GE: [inaudible]

BC: Did Drew look a lot like Ike?

MM: They were similar.

BC: They were similar. They resembled each other.

MM: Only Drew was kind of low, and Ike was taller.

BC: He was tall.

MM: I remember that.

GE: My grandpapa [inaudible].

LBD: Talking about the [inaudible].

BC: Yeah.

LBD: When she said that I said, that sounds like my dad, because my dad is 84.

GE: Okay, so they can relate.

LBD: Yeah. He won't say, "You fat." He'll say, "You're thick." Or stout. She's low, she's low to the ground. He would say you were low to the ground.

BC: That's the way he would describe me, right. Yeah.

LBD: So, you don't really know the heritage of Ike and Drew?

GE: Hopefully Emma does. Her mother and Emma's mother were sisters, and Emma is older than my mother, but she got out more. She was more innovative and ...

MM: But they lived right together.

GE: Emma and Drew had lived together. Yeah.

MM: On the same plantation.

BC: Yeah. So, they would've been close and have known what each other did more on a daily basis. Well, if you have anything else that you feel like we need to know at any time, please give us a call. You can call Mary that you know so well. You can call me or LaDoris. You have my telephone number. LaDoris, you can give them yours.

LBD: What's your sister name? In Decatur?

GE: Charlotte.

LBD: [inaudible] we're hollering distance.

BC: Is your sister younger than you, Charlotte?

GE: She's older.

BC: She's older.

GE: She's five years older than me.

BC: I see. And as I said, we are just storytellers. That's what we are. We are doing the stories.

LBD: Yeah, we [inaudible].

BC: Yes, [inaudible]

LBD: We've actually turned out to be more than we thought we were. It's so interesting.

BC: It is.

LBD: Every day, we learn something new.

GW: Something new, yeah.

BC: We're both just fascinated with this, and we don't usually spend this much time on stories. [crosstalk]. We love it, both of us do.

GE: Y'all going to be doing the same [inaudible]?

LBD: Well, we're telling the story together. I'm telling about Drew and the Williams and Ike from Trudelia's point of view, and you're telling it from-

BC: I'm telling it from May Mitchell Mable's point of view. She would've been married. May Mitchell Mable was married to Robert Mable, who was the son of Alex. And so, I'm telling it from her standpoint. She would've been about the same age as Trudelia, somewhere close there. But I'm telling it from her standpoint. I'm telling the story from her standpoint, the stories that have come to us from the Mables. And Trudelia is telling the stories that she knows from the Williams family, from other historical records and things. And we were in great hopes we would find some more stories about Ike. There's just lots of stories floating around out there about Drew. And he was a unique character.

MM: Yeah, he sure was.

BC: And I guess people like to tell the stories about him.

LBD: Do you remember he dressed? [inaudible].

GE: [inaudible].

LBD: Do you remember that he dressed any differently than anybody else?

MM: No, he just ordinary clothes.

LBD: So, you don't remember him wearing layers of clothes and collecting strange things?

MM: No. Because when we go out there, we just see him and we gone.

GE: See he could have –

MM: He could've had them there.

LBD: It could have been later on.

GE: But Emma is the one that –

MM: She would know. He would come down and maybe say a word or two and sit awhile, and then he would be gone.

BC: He would be gone.

BC: Gone back up in the house.

LBD: Would he hug the nieces and nephews?

MM: No, he wouldn't. He would talk, but you didn't know what he was saying.

BC: You just couldn't understand what he would say. Yeah. And that must have been frustrating for him.

MM: Yeah.

BC: At first, I believe they thought that he may have been mentally impaired, may have had some mental problems. And he may have had some slight ones, but it's now thought that there were different disabilities there instead of mental.

MM: [inaudible] His brother, he could talk.

BC: Yeah. As far as you know, Ike and Drew did not have any other brothers or sisters.

MM: Not that I know of. Those were the only two there.

BC: Do you know what their mother's name was?

MM: Drew's mother?

BC: Drew and Ike's mother.

MM: Mm-mm (negative). I tell you, you'd have to ask Emma Lee or her brother. The brother would know more than Emily because he younger, but he'd know more about it, I think.

BC: [inaudible].

MM: That's Emma Lee's brother.

BC: Oh, okay.

GE: So, who Emma was, who Emma is, was grandpapa's –

MM: Daughter's child.

GE: Daughter's child, yeah.

LBD: So, his grandchild?

MM: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

BC: And so, that would be a grandchild to Ike.

MM: M.C. Wilson is her brother.

BC: What's his name?

MM: M.C. What's her brother's name? M.C. –

GE: [inaudible]. Matthew.

BC: Mathis was Ike's last name, your grandfather's last name.

GE: Matthew Wilson.

MM: Wilson.

BC: Oh, Matthew?

GE: Is it Matthew Wilson? Isn't it Matthew Wilson?

MM: Yeah, may be Wilson.

BC: Matthew Wilson.

MM: Emma Lee's brother.

BC: Okay. His grandson.

MM: He's younger than Emma Lee, but he probably could tell you more than Emma Lee.

GE: You were first cousins. You were first cousins, Emma Lee's brother. So, Emma Lee would be your first cousin.

MM: Uh-huh (affirmative), my first cousin. Two sisters.

BC: That's good. I think we've gotten a lot of information today. Although I'm disappointed we didn't get a little story, but we found out where we might be able to get one. So, as I say, if you think of anything else that you want to tell any of us, this is going into the archives. They're setting up archives there to get these records. And so, anything you think of, we'd be really happy to see that they get into the archives.

GE: [inaudible]. Back when he died, I remember they brought his body back to the house, and it stayed in the living room.

LBD: To the house [inaudible]? Stayed there how long?

GE: [inaudible]

BC: They had calling hours there.

GE: Uh-huh (affirmative) that's where they came to view the body. And my daughter still live in the same house.

BC: Oh, does she? And that was –

GE: Herring, 2398 Herring Drive. And that's on his death certificate. It's right in Cascade Heights. Do you know anything about Cascade Heights?

LBD: I know Cascade Road that runs –

MM: You ever been to Philadelphia Baptist Church?

LBD: No ma'am.

MM: It's right off of Cascade.

LBD: [inaudible] Cascade, there's a new Publix right there by the interstate and I go all the way back and it runs to West End?

GE: Okay. It's right - Do you know where Beautiful Restaurant is?

LBD: Yeah.

GE: It's straight, right in front of there.

LBD: So that's where –

GE: He died.

LBD: That's where he lay in state?

MM: Yes.

GE: How many days did Granddaddy stay at the house after he died?

MM: Just overnight. When they used to bring them, they'd bring them that night and they'd stay overnight, and they'd come and take them to the church.

GE: The next day?

MM: Next day.

GE: To me, when I was seven –

BC: It seems like a long time.

GE: - it seemed like it was a long time.

BC: Yeah.

MM: So, he died at night, and the undertaker came and picked him up. And the day before the funeral, they'd bring him back.

GE: [inaudible]

LBD: He had laid in state at the house, right?

GE: Uh-huh (affirmative).

MM: And then leave the home, go on over to the church.

GE: It's the same house he laid in state, we still own it [inaudible].

BC: Still in the family.

GE: They should [inaudible].

BC: Yes, they should. Yeah. Well, this has been fascinating, and we don't want to take any more of your time, and we will ...

MM: Really glad to meet you though.

BC: Well, it's nice meeting you.

LBD: We've got a little part in this [inaudible]. I mean, just being a part of it, discovering all this history.

BC: LaDoris and I are kind of sisters under the skin. [crosstalk]. We've been good friends for several years and we travel around together.

MM: [inaudible]. That's wonderful.

BC: Yeah. We have another friend, Nancy Sims, who lives over in West End, who's one of our friends too. She's going to be telling stories there that day, and we try and get together and tell stories and help each other. It's just ... yeah.

LBD: It is.

BC: Yeah. It really is. It's wonderful to have good friends.

MM: How far down in Mableton is this church?

BC: Little Bethel?

MM: Oh, it's going to be in Little Bethel? It's not going to be –

BC: Not going to be at the church. [crosstalk].

MM: No, no.

BC: The reception, Gail, you know about the reception, do you?

GE: Yes. Got the invitation.

BC: Are you planning to go to it? Will you be able to get off from work and go, and take your mother?

GE: Yes.

BC: Oh, okay. Good. I was telling your mother, if you couldn't, I would take her there, but –

GE: That's so sweet.

BC: I'm glad you can go too, though. That makes it better.

LBD: [inaudible] But like the kids say nowadays, we hook you up.

MM: Hook you up. It was so nice meeting you.

BC: It's so nice meeting you. It certainly is.

LBD: Nice meeting you, darling.

BC: This tape was recorded on September the 16th at the home of Mrs. Gail Evers, who is the daughter of Mrs. Mildred Merriweather. I've helped record it. I was recording. I'm Bev Center, who is a storyteller. And the other storyteller, LaDoris Bias Davis, was there. We did not get all of this information, unfortunately, on the front of the tape for some reason, but I just want to include it now so that you would know where it came from.

Mrs. Evers lived in Decatur, Georgia, and Mrs. Merriweather was there at that time. We interviewed Mrs. Merriweather first, and then Mrs. Evers came in. Her daughter came back into the room and began to answer questions and take part in the interview as well. So just wanted to make that clear. Thank you.

[End of interview]