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COBB COUNTY ORAL HISTORY SERIES

NO. 29

INTERVIEW WITH JOHN STEVE FREY, SR.  
AND  
SARA SKELTON BOZEMAN FREY

CONDUCTED AND EDITED BY

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John Steve Frey, Sr. was born in west Cobb County on January 4, 1898.

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MC: when you were born?

JuF: January 4, 1898.

MC: who were your mother and daddy?

JuF: My mother was Jane Beasley.

MC: That was her maiden name. And your father's name?

JuF: John Frey.

MC: What did your father do for a living?

JuF: He farmed.

MC: Where was his land?

JuF: It was on the Roswell Road out there.

MC: It was on Roswell Road, right there at the loop where Pike's Nursery is?

JuF: It was in that shopping center on the left.

John Steve Frey, Sr. was born in east Cobb County on January 4, 1898, the son of John and Jane Beasley Frey. Owner of a Marietta grocery store for 20 years, Mr. Frey later farmed and ran a cotton gin in Kennesaw. He also worked as a Cobb County deputy sheriff. In 1946, Mr. Frey bought and still owns land on the corner of Roswell Road and U.S. 41, which later became the site of the "Big Chicken." His former Kennesaw farm is now the home of Kennesaw College, and his cotton gin became the home of "The General," the famous Civil War locomotive. Mr. Frey's three children by his deceased first wife Lena Bentley Frey, still live in Cobb County. He and his present wife, Sara "Billie" Skelton Bozeman Frey, have been married for 15 years, and live in Kennesaw. Mrs. Frey is also a Cobb County native, living in both the Kennesaw and Smyrna areas during her youth.

JSF = John Steve Frey      BF = Sara "Billie" Frey

MC = Mary Boswell Cawley

MC    Why don't we start out, Mr. Frey, with you telling us when you were born.

JSF    1898.

MC    On what date were you born?

JSF    January 4, 1898.

MC    Who were your mother and daddy?

JSF    My mother was Jane Beasley.

MC    That was her maiden name. And your father was?

JSF    John Frey.

MC    What did your father do for a living?

JSF    He farmed.

MC    Where was his land?

JSF    It was on the Roswell Road out there -- Pike's.

MC    It was on Roswell Road right there at the loop, where Pike's Nursery is?

BF    It was in that shopping center on the left on up the

road.

JSF Yes. They made two rooms out of it. They put a

MC In the one where Kroger is, or are you going the other way, toward Eastlake [Shopping Center]?

JSF You could go through how many grades at that school?

BF It was Eastlake. [Question directed to Mr. Frey]

JSF Wasn't the shopping center on the left, where Espey's shop is, wasn't that your daddy's farm?

JF No. er that, did you stay out of school?

BF That wasn't your farm? Was it on the right?

JF No, it was back this side. on the farm.

BF Before you get to Eastlake Shopping Center?

JSF At the loop [120 Loop and Roswell Road].

MC Did your daddy's land go inside the loop, or did it start there where Pike's Nursery is?

JSF No, where Pike's is.

MC He farmed, you said. What was his money crop?

JSF Corn. We grew wheat and cotton, and that's about all.

MC Do you remember how many acres he had when you were a little boy?

JSF Ninety-eight acres.

MC Did his land extend on both sides of Roswell Road?

JSF Yes. Right down the middle and beyond.

BF More of the farm was on the right of Roswell Road than on the left, going toward Roswell. It did not go as far as Robinson Road.

MC When you were a little boy, where did you go to school?

JSF I went to there and I took a plow all summer.

MC The campground out there. I went to school at the campground.

JSF That was your first real chore as a boy?

MC Was it a county school, a church school, or what was it?

JSF It was just a country school.

MC Was it a one-room school?

JSF Yes. They made two rooms out of it. They put a partition in, and they had two teachers.

MC You could go through how many grades at that school?

JSF I didn't go through many there (laughter). I went about three or four.

MC After that, did you stay out of school?

JSF That's all the schoolin' I had.

MC Then, you helped your daddy on the farm?

JSF Yes.

MC What were the kinds of chores that you had to do as a child?

JSF Well, first thing I done was I learned how to ... you know what a hoe is? [Laughter]

MC Yes.

JSF I learned how to hoe from my granddaddy; he was living back then. He died in 1909. He learnt me how to hoe -- that was the first thing I done. When I got up a little bigger, why, they put me behind a mule. (Laughter)

MC Plowing? First you hoed and then you plowed?

JSF First thing I done was, I had all these cousins who what we called "runned around," and I got to busted out what we called "the middle." Took one mule and run right down the middle and busted the middle. That's what I'd do.

MC Busted the middle of the ground, are you talking about? You "busted the middle" of the rows?

JSF Yes.

JSF Yes. Where they'd run around, they'd leave a ridge; I went in there and I took a plow and busted out that ridge.

MC That was your first real chore as a youngster?

JSF That's right.

MC Did you have brothers and sisters?

JSF Oh, yes. I had three brothers and three sisters.

JSF Yes.

MC Are any of them still living?

JSF She worked for what doctors? Can you recall who they were?

JSF No, I'm the only one left.

MC Where were you in the family, in order of age?

JSF I was about the middle.

MC Did all of your brothers and sisters go to Campground school also?

JSF Did she work for Dr. Bolen? Was he another one?

JSF Well, I had one sister who went to Marietta High School. And I had a sister ... she graduated and she went to college -- to nursing school. She was a nurse.

MC Dr. Bolen? JSF gives head negative shake.

MC Where did she go to nursing school?

JSF At Piedmont Hospital. I put her through Piedmont Hospital.

MC Did she nurse in Atlanta, or did she come back to Cobb County?

JSF Yes. She ran part of a bridge up there.

JSF She first came to Marietta ... she was in charge at ... your brothers stay on the ...

BF Marietta Hospital? He lived with ... after ...

JSF ...at Marietta Hospital.

MC How long were you a child out on ...

BF Where was it at that time?

JSF She was down there at the old one on Cherokee Street.

MC Was it where the Barnett Bank parking lot is today?

JSF Yes. ... a ...

BF [It was ] right in back of the Baptist Church there.

JSF Yes. ... right. Then, there ... they lived out there.

MC What was your sister's name?

JSF Was that Dr. Osborne, or is this not the same name?

JSF Minnie Mae.

JSF No, he just had a farm.

MC Did she marry?

JSF How far away were your closest neighbors?

JSF No.

JSF My granddaddy was the closest. John ...

MC So, she was Minnie Mae Frey?

MC Did the Osbells have a farm out there?

JSF Yes.

JSF Yes. They lived on out on the other side of the

MC She worked for what doctors? Can you recall who they were?

JSF How far away was your little school from where you

JSF Yes. She worked for .....

BF Dr. Gober, was he one of them?

JSF Yes. you talk or take a buggy?

MC Did she work for Dr. Nolan? Was he another one?

JSF Yes, he was one of them. as of things they talked about in school?

MC Dr. Benson? [JSF gives head negative shake] No, mostly for Dr. Gober? [JSF nods in agreement.]

JSF She got killed. She went to Blue Ridge, up there where all the timber died.

JSF Yes.

MC Was she in an automobile accident?

MC Did they give you the books or did you have to buy them?

JSF Yes. She ran off of a bridge up there.

MC Did your brothers stay on the farm with you?

JSF The oldest stayed. He lived with my mother after my daddy died.

MC When you were a child out on Roswell Road, who were some of your neighbors?

JSF As you were growing up, did you have any neighbors?

JSF My granddaddy lived next door to me.

MC What was his name?

JSF He was a Beasley. I happened.

MC So, that was your mother's daddy?

JSF where they could afford to own a life for a year or so?

JSF That's right. Then, there was [the] Osborne [family]; they lived out there.

MC When was that, in the teens or the

MC Was that Dr. Osborne, or is this not the same family?

JSF No, he just had a farm.

MC How far away were your closest neighbors?

JSF My granddaddy was the closest. John Beasley. and corn.

MC Did the Sewells have a farm out there?

JSF Yes. They lived on out on the other side of the campground out there.

MC How far away was your little school from where you lived?

JSF About a mile.

MC Did you walk, or take a buggy?

JSF I walked all the time.

MC Do you remember what kinds of things they taught you in school?

JSF Well, they had spelling, and reading and geography.

MC Did you have books?

JSF Yes.

MC Did they give you the books or did you have to buy the books? Where did they come from?

JSF They furnished the books.

MC So, you left school in, oh, about the third grade, and went back to farming.

JSF Yes.

MC As you were growing up, how did farming change? Did it change over the years?

JSF Lord, yes. [Laughter]

MC Tell me about what happened.

JSF First we used mules. Well, it finally got on up to where they could afford to own a tractor. An old Ford tractor was the first one.

MC When was that, in the teens or the '20s? I bet that really helped, didn't it?

JSF Yes, it sure did.

MC Was your daddy's primary crop cotton?

JSF Well, he grew some cotton, yes. We grew our own wheat and corn.

MC Did he sell wheat and corn?

JSF Yes.

MC Where did he sell the things that he grew?

JSF Well, the corn, he kept for the mules; he fed most of the corn to the mules.

MC So, your own livestock used most of it. What you are saying is there wasn't much corn to sell. What was your daddy's money crop? What did he sell for you to buy whatever little things you needed to buy?

JSF Well, we made syrup. He was a syrup maker.

MC Oh. Did he have a mill?

JSF Yep. I got up each morning at three o'clock to start the grinding. Had to get enough juice [flowing] so it could start to separate. Of course, that's changed.

MC How did the syrup mill work? Did the farmers bring you their cane?

JSF Yes. But we [also] grew a lot of our own, and even made it for the public.

MC So, they could either buy yours that you made, or you would make it for them with their cane.

JSF Yes.

MC If you made it for them with their cane, how did they pay you?

JSF [They paid] a toll. We charged a third for making it.

MC You got a third of what you made? In other words, if you got six gallons of syrup, then you kept two of them?

JSF That's right.

MC It was almost like bartering, then, wasn't it?

JSF Yes.

MC You bartered your services, and no money changed hands?

JSF That's right.

MC If somebody came and got your syrup, though, how would

they pay you? Would they pay for it with money?  
JSF They'd pay us for it.  
MC Would they occasionally swap things?  
JSF Yes.  
MC On the farm, did you have chickens and cows?  
JSF Yes, we had cows, and we had chickens and eggs.  
BF You had hogs.  
JSF Oh, yes. We had three hogs.  
BF That would carry you through the year? That would feed your family for a year?  
JSF Yes. We salted the meat down and kept it ...  
BF ...in a box; [they] didn't have a refrigerator. They salted it down and kept it in the smokehouse.  
MC So, you had a smokehouse and a syrup mill; what else did you have?  
BF Don't forget the woodyard.  
JSF Oh, yes. He'd [Mr. Frey's father] go out and buy all the timber. The boys would go out and clear that timber out and run a woodyard.  
MC A sawmill?  
JSF No.  
MC He would have it taken somewhere else and have it finished?  
JSF He would cut it, take it to Marietta and peddle it out. He run a woodyard.  
BF Tell her where the woodyard was.  
MC Where was the woodyard?  
JSF Up on Atlanta Street where the old post office was.  
MC What was the name of the woodyard? Was it called Frey's Woodyard?  
JSF Yes.

MC Who were some of your customers? Did Stephens [Lumber Company] buy from you?

JSF No, Stephens didn't.

BF Listen. Did you sell that wood to people to heat with, mostly? You didn't sell it to build with; it was to heat, wasn't it?

MC It was like firewood?

JSF Firewood. Yes.

MC Did you work in the woodyard yourself?

JSF Yes.

MC So you farmed, and you worked in the syrup mill, and you also worked in your daddy's woodyard.

JSF Yes.

MC Was your family related to the family on Frey's Gin Road that had the cotton gin -- sort of across from the "Big Chicken" and near K-Mart?

JSF They and my daddy were first cousins.

MC He was at one time sheriff of Cobb County -- or was it Marietta?

JSF He was sheriff of Cobb County.

MC So, Freys owned a lot of land in there -- from up on Roswell Road all the way in to U.S. 41.

JSF Yes, all across there was Freys.

MC That's interesting. When your daddy died, did you take over the farm?

JSF No, I went to work in the grocery store.

MC Which grocery store did you go to work in?

JSF I went to work in a little old store on Cherokee Street.

MC Right off the square? What year was that -- do you remember the year.

JSF Yes. He [Mr. Frey's father] died in 1918.

JSF So, you were about 20 years old when he died. Did you continue to live at home and work at the grocery store.

JSF I did until 1923, when I got married.

BF And you walked from way out there [on the farm] to your job in the grocery store, didn't you?

JSF Yes.

MC You made that walk every day?

JSF Twice a day.

BF You didn't tell her the name of the store.

JSF Oh. Brown and Allgood.

MC Was that Allgood the [same] Mr. Allgood that had a farm out on Allgood Road, and later on had a dairy, I believe.

JSF He had a farm out there, but he didn't have a dairy. His brothers had a dairy.

MC When you were working in the grocery store, where did he buy produce and meat and things he sold in the grocery store? Did he get them from the local farmers?

JSF Well, he would buy some stuff from them, but most that they had he would go to Atlanta; they had to buy in Atlanta.

MC From the farmers' market down there?

BF Steve, they didn't carry too much meat in the grocery store, did they? I can remember when farmers used to kill their meat and put it on a wagon, and go through the neighborhood and sell it off of that wagon. So, he probably didn't have a whole lot of meat in the grocery store, did he?

JSF No.

BF He had no way of keeping it, did he?

JSF No. He hadn't started a meat market for a long time.

MC Back then, a grocery store and a butcher shop were two separate establishments, weren't they?

JSF Yes. They were separated, some of them were. [They

would] just sell meat.

MC So, you got married in 1923. What was your wife's name?

JSF Lena Bentley.

MC After you married, you said you didn't stay at the grocery store anymore. What did you do then?

JSF Well, I worked for them awhile, and then I went in the grocery business.

BF Yourself. You bought your own little store.

MC Where was it?

JSF It was on the square. It was on the north side.

MC Where the Strand Theatre and Shillings are now, in that area?

JSF I was next door to Schillings.

MC Lena Bentley; that's an old Cobb County name. Where did she live?

MC She lived on Franklin Road.

MC So, you were courting her while you were working at the grocery store on Cherokee?

JSF A little bit.

[Laughter]

BF See that twinkle in his eye!

MC Your wife must be related to Fred Bentley. What relationship was she to Mr. Bentley?

JSF Yes. She was his sister.

MC You're talking about his father now, aren't you -- Mr. [Oscar] Bentley, who worked at Schillings?

JSF Yes.

MC How did you meet your wife, do you remember? Did you meet her somewhere, or did you just already know her?

JSF The first time I ever remember seeing her, I was going down the road. Her and her sister were walking down

the road and I kind of looked at her and I says,  
"That's a good-lookin' woman." [Laughter]

MC And you wanted to meet her. How did you arrange to meet her?

JSF I think it was at a party, I believe, one night. Yes, that's it.

BF Where was the party, do you remember? Was it at someone's house?

JSF It was just a get-together. I don't remember.

MC You married, and started your own grocery store right there on the square; how long did you remain on the square?

JSF Twenty years.

MC Oh, a long time. What was the name of your store?

JSF Frey's Grocery.

MC Do you remember the names of some of the other businesses on the square when you were there? You must have been near Florence's, weren't you?

JSF I was down the street from them, yes.

MC Down the street from Florence's, right next door to Schillings ...were you right next door to Schillings?

JSF The first time, yes.

MC Oh, you mean you moved.

JSF I left Allgoods and moved myself.

BF You were with Allgoods on Cherokee, weren't you?

JSF Yes.

BF And then, when you went in yourself, you were next door to Schillings, and you never did move, did you?

JSF No.

BF Schillings was on your left, Dixie Cafe was on your right.

MC Was Hodges Drug Store in there?

JSF Yes.

BF If you were facing your store, it was Schillings, Frey, Dixie Cafe?

JSF Yes.

BF And then Hodges? Hodges was on down on the corner.

JSF [The place where I buy] batteries.

BF Yes, Culbertsons. That is Marietta Optical, where he buys batteries for his hearing aid. It wasn't there then, was it? What was on that corner, Steve, do you remember?

JSF On that corner? Schillings was on the corner.

BF Wasn't Schillings on the corner of Church St. and the square?

MC Do you mean on the corner of Root Street?

BF Yes.

JSF A bank.

MC Do you remember which bank that was? Could it have been Merchants and Farmers?

JSF That's what it was.

MC That was your next-door neighbor? No, the Dixie Cafe was next to you, is that right?

JSF Yes.

MC Who owned the Dixie Cafe?

JSF Horace Adam.

MC I understand that there weren't many places to go out and eat in Cobb County...

BF There wasn't.

MC So, the Dixie Cafe was unusual, wasn't it? Did they just serve lunch, or did they serve breakfast and lunch and dinner?

JSF Let's see now; must not have been no cafe in there.

MC Way back?

BF When you first opened your store, you know the Cagles owned the cafe. When you first opened your store, was there a cafe there then?

JSF No, I don't believe there was.

MC When did you first open your store on the square, when was that? Was it in the late teens or early 1920s?

BF The early '20s. It's real funny, but out of everything we have here [papers and deeds], we have nothing on that store. But he did not own the building, and I think he didn't have to [have any papers].

MC No, he just bought the business. In the '20s, when you were on the square, you were in an ideal position to see what was going on with the farmers who would bring their wagons in [loaded with] their crops and their produce. Who was buying their cotton and their produce back then, do you recall?

JSF They would bring their cotton in, and they would park right there in front of the First National Bank. That place would be so loaded sometimes [crowded with wagons] that they blocked the streetcar.

MC They couldn't get the streetcar through?

JSF It would have to stop and they'd have to get somebody to move the wagons.

MC Was that at the time the streetcar went around the square? They couldn't even get around the square because it was so crowded?

JSF That's right.

MC Was there usually a day -- or a weekend -- when all the wagons would come to town?

JSF No special day. They'd come every day.

BF Except Sunday.

JSF Yes.

MC On Sunday, they didn't do business; they were in church. Is that the way that worked?

JSF Yes.

MC What happened when the bottom fell out of the cotton

market?

JSF Whew! It busted everybody.

MC Did it have a bad effect on your own business?

JSF Well, of course it did, but I stayed in business. I was about the only merchant that did stay in business.

MC Really? A lot of them went under?

JSF They sure did.

MC Did you have a lot of farmers as customers?

JSF Well, I had a few, but most of the buyers were downtown.

MC They were townspeople?

JSF Yes.

MC Did you deliver groceries, or did they come in and pick them up?

JSF I'd deliver.

BF You did both, didn't you? Wouldn't some people come in and buy, and then you took orders over the telephone, or they'd send their list in and you'd fill it and deliver. But some people probably came in and picked up. But they didn't have cars then, so they couldn't carry much.

JSF Yes.

MC Who would your delivery people be? Did you have high school boys or children that worked for you?

JSF I kept a regular truckdriver.

MC You had a truck?

JSF Oh, yes.

BF Steve [has told me that his] oldest son John first delivered for him on a bicycle, and then by truck. Jane, his daughter, did not work for him, but she liked to give his candy away, and Ralph was too young to work. Tell her one person you hired -- gave him his first job in the grocery store -- and what he turned out to be.

JSF Who, Gene?

BF James. She knows him.

JSF This boy's mother came in and she wanted me to give him a job. So, I said, "What doing?" She said, "Delivering groceries." So, I figured he was pretty spoiled, but I gave him a job.

MC He was from a well-to-do family?

BF Probably middle-class.

JSF Yes.

MC Why did you think he was spoiled?

BF No, he didn't say "spoiled"; he said "small." Didn't you say "small?" [to Mr. Frey]

MC Oh, you mean he was young. So you went ahead and took a chance and gave him a job. What was his name?

JSF Gene Barmore.

BF Well, okay, there might be two [boys], but the one I was thinking about was James Marler.

JSF Oh, he's the one that had a job inside.

BF Okay, that's who I was thinking about.

JSF I gave him a job, but he didn't stay long. He went on and went to work for ...

BF James Marler said that you gave him his first job in the grocery business, and he went on to become president of Best Foods, I believe it was.

JSF Yep. He just retired.

BF Who was the other boy you mentioned? I don't believe I know him.

JSF Gene Barmore. He stayed to work for me until he went with Anderson Motor Company.

BF. Now then. Didn't your wife bake cakes on the weekend, and you sold those in the store -- good homemade cakes, and everybody talked about her good homemade cakes?

JSF Yes. Mrs. Little bought one every Saturday.

BF About how many would she bake and bring to the store on Saturday?

JSF Oh, eight or 10, I guess.

MC That Mrs. Little who bought one every Saturday, was that Mrs. D.R. Little?

JSF Yes.

MC And he [her husband] worked for First National Bank, didn't he?

BF Did Mrs. Little's husband work for the bank?

JSF Yes.

BF Something has just come to me. Was Coggins Shoe Store over there? Wasn't one of those stores right next to you a clothing store?

JSF Yes. Mr. Fine.

MC There was also a Sauls.

JSF Yes, Sauls was on the other side of the square.

MC. Mr. Fine, as I understand it, was one of the few Jewish families that lived in Cobb County.

JSF That's right.

MC Someone told me the other day, that after Leo Frank was convicted, other Jewish families in Cobb County were encouraged to leave.

JSF Yes.

MC Were any of those businessmen up on Marietta Square?

JSF Yes; what was his name?

BF Not Goldstein, or Fine? What kind of store did he have?

JSF A clothing store.

MC Why do you suppose the Fine family stayed?

BF Why do you suppose they stayed after the Leo Frank incident? [Directed to Mr. Frey]

JSF I guess folks asked him to... begged him to.

BF They had been here longer than any other family. They were more or less old settlers in Cobb County. Now, I don't know, but I do remember the Fine's store. He can tell you about the day Leo Frank was lynched. He remembers that.

MC You would have been a child then...well, no, you would have been about 17. Do you remember that, when Leo Frank was lynched?

JSF Me and my daddy passed by there early that morning before they got there with him. We got the word when we got to Marietta that they were on their way there with him.

MC There was already a big crowd at the square in Marietta?

JSF Yes.

MC Oh, you saw that crowd already there, and they [the lynch mob] hadn't gotten there [to Marietta] yet. You saw that crowd and wondered what was going on.

JSF We didn't know what was going on out there. We got to Marietta and they told us they were on the way with him. So, they were supposed to get there before daylight, but something happened to them. They were going hang him over her grave, but something happened to them and they didn't make it.

MC They were going to hang Leo Frank over Mary Phagan's grave? She was buried in Citizen's Cemetery, wasn't she?

BF The city cemetery, yes.

MC But they couldn't do that, so that's why they went out to Frey's Gin?

JSF Well, they seen they weren't gonna make it...

BF ...in the dark. They wanted to do it in the dark, didn't they?

JSF Yes.

BF But they were detained, and so they stopped out there.

MC But there was a big crowd there that watched?

JSF The crowd was beginning to gather at the lynching site

when we passed. Yes.

MC I understand that they sold pieces of the rope for 50 cents. Do you remember that?

JSF Yep. They cut the lowest branches and sold them.

BF Off of the tree?

JSF Yep.

BF Okay. Tell her you saw them pass with his body.

MC After the hanging?

JSF Yep. I seen the body. They went down Atlanta Street. I seen them. Judge Morris had him in his car. He had a car with a top laid back, and he had him in a basket.

MC What was Judge Morris at that time? What was his position?

JSF He was a judge.

MC So, he took the responsibility to take his [Frank's] body into Atlanta?

JSF Yes.

BF It was said that someone even jumped on his body. Don't they claim that someone jumped on his body?

JSF Yes.

MC But you and your daddy had gone to Marietta to do business.

BF They had carried a load of wood to the woodyard.

JSF We run a woodyard.

MC And you didn't go back out there where he was hung?

JSF No.

MC You just heard about it.

JSF Yes.

MC Someone told me that that night there was a big celebration in town.

JSF I imagine there was.

MC Well, this person didn't live in town, but she could hear the noise like firecrackers and guns being fired. Do you recall that too?

JSF No.

MC You might have been a little further out.

JSF I bet I was.

BF Do you know where she [Mary Phagan] lived?

JSF She lived out there near Sardis, somewhere around Sardis.

MC Sardis being where?

BF There's a Sardis Baptist Church.

MC Over there near Terrell Mill, where Terrell Mill and Paper Mill roads come together?

BF Yes.

MC Did you know her?

JSF No, but I knew the family.

MC Well, it was a really sad thing, wasn't it?

JSF It sure was.

MC You had your store on Marietta's square for 20 years, so you were there during the Depression.

JSF Yes.

MC Tell me a little bit about what it was like to try to stay in business during those years. Was it rough?

JSF Pretty rough.

MC How did you handle your customers? Did you have customers who could not pay their bills?

JSF Some of them couldn't, but I carried a lot of them.

MC You gave them credit?

JSF Yes.

BF A lot of them still come to him today, and say they

couldn't have made it without him.

MC Yes. Did a lot of merchants in Marietta have to do that same thing -- carry some families?

JSF Some of them carried them too long.

[Laughter]

BF Steve, did the Rogers Chain Store and the A&P store go in there while you were still in business?

JSF Yes.

BF Now, they would not carry credit, so it was the little independent [grocers who gave credit to customers].

MC When did the chain stores come into town?

BF Rogers and A&P, weren't they next door to each other on Cherokee Street, or not? Rogers was down there, I know.

JSF Winn Dixie...

BF No, not Winn Dixie. Pigley-Wigley?

JSF Pigley-Wigley, yes.

BF I know Rogers was in that first block on the left.

JSF And then, the other [store] was next to it.

BF A&P?

JSF Yes.

BF And they would not carry credit, would they?

JSF No.

MC Did they come in during the Depression years? Were they here by then?

JSF Yes. That was when they come in, wasn't it [to Mrs. Frey]?

BF I don't know.

MC Were you still operating your store on the square when Bell Bomber was built?

JSF Yes.

MC How did that change your business?

JSF Oh, it ballooned it.

MC Did you have any problems dealing with those people you didn't know who became customers? Some people told me that they had always extended credit, but all of a sudden, there were all of these people that they didn't know, and they had to change their ways of doing business. They couldn't extend as much credit as they had before. Was it sort of like that for you, too?

JSF I never did go to cash and carry. I'd credit some of them.

MC You kept a credit running. What happened when Bell closed up and left town?

JSF They kept on paying me. Them folks would just pay a little at a time. Most of them paid me off.

MC These were people that you carried over the years? Even if they couldn't pay a lot, they kept on paying a little bit?

JSF That's right.

BF Tell her some of the specials you ran.

JSF A dozen eggs and a pound of bacon for a quarter.

MC Oh, for heaven's sake! This would have been in what years, during the Depression? And this was for both the bacon and eggs together?

JSF I paid a dime for the bacon and a dime for the eggs.

BF And you made...

JSF I made a nickel.

BF That's when you ran your specials. All right now, you had three children. Didn't John help you in the grocery store?

JSF Yes. He started off delivering.

MC Your oldest son is John Steve Frey?

JSF [Yes, he is John Steve Frey,] Junior.

MC And he came to work for you in the grocery store. Now,

somehow along in there, you bought some land out on Roswell Road, because I know you own the land where the "Big Chicken" is.

JSF Yes.

MC When did you begin to buy land out along Roswell Road?

BF Was the "Big Chicken" the first that you bought? The deeds to the "Big Chicken" are dated '46.

JSF Yes.

MC 1946? Do you remember who you bought that land from?

JSF Yes.

MC Who was that, Mr. Latimer? Lassiter is what I meant, Mr. Lassiter.

JSF It was sold, bid off outside, and I didn't bid on it.

MC It was sold from the courthouse steps?

JSF Yes.

BF Now, is this the "Chicken" you're talking about, darlin'?

JSF Yes.

BF This is the "Chicken" you're talking about.

JSF Yes. And the man who bought it I knew. I put it to him, I told him, "If you decide you can't pay for that thing, I'll take it off your hands." And he says, "I will."

BF Now, did Mrs. Lassiter make the deed?

JSF No, it was the woman that bought it, John Preston's wife...

BF Oh, okay.

JSF That was one of the daughters.

MC One of the Lassiter daughters?

JSF Yes. The wife, why, all she wanted was the house, the old house. She said she'd move it, and I told her, "I'll let you have it for \$300."

MC So, one of the Lassiter homeplaces was on that land?

JSF Yes.

MC So, she wanted the old homeplace and you sold it to her for \$300, and she moved it to her own land?

JSF Yes.

MC When you bought that land in 1946, was the Four-Lane [U.S. Highway 41] there?

JSF Part of it was, and part was marked.

MC What you said was that they had marked it, surveyed for it, but it hadn't been put through yet.

JSF Yes. They had brought the road up to there.

MC It stopped at Pine Forest, what was then Pine Forest, where they are building that WalMart now?

JSF Yes. It came out to Roswell Road.

MC When you and your wife married, where did you have your home, you and your wife and your three children?

JSF I rented. First child we had, we lived with the brother-in-law.

BF Oscar and Ima [Bentley], didn't you live with them? [To Mr. Frey] I know you lived in the same house with Oscar and Ima; was that when you first married?

MC Did you live with Oscar and Ima --not on Washington -- I'm trying to remember where they lived at that time.

BF Did they live on Roswell Road?

MC I can't think of the name of the little street that they lived on. But you lived with Oscar and Ima Bentley?

JSF Yes.

BF Were John and Fred [Bentley] both born in that house?

JSF No.

BF Okay.

MC Then, you moved into your own home at some point?

JSF Yes.

MC Where was it?

JSF On Roswell Road.

MC Were you somewhere near (I believe it was) the Robinson place, where Roswell Street Baptist Church is? Were you near there?

JSF Yes.

BF Well now, listen darling. Was your first house that you built where Cobb Exchange Bank is now? Did you build two houses out there?

JSF The first that I built was down...

BF Down farther? Down where? I know you did live right where old Cobb Exchange Bank is, right there on the corner.

JSF I moved there. I lived down the street there.

BF Did you rent down the street?

JSF No, I owned that.

BF Okay now, I don't know where that is.

MC On Roswell Street?

BF On Roswell Street.

JSF Where Cobb Exchange Bank was.

BF I know you lived there. Steve built two houses on Roswell Street, the last one on the site where Cobb Exchange Bank was. The first one was out farther, probably near Roswell Street Baptist Church. Was that street paved then?

JSF Paved out to there.

MC When was Roswell Street paved?

JSF When was it?

MC Not for a long time, was it? I know it was paved up near the square and out a little ways, wasn't it?

BF It was paved with brick around the square; and even down to [my] Aunt Edna's on Washington Avenue, it was

still brick. I don't know how far it went -- probably to the cemetery. As far back as I can remember, Washington Avenue was also paved with brick. Do you remember? [To Mr. Frey]

MC But out at the Four-Lane, was it paved, do you remember? It wasn't paved out there?

JSF No.

MC Did you ever move out to your homeplace, where you were born? Did that land stay in your family?

JSF It was sold.

MC So, none of your brothers or sisters lived on it either.

BF It was sold when everybody died in your family. That's when it sold, didn't it?

JSF Yes.

MC But it did stay in the family for a number of years?

BF Yes. Isn't that right [to JSF]? When your mother died, you sold the property and settled up with each child.

JSF And John, we let him have a lot.

BF He probably bought it from somebody. John, your son, bought a lot out there?

JSF Yes.

BF And who did he buy it from, the estate?

JSF Yes, and he sold it. That was the last piece of it [the old Frey land].

MC Your son's lot?

BF He built an office building out there and just sold it a couple of weeks ago.

MC Yes.

BF Now then, you sold your store about the time you bought the "Chicken," didn't you?

JSF It was near that time.

BF He sold the store on the square.

MC What did you do then, after you sold the store?

JSF I started in at trading land. [Laughter]

MC Did you? You got involved in real estate and you thought that was fun?

BF He decided he'd done pretty good on the "Chicken," and he started buying some lots around the "Chicken." You bought some vacant lots around the "Chicken," didn't you?

JSF Yes.

MC Did you develop any of that land, or did you just hold on to that land? You didn't [build], you just held on to the land. I understand that your family gave a cotton gin...

BF He did.

MC ...to the Kennesaw Museum. How did that come about, Mr. Frey?

JSF Well...

MC Where did the cotton gin come from?

BF He bought it.

JSF I bought it...

BF ...[from] Glenn Lewis.

JSF Yes.

BF ...in 1947.

MC Did Mr. Lewis raise cotton?

JSF He had some farms around.

MC And he had this cotton gin?

BF Yes, a warehouse and cotton gin.

MC Where were his warehouse and cotton gin?

JSF It is right downtown.

MC In Kennesaw?

JSF Yes. There's a cabinet shop in there. I sold it to my two boys. I kept it for 10 years. I ginned cotton for three or four years.

MC Tell me how a cotton gin works.

JSF Well, I had three gins I fed cotton to.

MC The farmers would bring it in on the wagons. Would it be in bales?

JSF No.

MC It would just be piled.

JSF Piled in the wagon...

BF Like it was picked.

JSF With a suction, I pulled it out and would feed it into this gin and it ginned it.

MC When it ginned it, what did it do?

JSF It picked the seed out.

MC How did you charge the farmer for doing this?

JSF We charged so much for a hundred pound of lint.

MC After it was cleaned, you put it in bales and weighed it?

JSF Yes.

MC How many people did you have to have to run a gin?

JSF I kept two men--one on that press back there [to] pack it down tighter, and [one] put ties on it and tied it down. We charged 35 cents for a hundred pounds.

MC Did you weigh the cotton before and after you ginned it, or just after you ginned it?

JSF Both, to see how many pounds of seed you got out of it.

MC Would they pay on the before weight, or the after weight?

JSF He'd pay on the after weight. I charged so much per pound. He'd bring 1400 pounds of cotton [,and that] would make a 500 pound bale. So, you would take off

for the seeds, you see.

MC After they had their cotton ginned, were there cotton merchants in Kennesaw, or did they have to go somewhere else to sell it?

JSF I bought it.

MC Then what did you do with it?

JSF I sold it to Fowler Brothers.

MC They were in Marietta, weren't they?

JSF Yes.

MC They were also related, weren't they, to your wife's family, I believe. Weren't the Fowlers related to the Bentleys?

BF Okay, was that the same set of Fowlers? The Fowlers that bought the cotton used to live up there near the hospital, didn't they? Okay, then there were the Dr. Fowlers. Your wife was related to the Dr. Fowlers, but was she related to the Fowlers that bought the cotton?

JSF Must have been.

BF I just don't recall.

MC You're uncertain about that? I believe Fred Bentley said the Bentleys were related to the [cotton broker] Fowlers, but I'm not positive. We'll check on that. It could be that the Dr. Fowlers and the cotton broker Fowlers were related.

BF It could be. They were related to the Dr. Fowlers, I know.

MC So, you farmed, and then you had a grocery store. Then you had a cotton gin, and you bought land. You did a variety of things.

BF He was a deputy sheriff.

MC I was going to ask what else you did. You were a deputy sheriff for Cobb County?

JSF Yes.

MC Did you work with Mr. Cecil Bullard?

JSF Yes.

MC You and Mr. Bullard are about the same age, aren't you?

JSF Yes. I might be a little older.

MC Tell me about some of the things you had to do as a deputy sheriff in Cobb County.

JSF Well, some of it was pretty rough.

MC When were you a deputy sheriff -- in the '40s or the '50s?

JSF I started in '59 and quit in '71.

MC You were a deputy sheriff for a good long number of years.

BF The person that you worked the closest with was Harold Griggs, wasn't it? Didn't you and Harold Griggs ride the same car together.

JSF Yes.

MC You started to say that some of the things you had to do were pretty rough. What were some of the things you had to do?

JSF Take calls, and you'd have to come. We'd try to talk them into doing what we wanted them to do. Never did have much trouble.

MC You never did have to use your gun?

JSF No.

MC Just the fact of having it was enough. In fact, did you know most of the people you dealt with? That helped, didn't it, because you knew them?

JSF Yes.

BF You raided liquor stills, didn't you?

MC I know Mr. Bullard did. Do you remember how you were paid.

JSF We were paid by the month.

MC Did you get a salary or a commission?

JSF A salary. I know I started in at \$400 a month, a hundred dollars a week.

BF I've heard you say that one of the jobs was carrying mentally ill people to Milledgeville.

JSF Yes. We hauled a lot of them.

MC [These were people who] were being committed? Was that difficult to do?

JSF It wasn't particularly rough, but we would have to hold them.

MC You would restrain them in some way. Did you know a lot of their families?

JSF Yes.

BF Back then, you knew everybody in Cobb County, didn't you?

JSF Just about.

MC During the time that you were deputy sheriff was when a lot of changes were taking place in the county.

JSF Yes, there were.

MC They were working on I-75 and they were building Cumberland Mall, and a lot of new people were coming into the county.

JSF They were.

MC Were you still buying a lot of real estate then?

JSF I started keeping a little.

MC What connection did you have with Kennesaw College?

JSF I gave up my home to get it there.

MC Where was your home?

JSF Where the college is.

MC Frey Lake, is that what it's called?

JSF That's my old lake.

MC Your old lake was Frey Lake. Did you donate that land?

JSF I sold it.

MC Who did you sell it to?

JSF I sold it to the folks that was getting up the land.

BF When you sold that property, did you know it was going to be for Kennesaw Junior College, or did some people just come in and buy that land and it was later used for the college? Did you divide the farm up with the children before it was sold?

JSF Yes.

BF How many acres did you have over there?

JSF Three hundred and twenty.

BF And you divided it four ways between you and your children, right? Is that right?

JSF Right.

BF And, was it your part that went for the college? Now, I don't know about that.

JSF The college finally got it all.

MC The college got your fourth, and the other three childrens' land also?

JSF Yes.

MC They got all of the Frey land, even what you divided up among your children?

JSF I didn't give it to them.

BF You had already divided the farm up before it was sold; is that right?

JSF Yes.

BF Now, I don't know.

MC Did Mr. Harold Willingham come and talk to you?

JSF Yes.

MC Did he tell you that they wanted to build a junior college?

JSF I went out there to the groundbreaking.

MC Did your land run from Chastain Road all the way through to Shiloh Road? Where was your land?

JSF I had a strip, and they come to me and wanted to know if I could get that piece of land from Mr. Garrett. He owned a little strip where they cut the road through.

MC Where they cut I-75 through?

BF No, when they cut Frey Lake.

JSF Frey Lake. Well, they left a little of it on the left when they cut it. They left a little on the left-hand side. They went to Mr. Garrett, and said if I could get that strip, why, they'd buy it all the way through. So, I went to see him, and he said, "Well, if you just give me enough, I'll sell you the whole thing." So I give him three rolls of barbed wire and \$300.

MC And in return, he gave you that little strip. Where was that strip -- where the Waffle House is, or where?

JSF It was on the left-hand side.

MC So, it would be sort of along the front of the school's land, where it fronts on Frey Lake. You gave him \$300 dollars and three rolls of barbed wire, and he gave you the land; what did you do with the land then?

JSF I sold it to them.

MC You just turned around and sold it to the people who were putting the land together for the school?

BF How many acres were in the farm up there, Steve?

JSF Three hundred and twenty.

BF And the school has 300 acres up there?

JSF Yes.

BF Okay. And part of it was where the Lutheran Church is, wasn't it?

MC It went behind the school?

BF Yes. And it went to I-75, Chastain Road. Is any of Wetherbyrne [subdivision] built on your property?

JSF Yes, part of it, but I don't know how much.

BF Did the college sell off the property to Wetherbyrne?

JSF Yes. lives here on Acworth Ave. road.

BF You and the children sold the whole 300 acres in one lump?

JSF Ralph, lives right across...

MC Did you sell it to the college, or did you sell it to Mr. Harold Willingham and that group?

JSF I sold it to Willingham and that group.

MC Does your land go as far up as Pinetree?

BF Part of his land is in Pinetree. Frey Lake is in Pinetree.

JSF Jane.

MC What did you think when they started building a public golf course and pool? Do you remember when they started to build that? Are you getting tired, Mr. Frey?

JSF No, I'm all right. no what?

MC Are you sure? This is hard, because I'm taxing your memory, aren't I?

JSF He's married a neighbor, didn't she? Is that the

BF He's doing a great job. Are you tired?

JSF I'm a little bit tired.

BF I don't think there's much more to tell, is there.

JSF No, that's about as much as I know.

MC You've seen a lot of changes over your lifetime, haven't you?

JSF He goes over here to Mt. Zion Church. There were 100 families who lived in this area.

BF You sold the farm and then you bought this place. lives in Kennesaw, and her name

MC You've been here ever since you sold the farm?

JSF Sure.

JSF Yes.

MC Do you remember her?

MC Where are your children now? Are they all here in the Marietta and Cobb County? that is, they are building the new post office

JSF Yes.

JSF Yes.

MC You have a son, John S. Jr., and he lives in Kennesaw?

MC I expect she'll be able to tell you.

JSF Yes.

JSF She ought to

BF [He lives] out on Acworth Due West Road.

MC One of the things that Mr. Jackson told us was that

MC Who are you other children? problem among the blacks

JSF Ralph, lives right across... Did you find that to be

BF Right across the golf course.

MC Then, another child is a son, or a daughter?

JSF A daughter.

MC What is her name?

JSF Jane.

MC Is she married?

JSF Yes.

MC So, her name is Jane what?

BF Her name is Jane Chastain.

MC She married a neighbor, didn't she? Is that the

Chastain of Chastain Road?

BF He's of that family.

MC We talked to Alfred Jackson, a black man who lives on

the other side of I-75 at Chastain Road. Do you

remember Mr. Jackson?

JSF Yes.

MC He goes up here to Mt. Zion Church. He told us a lot

about this area. There were just a very few black

families who lived in this area. I'm going tomorrow to

talk to a black lady who was a schoolteacher. She

lives in Kennesaw, and her name is Jessie Mae Taylor.

BF Sure.

MC Do you remember her?

BF Sure. Jessie Mae Spears that lives over here where

they are building the new post office [on Duncan Road].

JSF Yes.

MC I expect she'll be able to tell me a lot.

JSF She ought to.

MC One of the things that Mr. Jackson told me was that there was never really any problem among the blacks and the whites up here in Kennesaw, and the black and white families got along so well. Did you find that to be the case?

JSF Yes.

MC When you had your store in Marietta on the square, did you have black customers?

JSF Yes, I sure did.

MC Did you give them credit, like you did your other customers?

JSF Sometimes, yes.

MC Did you have some who were long-time customers?

JSF Oh, yes.

MC Cobb is sort of unique in that respect -- that there were so few racial tensions. There doesn't seem to have been much at all. There was a relatively peaceful relationship.

JSF When you look at the changes that have taken place, what do you think was the single biggest change that took place in your lifetime -- the single thing that made the greatest difference?

JSF Changes in property, I guess.

BF Well, I would think the bomber plant. That made all the difference in the world. Don't you think that made a big difference?

JSF That made a big difference.

MC Did a lot of those Bell Bomber people stay on after the plant closed?

JSF Yes, they sure did.

MC Then Lockheed came in. That was another big boost for the economy, wasn't it?

JSF It sure was.

MC What about I-75 being built?

JSF That made it.

MC Let me ask you a question that you may not want to answer. Why have you held on to the "Big Chicken" for all of these years? You've bought and sold a lot of land, but you held on to the "Chicken." The other land didn't seem to matter [as much] to you.

JSF They made me an offer; it was a good offer.

MC Now, you're talking about your other land?

JSF Yes.

MC But the "Big Chicken," you keep hanging on to.

BF Well, he signs pretty long leases.

JSF That's what it is.

MC You lease that building?

JSF Yes.

MC Who was the first tenant in that building?

JSF Who was that? [Question directed to Mrs. Frey.]

BF Chick, Chuck 'N Shake, wasn't it?

JSF I believe it was.

BF Chick, Chuck 'N Shake put the chicken up there.

MC They built the chicken, but they leased the land from you; is that how that worked?

JSF Yes.

MC When they were out on that corner, what else was there?

BF Miss Georgia? Wasn't Miss Georgia there that served ice cream? Was that there before Chick, Chuck 'N Shake?

JSF O.C. Hubert.

BF Did he have the Miss Dairies?

JSF Yes.

BF And that was there before the "Big Chicken" was, wasn't

it?

JSF Yes.

MC But it wasn't on that spot, was it?

BF Wasn't that right, Steve? Now, don't let me put words in your mouth, because I'm not sure. I could probably go back and get the papers. I think that Miss Georgia, that served ice cream, was there before Chick, Chuck 'N Shake. When Chick, Chuck 'N Shake [came], that's when the "Big Chicken" went up. The "Big Chicken" wasn't built for Kentucky Fried Chicken.

JSF O.C. Hubert built that thing; don't you remember?

BF I don't remember, darling.

JSF I rented it to him for 10 dollars a month.

BF Don't you think the reason you have held on to the "Big Chicken" is because the monthly income is so good?

JSF I know it.

BF I mean, all this other land was just sitting there not making you any money, and when you got a good price for it, you sold it. But the "Big Chicken" brings you in a good monthly income. That's probably why you held onto it, isn't it?

JSF I guess so.

MC Was that the only land you owned in that area, or did you own some other land along that intersection [U.S. 41 and Roswell Road]?

JSF Yes, I owned several lots.

BF Let's see. The only property that you owned out there was the "Big Chicken" and then, some used car lots around there. Wasn't that [right]?

MC [Those lots were] behind the "Big Chicken"?

BF Yes. It was behind the chicken that you owned, didn't you? You didn't own anymore up toward the Sizzlin' [Steak House], did you?

JSF No.

BF You didn't own anymore toward I-75, but you did own it back of the chicken. He has sold all of that; he just

owns where the chicken is.

MC Well, I think the Lassiter family still owns some land back in there somewhere.

BF They have the trailer park. Now, if it is important, I think I can go back there and look at some papers, and see when Miss Georgia was there, if you want me to.

MC That's something you can put in when the manuscript comes back to you. [Mrs. Frey,] we need to have your full name, when you were born, and when you and Mr. Frey were married.

BF [Laughter] Oh.

MC You are a Cobb countian, too. I can tell from some of the things you have said.

BF Yes. My first husband was with Westinghouse, and he and I did travel; I mean, he was transferred around. My husband died in 1956. I had two children; they were 12 and 8 [years old]. I was a widow for 16 years; he [Mr. Frey] was a widower for 11 months. He could not live alone. I will say this: Steve Frey has too much love to keep to himself. He is one of the sweetest people that I have ever known -- and one of the best. He is 20 years older than I am. I had a good job at the telephone company, and I will have to say that I was really concerned about giving up my good job and marrying a man who was 75 when I was 55. I [thought] I just might be marrying a nursing job. But we have had 15 good years.

MC That's wonderful. You worked before you [and Mr. Frey] were married; what was your maiden name?

BF My maiden name was Sara Will Skelton. Then I married Joe Bozeman, who was a native of Kennesaw.

MC I knew him [Mr. Frey] for a good long while, but we dated three months. He was going to get married [because] he could not live alone. He kept his health for 15 years, and last June he had this stroke which affected his equilibrium only.

MC That's wonderful.

BF Now, you can tell his mind is clear.

MC Oh yes, just as sharp as it can be.

BF We still have a good life together, but up until then,

Steve Frey was not 88 or 89 years old. Everybody would say he was more like... you went to New Hope.

MC Sixty? now who I talked to not long ago, who lived out in that same area? Alice Heck. She was Alice Wylie.

BF Exactly. So, it's just been great; it really has. I'll always remember that when we had been married ten years, I said, "Steve, really and truly, I did not think that we would be married for 10 years." And I did not think, if we were still living 10 years after we were married, that things would be as good as they [were] because he was 85 and I was 65. I said, "You know, that calls for an anniversary bracelet with 10 diamonds." He said okay, and we went down to Tracy O'Neal to buy the bracelet. We saw one with 15 diamonds, and he said, "We'll just take that one, and I won't have to worry about putting the next five [diamonds] in." They [those five years] were up last year, so last October 26, he was paid up. So, next year, he's got to come across with something.

Methodist Church.

[Laughter]

MC I really appreciate your letting me come and talk to you for two long hours. I know it's tiring, but you have so much information about the county, and how it has changed. We need to get all of that down [recorded] so that it is saved.

BF All of his family is buried at Campground Cemetery.

MC Campground is a Methodist church, is it not?

BF Right. All of your family is buried out there, aren't they? Except your wife, and she's buried over at Kennesaw Memorial Cemetery.

MC When you were a little boy, did you go to Campground Methodist Church?

JSF [Nods affirmatively]. and Church.

MC Later on, did you continue to go out there, or did you go to a different church after that?

JSF I went to New Hope.

MC On Franklin Road, or off of Franklin on Wylie Road?

BF That's right. Did you start going to New Hope when you and Lena married? She probably never did go to Campground, did she? She probably went to New Hope all of her life because she lived near there. You went to

Campground and she went to New Hope; I bet when you started dating her, you went to New Hope.

MC You know who I talked to not long ago, who lived out in that same area? Alice Heck. She was Alice Wylie.

BF Oh, yes. It's hard to remember when someone is asking.

MC I believe Wylie Road cuts off of old Franklin Road. One of her fondest memories was stopping by the Franklin Pottery.

JSF No, he died about a year ago.

JSF Yes.

MC Do you remember old Mr. Franklin, who actually made the pottery? She was remembering that from her childhood. There used to be a time when they didn't order it readymade, but he made it himself. She would stop on her way to visit her grandparents, I believe. Her granddaddy Wylie was involved in starting New Hope Methodist Church.

JSF Yes.

MC That church was not originally a Methodist Church; it was Presbyterian, but there were not enough Presbyterians, so it became Methodist.

JSF There's about to not be enough Methodists.

MC [Laughter] Is it really shrinking?

JSF Yes.

BF Where were you and Lena married?

JSF No.

JSF Campground [in a double wedding.

MC Who was the other couple?

BF Was it at the Campground Church? Yes, I remember you saying it was a double wedding. Who was it?

JSF [Laughter] I just thought of it [but now I can't recall].

BF They were not family, were they?

JSF No.

MC Were they just friends?

JSF Sure was.

BF Wasn't Marlowe?

JSF No.

MC That'll come to you; its one of those names you can fill in later. It's hard to remember when somebody is asking.

BF He'll think of it. Are they still living?

JSF No, he died about a year ago.

BF Now, he and the LeCroys are first cousins -- John LeCroy. We can ride out there and he'll say, "We've hunted in all these woods. We made out little old slides, and we slid down these hills." See, back then, so many relatives lived close to each other. The LeCroys lived out in there. All the LeCroys lived in your neighborhood, didn't they?

MC When you're talking about "the neighborhood," you're talking about Roswell Road and Franklin Road?

BF Yes. The LeCroys and the Freys all lived out Roswell Road. The LeCroys still live out that way, don't they? George still lives out that way; John died out there.

JSF Alton lives out there.

BF And all of you grew up so closely-knit. You were a closely-knit family. That was all you had to do was play with your cousins. You didn't have any toys, did you?

JSF No. Finally, one would get a little red wagon, and they'd pass it on down.

BF For Christmas, what would you get?

JSF Fruit.

BF Fruit, raisins, nuts [and] candy.

JSF That's right, the same old things.

MC But no toys?

JSF No.

MC I guess your old homeplace in long gone, isn't it?

JSF Yes. John sold that house the other day, and that was

JSF the last part of it.

BF That office building.

JSF That office building.

BF Now, let me ask you this. That little lot that John had right there -- that had been in the family ever since you were a child? -- a couple of that we talked with were Lex and LeDelle Jolley -- was a Lassiter.

JSF Yes.

BF She was.

MC When you were growing up, Mr. Frey, did you know people from all over Cobb County?

JSF Just about.

MC What about the people in Smyrna. Did you know them too?

JSF [I] knew a lot of them.

MC How about people out in west Cobb -- did you get back and forth to visit, and have acquaintances all over the county?

BF Did you know people all over the county before you went in to Marietta to work? When you were a boy growing up out on Roswell Road, you probably didn't know too many people.

JSF No.

BF But when you started working in Marietta, that's when you started learning. I would say until Bell Bomber moved here, you knew everyone in Marietta, didn't you?

JSF Just about.

BF Well, even I did. We lived in Kennesaw and Smyrna; we never did live in Marietta, but we went to high school in Marietta.

MC When you say you 'knew' everybody, are you really talking about knowing who the families were?

JSF Not many.

BF Yes.

MC What about down toward Powder Springs and Austell? Did you know them too?

BF I didn't.

JSF I knew a good many of them.  
 BF Being a deputy sheriff...  
 MC Lex Jolley.  
 MC Now, that was later on, wasn't it?  
 JSF Oh, yes.  
 BF Yes, that was later on.  
 MC One of the other people -- a couple -- that we talked with were Lex and LeoDelle Jolley. She was a Lassiter.  
 BF Is there?  
 BF She was.  
 JSF Yes.  
 MC I believe she told me that when she was going to high school, she lived with her grandfather right there where the "Big Chicken" is, or right behind it. She's probably one of those who lived in that house that Mrs. Preston wanted to keep. She was LeoDelle Lassiter then. Do you remember her?  
 BF Yes, but he's probably over 80, though.  
 BF Do you remember Mrs. Lex Jolley when you were growing up?  
 JSF Yes.  
 MC Do you remember Lex Jolley from when you were a boy? They lived so far out on Roswell Road that he went to Roswell High School.  
 JSF Well, Dewey Noble just died.  
 BF Did he? The first I knew of the Jolleys, they lived in Marietta, and his father was a policeman.  
 MC Originally, they had a farm out on upper Roswell Road.  
 JSF Yes.  
 MC So, when he was growing up, the high school that he was closest to was Roswell. At that time, Roswell was a part of Cobb County.  
 JSF I know there aren't many of them...  
 JSF Yes.  
 MC Did you know many people who went to Roswell High School?  
 JSF Not many.  
 MC Most of your friends went to Cobb County Schools?  
 JSF That's right.  
 JSF Yes.  
 MC Well, he went to the little grade schools in Cobb. He went to Mt. Bethel School.

JSF Who was that?  
 MC Tell me something before we finish up. When you were a  
 MC Lex Jolley. you had to go around busting up stills.  
 JSF Oh, yes. Where were the stills? Were they out in the  
 BF There's a good bit of difference in your age and Lex  
 Jolley's.  
 MC Out on some creek somewhere? Were there any of them?  
 MC Is there?  
 JSF Not too many.  
 JSF Yes.  
 MC Did you ever have to chase down cars that  
 BF Steve is 90, and how old would you say Lex Jolley is?  
 JSF About 80. During your time, was it? Steve  
 BF I thought he was in his eighties, but he's probably not  
 over 80, though. When was liquor legalized? It was  
 JSF That makes a big difference.  
 MC Oh yes, when you're growing up. You wouldn't have  
 had anything to do with each other. Ten years is a big  
 difference. Who were some of your contemporaries? Who  
 were the people that you grew up with?  
 JSF Well, Dewey Gable just died.  
 MC Who was that?  
 JSF I was in Kingsledgeville (when it was  
 BF Dewey Gable.  
 MC You had a big group of friends that you grew up with  
 who are your age?  
 JSF There aren't many of them now.  
 BF I know there aren't many of them left, but can you  
 think of any others? When you were a teenager, you  
 were busy working, weren't you? You didn't do much  
 running around when you were a teenager, because your  
 dad died when you were real young. You worked even  
 when your dad was living, and you didn't have much time  
 to run around with other teenagers too much -- except,  
 probably on Sunday.  
 JSF That's right.  
 BF I know that I have heard you speak of the LeCroys more  
 than anyone else in your growing up. In fact, that's  
 all I can remember you talking about -- the LeCroys and

Dewey Gable.

JSF Yes.

MC Tell me something before we finish up. When you were a deputy sheriff, you had to go around busting up stills. Where were the stills? Were they way out in the country?

JSF Out on some [creeks].

MC Out on some creek somewhere? Were there many of them?

JSF Not too many. A long time.

MC Did you ever have to chase down cars that were coming through from another county?

BF That wasn't during your time, was it? Steve, the stills that you raided during your run as [deputy] sheriff, were they doing it to sell, or doing it for their own use? When was liquor legalized? It was legalized before you were a sheriff, wasn't it?

JSF Yes.

BF They just made it and probably sold it to people cheaper than they could get it otherwise? I can remember one still that I think you went to that was almost within sight of I-75, and when they were brewing it, you could see the smoke from I-75. Am I right? Down there close to Cumberland?

JSF I was in Milledgeville [when it was raided]. It came on the radio.

BF I can tell you this: my son is 43, and he and other boys liked to sleep out in the woods. They were sleeping out in the woods, oh, no distance from the Baptist Church. It was probably right behind the church.

MC Out here off of Cherokee up here in Kennesaw?

BF Yes. And one of the boys saw a little old house up there with light in it. One of the boys said, "We'd better not go up there, 'cause they make [moonshine]." I cannot understand why those kids did not have enough curiosity to go up there, but they did not. Next day was when that little house was raided, and it was [the location of a still].

MC They were making moonshine.

BF Was that in the city limits of Kennesaw?

cases in Cobb County?

JSF Yes.

MC Who were the sheriffs that you worked for?

JSF Kermit Sanders.

MC The Matthews doctors?

MC Was he the only one that you worked for?

JSF Yes.

MC He stayed in a long time.

JSF Yes, he was in 20 years.

MC Did you enjoy that work?

JSF Yes.

MC What made you finally decide to retire?

JSF What I done mostly, was I waited on the judges. One was Judge Henderson.

MC Judge Albert Henderson?

JSF Yes. Luther Hames.

BF Who was the other one you liked so well -- he's a lawyer now?

MC Conley Ingram?

JSF Yes. Steve really liked him.

MC Can you think of anything else?

JSF He was a nice fellow.

MC We've talked with Conley Ingram at length. He started out as a juvenile court judge, didn't he?

JSF That's right.

MC Then he was a superior court judge, and then he went to the [state] supreme court.

JSF That's right.

MC Did they have any interesting cases that you got to listen to when you were there?

JSF Yes, every [case].

BF Can you remember any of them that would be outstanding

cases in Cobb County?

JSF When they had that bunch that killed...eve I went part of the way in a buggy.

BF The doctors?

BF What year did you drive ... who was the man you drove?

MC The Matthews doctors?

BF Now, Steve, were you still a deputy when that happened? I'm not sure you were, because I told you one day that I had never been in a court room and you and I went down and listened to it. I don't believe that happened while you were [a sheriff]. You really had to quit because of your wife's health, didn't you? She was sick for quite a few years, and he had to quit.

BF Well, you married in 1923, I think you said.

MC When you were in the courtroom with these judges, did they have very different ways of conducting the court?

JSF Some of them were more strict than others.

MC That made a difference in how the spectators acted, or how the lawyers acted?

JSF A lot of it was how the lawyers acted.

MC You knew a lot of Marietta lawyers, too, didn't you?

JSF Yes.

MC There were a lot of Cobb County lawyers.

JSF No.

JSF Plenty of them.

MC Can you think of anything else we need to cover that we haven't covered?

BF I can't think of anything.

JSF There's not too much more to tell.

BF When you were growing up, how often did you get into Atlanta?

JSF The first one I ever seen was ...

JSF Not often.

MC Was he the sheriff?

BF That was a far city, wasn't it?

BF It might have been furnished by ...

JSF Yes.

MC When you would go, how would you get there?

BF The first time you went to Atlanta, how did you go? Do

you remember? ~~see hours.~~

JSF The first time I went to Atlanta, I believe I went part of the way in a buggy.

MC Thank you for doing this. I see.

BF What year did you drive ... who was the man you drove to New York?

JSF Mr. [Enoch] Faw.

BF He was a native Cobb countian. He bought a car, and he got you to drive him to New York. What year was that?

JSF I hadn't been married long.

BF Well, you married in 1923, I think you said.

JSF Yes, that's when it was.

BF You mean, you left your bride and drove somebody to New York? How long were you gone?

JSF Four days.

BF It took four days to drive to New York?

JSF It took three days to drive to New York; I caught the train back to Atlanta. [Laughter]

BF Were the roads all paved to New York then?

JSF No.

BF You had to drive a lot of dirt roads?

JSF Yes, a lot of dirt roads.

MC Back then, were there many cars in Marietta?

JSF No.

BF Do you remember who had the first car in Marietta?

JSF The first one I ever seen was Will Frey's.

MC Was he the sheriff?

BF It might have been furnished by the county. Was it his car?

JSF I don't know.

MC I think we've just about worn him out. We've talked

for almost three hours.

BF Well, he's done so good. I've enjoyed it.

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