Interview with Annie Thelma Jamison and Marion William Jamison, Jr.

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Orangeburg (S.C.)

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Houston: That should be ... It should be working now. It's turned up. Maybe we could just start by having each of you state your ... your name and your birth date.

Annie Jamison: All right. I'm Annie Adams Jamison. My birth date is November the twenty-third, 1933.

Houston: And Mr. Jamison?

Marion Jamison: Marion Jamison. My birth date is March 13, 1934.

Houston: Could you begin perhaps by talking about your grandparents and I know that both of your families came to own land in the area.

Annie Jamison: Yeah. Well, I guess I'm a little unfortunate in that most of what I know about my grandparents came through my parents. And I only remember one grandparent slightly and that's the father of my mother, Dr. Sims, Sr. He was reared by some old white owners that lived in the area of
Gadsden. And they took him and he worked on his ... on their place as a young worker. And during this time he ... they would pay him a little money and also provide for his needs and what he did was unusual, was that whatever they paid him, he kept it and made himself survive on what they were doing for him otherwise. He would take his little money and save it until when he was able to leave their place, he had enough money to go out and purchase land of his own. And that's how he got his beginnings. He married Betty Campbell. She became Betty Campbell Sims. And they are the parents of my mother, Dr. Sims and my mother married a Adams, Frank Adams, Sr.

Marion Jamison: My father ...

Houston: I'm sorry. How does she spell her name?

Annie Jamison: Dorcas. D-o-r-c-a-s.

Houston: Okay.

Annie Jamison: Dorcas Sims Adams. Now my father's father was John Adams, Sr. And he was ... My grandmother was Millie Brown Adams. And they had quite a few children in their early marriage. And unfortunately, my grandmother, Millie, died very early. My father, Frank Adams, was the oldest child. And because of losing his mother, he became almost like a mother to his other siblings. And he had very little chance of getting an education. We could say maybe that he might have gone through what would equal the first grade. And at that time, they said school was only about three months out of
the year because most of the other part of the year was spent on the farm. And I came from a farming area. And when he stopped to take care of his siblings, he was like a mother to the other brothers and sisters. Of course, he was to care for the brothers -- and there were six brothers in that first marriage. And two sisters and the two sisters, losing their mother, and they were the younger children -- they lost them. So he never was able to see a sister grown. But at this stage, he is ... what records we can find, he's supposed to be 102 years old and out of those siblings, he lived to see all of them grown and became to be very prosperous. But they all are deceased now. He's the only one living. My grandfather married again. Had another son, which would be seven sons. And that son is deceased. My daddy and mom had eleven children but I usually count eight because they lost three of them when they were very young. And I never got to know them because I'm the tenth child. And the ones they lost, the oldest of the ones they lost at that time was just three years old. Therefore, I never got to know them. So the eight of us were very fortunate in that our parents worked very hard as farmers. And my mother worked with, side by side with my father on the farm. But she mostly kept house and kept her children. And to know that they struggled as hard and wanted their children to have the best. And they said the best would be they wanted to educate them. And out of the eight children that they saw into adulthood, five of us finished South Carolina State and five of us got our master's degree from South Carolina State College. The other three finished high school. One sister went two years into college. So I think with people beginning as they did, I thought they did real well with their children in those days. But we were fortunate to be able to always say that our father and mother owned their own land and their own
home. And we came from a very rural area. I remember in my early life we walked to what was Gadsden Elementary School. And that was about two miles from my home. And this was like maybe a six room school. But it had from the first through the tenth grade. So in most classrooms you had at least two grades. And we would go to that school early in the morning. And it was a responsibility -- we really wanted to help to get the fire started in the morning and then get the room clean and the desks straight. And then from then, we had real teaching. We came from a community where the children knew that everyone in the community would be extended families because they were to respect them and if they didn't, you didn't want this to get back to your parents because they were the ones that you were supposed to obey just like your parents. So we came from that type of close community. And the same thing happened in the school house. You didn't ever want it to get back home that you disobeyed a teacher or you didn't do what a teacher said. So this is the way we went to school and learned. And to think of my father as a person who didn't have any formal education, he always sent us to school and would say that "I'm sending you to school to pass" and what you knew by that was it was an A and a B. He never went past that. So that meant to us to do your best. To do your best. So he wanted us to have as much as we could in the field of education. And from there, I finished the seventh grade in the Gadsden area and I went to Booker T. Washington High School in Columbia. And from graduating from Booker Washington, I came to South Carolina State College. And you would think that I met my husband at State but I didn't. He was there and he was a class ahead of me. But I did not really meet him at State, but after I graduated from state, my first job was right here in Orangeburg School District Five. And he was in ROTC and he'd gone on to do
his term in the service and when he came back from the service, he worked in Walterboro for a year or two. And then he came here to work. And that's when I met him is when we worked at ... we were teaching at the same school. And that ...

Houston: You were teaching high school in ...

Annie Jamison: Middle school. Sharpsen. Sharpeson Junior High School.

Houston: Why did you ... Now you left Gadsden in the seventh grade but you could have stayed on and gone to school there. Yet, your family ...

Annie Jamison: What happened was that at the time they were changing the schools around where you would have from maybe from the first through the seventh grade at Gadsden School when ... When I first started to Gadsden, it went through all of the grades. Then they started putting part of the grades at Gadsden, another part of the grades at Hopkins. And they were moving them up. So knowing Booker Washington and Booker Washington being the popular school in Columbia, that's where our parents sent us -- from Gadsden to Booker Washington.

Houston: Okay. But you could have gone to Hopkins which was also in Columbia?

Annie Jamison: No. Hopkins is about seven miles from me, but it's still about ... about eleven miles from Columbia.
Annie Jamison: But it was convenient for us to go there. We ... One or two sisters stayed with cousins in Columbia. But I had a brother at that time working in Columbia so I went every day with him and came back.

Houston: Oh. So you didn't live in Columbia.

Annie Jamison: No, I didn't. But the older sisters did. My older sisters and brothers but I was one of the fortunate ones that didn't stay. I had that same cousin that if there was a conflict or a program at school, I could spend the night with that cousin. But since my brother was working there daily, I could go with him and come back.

Houston: And how far was it from Gadsden?

Annie Jamison: It's about nineteen miles from Gadsden to Booker T. Washington.

Houston: So did you drive the distance?

Annie Jamison: Yes, I went with my brother.

Houston: When you were growing up in Gadsden, your parents owned their own farm.
Annie Jamison: Yes, they did.

Houston: How big a farm was it, do you know?

Annie Jamison: Well, I would say from the time I knew the farm, he had about 125 acres. Plus he had three pieces, three main pieces of property.

Houston: And this was land that he inherited from ...

Annie Jamison: Well, from my mother's father gave ... gave each of the children ... he divided his land among them.

Houston: Okay. And he ...

Annie Jamison: That's what he started off with, with just the land my mother's father had left for his children.

Houston: Okay. And then he expanded.

Annie Jamison: Yes, he did.

Houston: So 125 acres.

Annie Jamison: No. it's about ... it's close to 200 acres now. Because after it got up to size, he acquired some more.
Houston: Do you know how much he inherited?

Annie Jamison: The piece at ... is about 41 acres. And it's 36 at the house. And at Pine Bluff, it's about 21. Forty, fifty, sixty, seventy, eighty ... about ninety. About ninety acres.

Houston: And were there ... were there other black land owners in the community where you ...

Annie Jamison: Believe it or not, in communities like that, a lot of the people are related. And most of them came from parents or ... or close relatives of the grandparents. And they did the same thing for their children -- left the property to them.

Houston: So there were lots of land owners.

Annie Jamison: There was a lot of black land owners in the area.

Houston: And many of them were related to you so ...

Annie Jamison: Many of them are related to me so we're still in the area where there are cousins living around. One of the plot of land that he acquired belonged to Mr. Mike Arab which was at that time like the magistrate for Gadsden. And he was white. But I guess my daddy working there and doing farming with, you know, his gin house and everything, when he got ready to
sell it, he sold it to my father. And we have seen a lot of people who, you know, lived on white people's property when I was young, acquire property of their own. So in that neighborhood now, mostly we have just blacks right in one area, you know. And they're land owners now. Most of the land that they're living on now, you know, once they would live on quite a few spots of land that belonged to whites. But through the years they've been able to acquire some of the land for themselves. So a lot more people have become land owners.

Houston: Okay. And it was ... My understanding is it was generally difficult for blacks to acquire land.

Annie Jamison: It was.

Houston: But it sounds as though a number of black people, even from the time you were born, I mean, let's say in the 1940s, were acquiring land.

Annie Jamison: They were acquiring land. And it seems that the old, old white people -- I don't know if you would call it plantation -- but they had a lot of land that they must have died out. And they had small families. Because, you know, you didn't have a lot of their children passing down, the land passed down to them. I assume this might have been one of the reasons why it was sold to blacks.

Houston: Rather than their operating plantations with fewer ...
Annie Jamison: Well, I guess I shouldn't say "plantation" but at that time, they ... they would do all of their farming through these white people that had the area. You know, they would buy their fertilizer and they would let them have that on time. And then when they make their cotton, they would owe them so much. And at this time, with little education, you know and I know that a lot of people were taken advantage of because they couldn't figure out themselves really how much they would owe them for what they had acquired from them in order to have the farm, see? But the main person there had the kind of business where they would get everything for their plows. Or you could say their equipment. And then all of the fertilizer. So that all the stuff that re-fertilized the soil and everything, they got it from the same person, or the same business. And then at the end of the year, they wouldn't acquire very much from their farming because they would owe it all back to them. M-hm. So we can say way back there it was ... you could see yourself that it wasn't much fair dealings with them. But they couldn't understand it because of the lack of education.

Houston: Yeah. Share croppers were frequently taken advantaged of.

Annie Jamison: Yes, they got taken advantage of.

Houston: Yeah, I understand that you came, Mr. Jamison, from the same ... background. From a family of land owning black farmers.

Marion Jamison: Yes. My grandfather was ... didn't know his parents from what my ... from what I can understand. He knew his mother but he didn't
know his father. But he was very ingenious in business. And I don't know how much formal training he had but he could read and write. So I'm sure he had some ... some formal training. And starting with just a meager amount of money, he developed quite a sizable business in Orangeburg. And his business was ... dealt primarily with helping black farmers by purchasing seed and equipment that they would need on the farm. And allowing them to have it until they made their crops and they were able to repay him for it. My grandmother -- my grandfather's name was Henry Jamison. My grandmother who married him was Camilia Moore Jamison. And she knew her father quite well. She cared for him until he died. He was a former slave owner. And never married and had children for many of the women that were on ... on his plantation. His plantation is about, oh, twelve miles from ... outside of Orangeburg between ... I think it's Calhoun County or it's ... what? Part of the land is in both counties. When he passed, or at his passing, well, before he passed, he gave his children land, which was unusual. He ... he sent his girls to school. A lot would send their boys to school but not educate their girls. But my grandmother went to Claflon. She was born in 1865. Claflon opened in 1869. So as a young girl, she attended Claflon and was well educated. My mother's parents, I don't know their grandparents. But they were Willie and Mary Jane Glover. And my mother was Blumah, B-l-u-m-a-h, Lee Glover. And she was born and reared in the Orangeburg County area. My father was Marion Jamison, Sr. And as a very young child, I was surrounded by chickens because my father did poultry farming. One of the few men who started in the area of poultry farming. And he raised poultry for eggs and sold eggs to both college, Claflon and State. And when I became a lad of eleven, he decided to go into the grocery business. And that's
where I got my business background. I went to work with him. And grew up in the grocery business from that age. I attended South Carolina State College. Received a degree in education, science education. Received a commission in the U.S. Army. I served in Korea. And returned and taught for several years. Went back to the School of Pharmacy, Xavier University of New Orleans. Completed my pharmacy training and from 1966 or '67 until now, I've been practicing in a professional pharmacy.

Annie Jamison:

Marion Jamison: Oh, she's saying it's the same building where I worked. I've been in that store since I was eleven years old because ...

Houston: Oh, it's the same as your father's store.

Marion Jamison: It was my father's store.

Houston: When you ... when you grew up in this area, this was originally farming country? This is now ...

Marion Jamison: This was all was farming area.

Houston: Although you're over the city line, this is now really part of ... part of Orangeburg. I mean, it's part of the city of Orangeburg.

Marion Jamison: Right. They consider it part of the City of Orangeburg,
even though we're in the county. Yeah.

Houston: Okay. And were there ... were there other black land owners as there were in ...

Marion Jamison: Yes. In fact, in this area, all were black land owners. I only knew four rental places in the whole community. All the others owned their own property.

Houston: That seems very unusual.

Marion Jamison: It is very unusual. And we often talk of it with extreme pride about how proud the community was because they were all land owners and they all shared. Particularly like butchering time, the neighbors would come and all would share the work, and share the food, the meat. And it was common to ... a sharing type of community. And like my wife said they would share discipline with the children. Everybody ... you were everybody's child in the community. And if you ... someone saw you doing something that wasn't quite what they expected of you, you would hear about it and then you would pray that it would stay right there. [chuckles] But I think that's ... that's a big factor that's lost today, that ... They would whip you, if necessary. If they thought it was warranted, they would give you a good whipping. But usually all they had to do was say, "Boy, I see you. Mind now what you're doing." And all, that was it.

Houston: So then the farm land that your daddy ... your father operated
was land that came into your family through your mother?

**Marion Jamison:** No.

**Houston:** Through your mother's

**Marion Jamison:** Through my grandmother.

**Houston:** Your grandmother, excuse me.

**Marion Jamison:** My grandmother. And my grandfather. Because my grandmother's father gave them land. And then grandfather expanded on that land.

**Houston:** Okay.

**Annie Jamison:** The same thing happened ...

**Houston:** The same thing that happened as with your family.

**Marion Jamison:** Same pattern. Right.

**Houston:** Now were these land acquisitions, do you think, about the same time? Because we're talking about similar generations. I mean, this is ... both your grandparents were the acquirers of ...
Annie Jamison: I believe ... Grandma Nealy might have come along a little behind Papa. Do you think?

Marion Jamison: Yeah, I think so.

Annie Jamison: My grandfather, Dr. Sims, might have been like a twenty year ahead of his grandmother, Camelia Jamison. Camelia Moore Jamison. Thinking about their age -- what age they would be right now.

Houston: Okay. So your grandfather was twenty years older than ...

Annie Jamison: Right. Than his grandmother that ... you know, see, she came from a plantation. You know, her father was white.

Houston: Yes. That's right.

Annie Jamison: Well see, my grandfather probably didn't know ... the unusual thing about it, I don't think he really knew his mother and father as mother and father. But he knew all of his brothers. And they were different places. You see, he happened to have been with this white family when they took care of him. But he never lost sight of who his brothers were. Brothers and sisters were. He knew all of them. But he was able to purchase some land himself when he left them. But see, hers was inherited because her white father saw that his children -- and I understand from Marion that all of the children he had were black children, or by black women.

Houston: He never married?
Annie Jamison: Never married and he never had any children as they knew by, you know, white women. So that's how he left what he owned to his black children.

Houston: Right. So ... so

Annie Jamison: But Marion didn't mention that they took most of it from him as far as money was concerned.

Marion Jamison: He has family brothers, particularly a brother, and, you know, well, he willed a certain amount to the ... to his black children. But the will was changed. And they never got the money.

Houston: The money.

Annie Jamison: The finance ...

Marion Jamison: ... the portion of money or land that they were supposed to get.

Houston: But your grandmother did?

Marion Jamison: No.

Annie Jamison: She got some of it.
Marion Jamison: They gave her ... well, the land that he gave her when she started out, well, you know, she got that. But after he died ...

Houston: I see. He willed her land but _______ never got.

Marion Jamison: He willed her land and money and she never got it. Well, I guess you can understand from what I was told she was willed something like $5,000.00 back ... back ... way back.

Annie Jamison: ... which was money.

Marion Jamison: ... a million dollars now. And I think they gave her five hundred dollars. And I don't know what ... how they did the land but one of the lawyers that bothered him so until he t________ it before he died. And another just lost his mind.

Annie Jamison: Marion's oldest uncle always would tell us about it. This terrible thing happened to all of them that got together and did that transaction, you know. Just seemed like something terrible happened to all of them. Then one told what they had done, see, before he died.

Houston: So you actually had contact with this side of the family? So these were the uncles of your grandmother ...

Annie Jamison: Uncles of his daddy, his daddy. His daddy's oldest brother
was the one that ... See, his daddy was the baby of Miss Camelia Jamison. But ... and the oldest boy was Theodore ...

Houston: Knew his grandmother.

Annie Jamison: knew his grand ... knew those white folks. Yeah, he knew those white folks.

Houston: Okay. He knew what had happened and he ... it was he who told you.

Marion Jamison: Right.

Annie Jamison: But he was the one that the ... in ... I don't know if he was in the conversation or what ... of one of the whites that did the transaction. Somehow it came to him that this fellow either told him or told him in his presence what they did with that land when Old Man Moore died and left it to the black ... his black children.

Houston: So there was nothing really ... there was no lawsuit to be filed.

Marion Jamison: Oh no. They couldn't do anything, no. You was lucky they gave you what they gave you.

Annie Jamison: You couldn't start anything with them because they were the officials. Then I think at the time this one told it, most of them that
probably could have done something with, they were already deceased.

**Houston:** Well, I mean, ... so, so the only way your grandmother acquired land was ... was by the direct gift her father made to her of land while he was still living.

**Annie Jamison:** That's right.

**Houston:** but that land that he tried to devise to her, he was unable to give to her because his relatives defeated his will.

**Annie Jamison:** That's right.

**Marion Jamison:** That's it.

**Annie Jamison:** By having contact with the town officials here.

**Houston:** Right. Yet, in this area, virtually all of the blacks except four families that you knew were land owners. And in your area, there were many, many land owners.

**Annie Jamison:** Many, many black ... m-hm.

**Houston:** So it would be interesting if you know to recount how it was your ... your grandfather was able to save enough money to buy ... well, not just save enough money to buy land but how he was then able to get somebody to
sell land to him.

**Annie Jamison:** Transact it, it get it to it. Yes. And I really probably need to try to find out who were the whites that ... and what area they were living in right there in Gadsden. And you know, he could ... because he could have, I guess, purchased it from them. I don't know. See, I don't know. This part I don't know.

**Marion Jamison:** But what happened then in many instances like that, the white ... particularly white slave owners cared for their black children.

**Annie Jamison:** Yes, they did.

**Marion Jamison:** Now I have a first cousin who comes from Ellery, just twenty miles south of here. And he comes from a clan called Williams. Their last name is Williams. And his grandfather accumulated land in a similar manner. And we're talking about a lot of land now. The same ... Now my ... Let me finish this first. But, he was ... the master, slave master owner realized his intelligence and the slave master had a child by a black woman that he considered his daughter. He knew it was his daughter. And he arranged for this young black boy that was smart to marry her. And gave them so much land. And I think this is where blacks got a lot of land.

**Annie Jamison:** That's why I told you about my grandfather. That it seems that they must not have had children of their own because I understand that they respected him as being a very thrifty or smart young man to be able to
save this money. I don't think they took out anything, you know, evil against him for what he had done. I think they respected him for that. So that's why I say I don't know if they were able to purchase the land ... he was able to purchase the land from them or from whom. But I understand there was no ill feeling because he had ... he had done this for himself.

Houston: Right. What ... the story you just related suggests that ... that land passed into black hands largely through blood relationship with whites.

Annie Jamison: Whites. That's right.

Houston: Is there any evidence ... I mean, just based on observations, that land owning families were of mixed race background versus non-land owning families? For example, of the ... I think there were only four families

Annie Jamison: not owning land, didn't you say.

Houston: not owning land. Would you say that there was a difference in terms of the

Marion Jamison: No, because these people in this community owned small pieces of land. Something like maybe ten, five, ten acres. And that land I think was purchased land because ...
Annie Jamison: The Fredericks had to buy some of theirs. Didn't they have ... They didn't have that much though, just about ten acres.

Marion Jamison: Yeah. And of course, they had that and people like Fredericks, Mr. Fredericks, worked __________. So, he made a salary and he was able to

Annie Jamison: to purchase land.

Marion Jamison: through the sacrificial methods that they practiced, they could buy land. And he worked on the campus and he had five sons. Which means that they could work a small farm. And he could still do his work, you know, at the school. And they could do the farming. And many of the ... that's how many of the families worked. Many of the fathers were journeyman trades people and most of them had large families. And those families, when he was gone on his trades, the family kept the farm going.

Houston: So they were able ... I mean, the families who were able to buy land were perhaps able to buy it because ... because the heads of the households were journeymen who were able to earn salaries

Marion Jamison: That's right.

Houston: from the colleges.

Marion Jamison: And from just ... not only colleges. For any building that
needed done. They were trained to build buildings.

**Annie Jamison:** But Marion, were they trained to build buildings and doing this work for white folks even then?

**Marion Jamison:** Oh yeah! That's what I'm saying.

**Annie Jamison:** So most of what they accumulated really came ... like you said, from their relationship with whites.

**Marion Jamison:** Yeah. But now ...

**Annie Jamison:** But not like you say inherited ... giving it to them.

**Marion Jamison:** No. They worked for it. Because all of your trained builders were black people. And I mean, they were trained. So they could ... they could earn their keep. And see, the family that was on a small farm, the farm maintained them. So the money that he made was money to extend that farm. You know, to buy more land. And that's how they were able to do it.

**Houston:** Okay. And you said most of these farms in this area were five to ten acres?

**Marion Jamison:** Right.

**Houston:** So they wouldn't ... they would ... it was large families. So
they would not necessarily ... Would these have been farms where they were growing a surplus for market, for sale in the market place?

Marion Jamison: These were ... Basically, they planted then corn, cotton. There was no soy beans. And fig gardens and everybody raised chickens and hogs.


Marion Jamison: But it wasn't a marketable ...

Annie Jamison: I know. But that's how they could eat!

Marion Jamison: Cotton was the standard. And most of the migration to the north was as a result of the bo weevil that interrupted the cotton productivity. And those large families, the farm could no longer sustain them because ...

Annie Jamison: Now your grandmother had more land than that because all this area back here, after her children migrated ...

Marion Jamison: Oh yeah.

Annie Jamison: to the north, they sold this area. They sold this area, see. They sold a lot of the land.
Marion Jamison: Yeah, well, see much of the land, like I said, it was ... that Henry Jamison and Lee Jamison owned, my grandfather bought. You know, to extend it like your grandfather. And now he may have gotten some land due to forfeiture because, you know, like a person would come and gives him the seed and the horse and the wagon and what have you. And then at the end of the year, they can't show anything or can't pay. Then they'd forfeit the land. I would assume. That's a practice so ... I would assume that some of his land may have come as a result of that.

Houston: Do you know how big his farm got to be?

Marion Jamison: Well, it wasn't in one piece. That's the problem. I know he had some land that's what? Roseville is ten miles down the road? I don't know how much. He had land up at Jamison. I think he had some land up the north road.

Annie Jamison: Well, see, all of his ... all of his children migrated to the north except Marion's father. The baby boy was the only one who really stayed here on the home spot.

Marion Jamison: During the Depression when he had a stroke and was ill ... well, they had migrated before then because they didn't want to farm.

Houston: When did they migrate?

Marion Jamison: Oh, let's see now. The Depression was '29, '30. So, it
must have been maybe five or six years before then that they would have migrated. Because I knew that they came back when he died. That's how, you know, I can remember that. I can remember them coming home talking about the boys came home.

**Annie Jamison:** He must have died in the thirties.

**Marion Jamison:** He died in '31 I believe. He died ...

**Annie Jamison:** You can't remember that because you weren't born.

**Marion Jamison:** No. I'm saying I remember them talking about it. They came home to his funeral.

**Annie Jamison:** Yeah. And we do have that picture of them.

**Houston:** That's right.

**Annie Jamison:** When they came back with their mother. Yeah.

**Marion Jamison:** But I think all of them ... Uncle Hazel might have been here because he had a marital problem. He came back home. But Uncle Jordan with his ____________ and Uncle Mike were all gone.

**Annie Jamison:** Now I'd like to tell him I think there was another thing about the family during those times. Not only did you belong to everyone in
the community but I think you were taught in the families. I know that's how so many of us were able to get our education where one would help the next one after he got out. And like my baby sister, I helped her. Then the sister above me helped me. And, you know, even ... with Momma though still continuing but it was ... it really helped them because, you know, they had so many children. But we were taught to share and help one another. And I think that was a beautiful part of teaching back in those days too. And I think it made for an excellent closeness in the family members.

Houston: In terms of migration, you suggested that the reason people migrated was that they ... first of all, it was difficult to make a living farming, particularly because of the Depression which hit, I guess, agriculture earlier in the Depression than the industrial.

Marion Jamison: Right. The bo weevil.

Houston: And the bo weevil.

Marion Jamison: And the bo weevil.

Houston: But your ... both of your families, as land owners, would have had a real advantage over ... over other ... others.

Annie Jamison: You're right. You're right.

Marion Jamison: Right.
Houston: Were they ... when they migrated, had they received more ... your uncles received more education? I mean, were they ...

Marion Jamison: I don't think any of them completed their education as was available at the time.

Houston: Okay. Which would have been what?

Marion Jamison: Okay. My ... The oldest brother started school in 1896. That's when they started State.

Annie Jamison: Yeah, but he was in the first ... He was just ... He was too young.

Marion Jamison: That's what I'm saying. That's when he started school. Okay. So he probably went to something like maybe like ninth grade, eighth or ninth grade, which meant then that you had a tremendous education. But that was not as far as the school went. So he didn't complete school. But he was well educated for that period of time.

Annie Jamison: My mother did the same.

Marion Jamison: Uncle George took the brick masonry trade. Now when the State College during that period ... and most of your black schools -- Tuskegee and ... were ... taught many trades. They had blacksmith. They had
iron works. They had brick masonry, carpentry, plastering. So one could be fairly well trained in the area of trades and could make a decent living. And I think most of them migrated to places where ... particularly those who had acquired the trades. Like Rudy's daddy and Jim and them went to certain areas like New York or the cities where building was going on. And they could make money. You know, they could make money continuously. Because in an area like this, you ... where it was basically agricultural, there's not that much industrial type work going on, or buildings. So you get a building and then six months you're working and six months you're not working. So they went to areas where they could work continuously. Some of them took their families. Some of them left their families at home. And that's how they got their start.

Annie Jamison: Because Uncle George had a tremendous trade.

Marion Jamison: Yeah. And he took ...

Annie Jamison: Dennis?

Marion Jamison: No. Horse

Annie Jamison: Putting those horse shoes on those horses?

Marion Jamison: Yeah. But ... no. Making the gear. Tanning the leather and making the saddle and whatever leather working stuff that was done for horses. But see, when the automobile came, they figured that's a dead thing
now. But, if you were trained like that and could work and get in where they do racing, horse racing and stuff like that, you're talking ________ in the band. You can just almost tell them what you want because so few people are trained. And the same thing in this area now with plasterers. Very, very few and this ...

Annie Jamison: And at one time, most of the plasterers were black.

Marion Jamison: Everything was black.

Annie Jamison: That's what I thought.

Marion Jamison: All your building people were black. There wasn't a licensed brick layer in the state of South Carolina until 1950. You believe it?

Houston: That's a surprise.

Marion Jamison: And then they started smelling the money when they started building condos and stuff and that's when they ... they got involved.

Houston: So the tradesmen in this area, in the Orangeburg area, continued to be black say even through the Depression.

Marion Jamison: Right. They were the only people trained. And the whites could find something else to do. And they didn't want that dirty work.
Houston: Were ... What percentage black would you say this area was? Were there more blacks than whites in this area?

Marion Jamison: It's almost ... I think always been about fifty percent.

Houston: Okay.

Annie Jamison: And it's still about that. But now in our Gadsden proper, the majority of the people ... [End of Tape 1, Side A]

[Begin Tape 1, Side B]

Annie Jamison: ... in the Gadsden area now. I guess to get out of the city now. We have quite a few of them down there. But Gadsden is predominantly black. And it's nice to see that the people, like you say, who didn't have land before, they've taken pride in acquiring land and they keep up around their places very nice. This is really wonderful for most of them that, you know, their families in groups and families in groups. You know. It's amazing how they haven't spread out that ... It's still, you know, a big mixture. A lot of the children from previous parents and grandparents still live mostly in the area.

Houston: Were there ... Because Gadsden was predominantly black, were there white farmers living among black farmers?
Annie Jamison: Oh yes. And the blacks worked for them, yeah. Because a lot of the blacks did not have, you know, ...

Marion Jamison: A lot of them were share croppers.

Annie Jamison: Share croppers. And lived on the white farm.

Houston: A lot of the whites were share croppers?

Marion Jamison: No, no.

Houston: A lot of the blacks were share croppers.

Annie Jamison: Blacks were share croppers that worked for these whites. You know, it's amazing how you would have just two or three whites down there that owned so much land until they had these little houses everywhere. And then, you know, they would have these blacks living on their farm. They would take care of their farm and they would let them have a little place of their own and then they would be share cropping for them.

Houston: Was there ... So it sounds like there was more of that in Gadsden than there was in this area.

Annie Jamison: More share cropping? Oh yes.

Marion Jamison: In ... Now in this area, we have to define the area because
we're talking maybe east of Orangeburg. That's the area I can speak of. Because we're ... where Howard School is.

Annie Jamison: Well, that was woods.

Marion Jamison: U-uh [no]. That was pasture. There was a white family that owned a great deal of land just to our right here. But going up this way from the railroad and even beyond, there were only black families maybe out to where the cemetery is. There was some white families out there. But all of this land in here was black owned.

Annie Jamison: Even though it was not farming land, most of it was not farmed.

Marion Jamison: Well, most of it ... yeah, most of it was small farms. Because see, when I was a child, I knew from ... for two miles this way and maybe a mile this way, I knew everybody that lived in the area. There weren't that many people but I knew. And we often talk about this. Now the streets like Mendel Street where you're going back to Bellville, you couldn't go through there. That was all Aunt Sally's pasture.

Annie Jamison: That's what I thought.

Marion Jamison: You went from State College back to Swen and Gramly Store. Okay. So all those roads, including Frederick Street, Mendel Street, Jamison and Coleman, all those streets
Annie Jamison: were not streets.

Marion Jamison: went to his pasture and were dead ends. But the black families were to that fence. And the Colemans had their place. The Jamisons had their place. Old Man Jake Jamison.

Annie Jamison: Now, Miss Walker acquired hers from your granddaddy.

Marion Jamison: Yeah, Miss Walker just got a lot.

Annie Jamison: That's what I said. But she got it from your granddaddy.

Marion Jamison: Right. And then ... Okay. Then, well, you'd know everybody. I told you John Paul and Billy's cousin, that Henry Williams and his family, they farmed back where Nick's school is. That's where their farm was. So you just knew everybody in the community.

Annie Jamison: Because there wasn't that many really.

Marion Jamison: But see, the farms weren't large. But the families were ... were ... maybe ten acres of land, something like that. Small farms. And ...

Annie Jamison: Which back in that day was a big farm. Ten acres was a lot of land. Because my granddaddy had a ...
Marion Jamison: I mean, if you were farming it wasn't a lot of land but ... 

Annie Jamison: No. But for them, I'm talking.

Houston: Well, I suppose what I'm trying to get at is ... is the difference between an area where there were a lot of blacks who were tenant farmers and an area like this where there were fewer tenants.

Marion Jamison: In the south, I can generalize. Most of your black people were tenant farmers, or share croppers. And you can easily see that after slavery ended and they were given forty acres and a mule, how easy it was for that to be taken away from them because they had no training about what business was involved in paying the taxes or buying seed and fertilizer and so on. They just weren't equipped. So, before they got it good, the man had taken it back from them. And there was nobody to help them or to oversee that they weren't taken advantage of. So, unless the blacks had some white of some status to intercede and help them, then they lost their property. And they reverted right back to slavery in a sense of being share croppers and tenant farmers who worked and at the end of the year, the man said, "Well, you didn't quite make it this year. But maybe next year you can break even." So he's in the hole as far as he knows _______ year. And no matter what he made, he was always in that untennable position of not coming out. So, unless he had someone to care for him and see after him, then he was in a pretty bad situation.
Houston: But as a land owner, people here would not have had their children working in the fields for example. I mean, as ... 

Annie Jamison: As much, Marion. He's talking ... 

Marion Jamison: I understand where you're coming from. But ... And then the blessing of this community was the two black colleges. 

Houston: Okay. And how did that make a difference? Because I guess people here did have their children working in the fields. 

Marion Jamison: Oh yeah. 

Houston: I mean, you were saying ... 

Marion Jamison: Even if they had five or ten acres, you worked in the fields. 

Houston: The children did? 

Marion Jamison: Yeah. 

Houston: But did they ... did they work at the expense of their education? where a farmer is a share cropper and living on the ... the non-land owner living on the white man's land, that the ... if the white man said, you know, "I want those children in the field ..."
Annie Jamison: Well, they had to go in the field.

Houston: they had to go in the field. But if a person owned his own land ...

Annie Jamison: At a certain time, his children went to school.

Marion Jamison: Even if he owned his own homestead. Because many kids who lived in this community went to the various farms that were owned by whites basically to pick cotton. Or some went as far as to the back areas to work in the tobacco farms. And some went even north to work on farms. But those kids, when it was school time, what they were ... what your parents would tell you then, you need to get out and get your money to get your school stuff. But when the school bells rang, they went to school -- most of them. Most of them went to school. And many of them went beyond grammar school, went on and finished high school. Because it was convenient. And many went to college because of the convenience. They didn't have to board. They might walk four or five miles or what have you. And that happened with Mary. Mary was a real late comer.

Annie Jamison: Yeah. M-hm. She lived out there, all the way out there.

Marion Jamison: She lived ... She was one of them ... We've got a bunch of children that are beyond these four that we have in some way been instrumental in their getting their education, or helping them, or what have
you. So they always refer to us as Daddy and Momma. And this child that we're talking about teaches now at ______ State. Mary walked five miles

Annie Jamison: into town

Marion Jamison: to State College, yeah.

Annie Jamison: To Claflin. Well, really, she got her a job. From high school, she walked that five miles to school every day. But then she realized she wanted to go to college. So she got her a job and she got in the Upward Bound Program at Claflin. So then she was getting money for Upward Bound, a little extra money, and then she got her a job on the side. And she rented a house right back there and moved her mother into town so she could go to college. And she worked her way ... She worked with Marion right at that drug store. And worked her way through college. She's got her master's -- and beyond. She works at State in the Speech Department. She just had it. She just was determined.

Marion Jamison: Yeah, she wanted something.

Annie Jamison: She was determined she was going to do for herself.

Marion Jamison: But many kids had the advantage of not having to go elsewhere to go to college and paying room and board and so on, which they wouldn't have normally had. But that was eliminated so all they needed was tuition. And that makes a difference.
Houston: Sure.

Annie Jamison: It makes a difference.

Marion Jamison: It makes a difference. So in that regard, the colleges really facilitated the community and many kids who were in the Orangeburg area could go.

Annie Jamison: Because they could walk to school or live close enough to just not have to stay on campus.

Houston: Right. So the colleges have made a difference, a big difference in terms of the number of blacks who were able to afford land because they ... because the economy of the colleges and Orangeburg supported a community of black craftsmen who were also small farm owners and operators.

Marion Jamison: Right.

Houston: But it also enabled many blacks to improve themselves through education

Annie Jamison: the colleges proximity. Yeah, the schools.

Houston: And would you say that ... was Gadsden different, it being more rural than ...
Marion Jamison: Yes.

Annie Jamison: Yeah, Gadsden was much more.

Marion Jamison: Yes. Because they had further to go to Columbia, which is twenty ... about twenty miles

Annie Jamison: About nineteen miles from Columbia. And most of us then would have to stay. Like I told you, all my sisters and brothers before me stayed with a cousin in Columbia to go to high school. And then Daddy had farmed and they sent me to State College. And the first thing you got at State College was a job so you could help send yourself to school.

Marion Jamison: But that was the key.

Annie Jamison: But then, like you say, it was just a few because they were saying that, you know, Daddy was sending his children. Nobody else was able. But nowadays, most of them send their children to school. That's what I'm so happy to see.

Houston: And when you were a child, you say in the early forties, do you have a sense of how many people in your community were ... how many African-Americans, lived on their own land or on their own homesteads versus how many, you know, were share croppers or tenant farmers? Any sense of that?
Annie Jamison: I would say it was

Marion Jamison: Maybe thirty/seventy.

Annie Jamison: Yeah, thirty/seventy and the thirty was the one who had their own farm. The others were tenants.

Marion Jamison: Yeah. I don't think it would be more than thirty/seventy. It might be more like twenty-five/seventy-five.

Annie Jamison: Twenty-five/seventy-five.

Houston: Was there a difference in terms of those who migrated? Did you find that ... was it the poorest people who migrated or the ones who had some resources? But a lot of people in your dad's family migrated. I mean, all of your dad's brothers except your father.

Annie Jamison: Well, I really think that they migrated because they were used to having their own and used to ... used to certain things and when the Depression came ...

Marion Jamison: They were trained too.

Annie Jamison: Yeah. They migrated more than the people in Gadsden. Because the people in Gadsden, this was their standard of things all the time, you see. And they weren't used to what these what migrated were used
to so they were used to share cropping all the time. You know, it was no sense in going north. Now, some went north but not to the number you would say here.

Houston: Okay.

Annie Jamison: Because they really weren't used to, you know, that much a difference.

Houston: Right. What were the ... in both ... I mean, in your early life, what were some of the signs of segregation of the Jim Crow south that you recall?

Marion Jamison: The things that you would remember as a child is that you had ...

Annie Jamison: ... You had black water and white water, when we were able to get to Columbia. And then, see, to get to Columbia from Gadsden, most of the time you had to go on a train because they didn't have buses that came through. And you know where you had to sit on the train. And then, finally a few people got cars and they would take the neighbors to Columbia. And that's when we got so we could go. And Momma would take one of us one week or three of us one time when it was almost time to go to school. But the facilities were just terrible. The only way we could use a restroom was to go to the courthouse.
Marion Jamison: Federal Building.

Annie Jamison: And it was so far, yeah, from the stores, you know, until it just was awful that you were in a store and couldn't use the restroom. Then the water was in the store but one was marked "Colored Water" and it wasn't no black. It was "Colored Water" and "White Water".

Marion Jamison: Was the colored marked?

Annie Jamison: [emphatically] Yes! It wasn't black. You know, "black" is a new thing.

Marion Jamison: Oh yes.


Marion Jamison: But they just had a sign up there: "Colored". Yeah.

Annie Jamison: And the other one was "White".

Marion Jamison: The one that was refrigerated, it was the one for colored. [laughs!] Just the opposite. [laughs]

Annie Jamison: But the thing that you would have to try to get your children ready for school and go up there to get them, to fit things for them, and your children would just have to wait that long to get to a
restroom -- it was just terrible.

Marion Jamison: And you spent money in the store!

Annie Jamison: And you're spending money in the store. And then when you get to that restroom, so many black people in there 'til you probably have a problem on yourself before you could get to the bathroom any way, to the comode. But it was just sad of that kind of thing. Now, in the schools, you didn't have too much of it when you were in the early grade school because that was all you knew. I don't even know whether white children went to school in Gadsden! I don't.

Houston: You mean they would have gone to school but somewhere else?

Annie Jamison: Somewhere else!

Houston: They would have been bussed.

Marion Jamison: Yeah, it never ... It just never bothered you because _____ black school to go to and that was it.

Annie Jamison: Uh-huh [yes]. And you were in a black world and I think for the time being you weren't thinking anything so wrong. You understand? So you were just happy to go to school and get your lessons. And the teachers were there. And they didn't tell you anything about, "We're not getting what the white children are getting." You know, like that finally
came along?

**Houston:** Right.

**Annie Jamison:** So you just ... I just didn't know where they went to school. But I know they didn't go there.

**Houston:** So when you say you were in your own world, did you ... in the countryside, did you not have much contact with whites?

**Annie Jamison:** We did not. And that's why I'm telling you we didn't have many whites in our community.

**Houston:** So they were more absentee land owners, or few land owners who had black tenants working on their farms.

**Annie Jamison:** Yeah. They had ... and I was telling you that most of them then did not have many children. And I guess they sent their children to these private schools. And so they just ruled us and had ... you know, not me per se, but the people that lived on their farms, see. And you just didn't see many whites. I would hear my daddy talking about Mr. Harry Camel, who was the magistrate -- is that what it was? And then from Mr. Harry Campbell, it came Mr. Mike Arat. And they just had everything there in that general store.

**Marion Jamison:** They ran the general store and the post office and that's
about all you know.

**Houston:** Were there ... were there ... Was there a law enforcement official, I mean, like a county sheriff? No?

**Annie Jamison:** U-uh [no].

**Marion Jamison:** You never saw him.

**Annie Jamison:** I never saw one. And all the problems

**Marion Jamison:** They were there but you never saw them.

**Annie Jamison:** Uhuh [yes]. And all the problems that black people had, they would carry those problems to Mr. Harry Campbell or Mr. Mike Arat. And that's how white people knew all of our business, because that's the only person they had who they felt would intercede for them.

**Houston:** So what kinds of problems did black people have that they would carry to these people? I mean, now we're talking about the early forties I guess? Late thirties, early forties?

**Annie Jamison:** Yes. Yeah, I guess _______ don't have enough kerosene for the ... I mean, something that simple, you know. They would have to take that to him. Now, I think that's what they were doing in the ... in the black churches. They would carry that problem to them. Just anything. They
had a ... one doctor that came out of Columbia, Dr. Campbell.

**Houston:** Was he related to Harry Campbell?

**Annie Jamison:** No, this is a black man. Dr. That's not his name. That came out of my mind. Marion, his wife was in your medical thing when you first opened but he was dead a long time ago. Who did I tell you it was? But anyway, he would come down there to Gadsden like once every two weeks. And the people who were sick, he would have to see all of them. And he was ... Okay, Momma ________ talk about it. He was dedicated to helping his people. But he died a very young man because he gave so much time. And so we didn't have any way of ... I don't think they had any way of getting to a doctor, you know. So all of that type of thing, they had to take to the white man -- who was sick and what he can do with them, do for them, and whatever he did for them, they were thankful.

**Marion Jamison:** We couldn't go to a hospital.

**Annie Jamison:** No, we couldn't go to hospitals.

**Houston:** Were there any disputes ever in the black community of Gadsden, where people, you know, ...

**Marion Jamison:** There would be fights and things like that.

**Annie Jamison:** Yeah, and they would go have a little ...
Marion Jamison: Most of the time it would be settled among their fighting each other.

Annie Jamison: Yeah, it would be settled there.

Annie Jamison: Or cutting each other. Something like that. You'd hear about it. Because they had little night spots. ______ folks used to call them night spots.

Houston: So ... you mean like juke joints?

Annie Jamison: Yes, that's right.

Houston: And so when disputes would arise between blacks, whether it was in juke joints or say two farmers over something ...

Annie Jamison: Right. And even at that, if they couldn't settle it among themselves, they would take that to the white man and he would settle it for them.

Houston: Now what about land owners? Did they do the same thing? Did they ... I mean, ...

Annie Jamison: I have never heard of any of them taking each other's land.
I think ... that's why I think what transaction they ever made, it must have been pleasant, you know, to sell it to them. And it had to be legal because I've seen my daddy's and those plats for their land and things. They probably let them just buy and they became land owners, you know.

Houston: I mean, were there ever disputes between say two black land owners where ... I mean if two black land owners fell out about something ...

Annie Jamison: Yeah, my hog's on yours. They take that to the white man too.

Houston: Is that right?

Annie Jamison: Uhuh. [yes] Because, see, either one will go there telling them that if you don't get him to stop making his hog break out on my land and doing this and doing that, I want you to make him give me that hog. You know, things like that, just little things like that. I know that's what you're talking about, isn't it?

Houston: Yeah.

Annie Jamison: Well, they would take that to the white man too. Because he was the overseer for that area. So they would take all of that to him.

Houston: Okay. And was it ... Well, I guess, the other thing ... sort of the other side of that is what were ... In the Gadsden area, what were the
... the institutions in which blacks came together as a community? I mean, I assume the churches were ...

Annie Jamison: The church. And my mother started what was called a Judy House. I don't know why they called it that. But that was a church, after church, on Sundays where all the community people could get together. I started to say children but she had adults in there and the children. And we would ... It would be like a festival. And she would go there and during regular time, we would, be taught

Marion Jamison: Sunday school.

Annie Jamison: Sunday school. And then we would have a big thing ... I guess what would equal to people now -- May day, about twice a year, where they would have these big old barrels of cold lemonade and cake.

Marion Jamison: You don't forget those days.

Annie Jamison: Oooh, you don't forget those days! And see, everybody had to walk because you didn't have anything but a wagon. Or you could walk to it, you know. But everybody in the neighborhood was at that. And that was just a big thing.

Houston: Now you said your ... your mother started it and called it Judy House?

Houston: J-u-d-y?

Annie Jamison: I would say ... I guess that's the way I would spell it! I don't know why. But they didn't call it the Christian school. They didn't call it the church after church. They called it the Judy House. But it was ... religiously related. That's what it was.

Marion Jamison: And it was after church.

Annie Jamison: It was after church, uhuh.

Houston: But sometimes Sunday school would be held during Judy House? Judy House ...

Annie Jamison: Yeah! It was really a teaching like that, you know? I guess it's like Bible school is now.

Houston: Okay.

Annie Jamison: Yeah. Okay. It would have different groups. One group, a little older, would sit up to the front. And one over to this side and then the children would be in the back.

Marion Jamison: Where was the Judy House? What building?
Annie Jamison: Right ... you know over there where Tarrabelle's sister -- Miss Janie lives.

Marion Jamison: What kind of building was it?

Annie Jamison: I don't know how they got that building the community. But it was like a big one room school.

Marion Jamison: Okay. I remember.

Houston: But that's all it was used for.

Annie Jamison: That's all it was used for -- for the Judy House, as far as I know. It could have been a school before that but I don't know about it, see? Because I was young.

Houston: Who's land was it on?

Annie Jamison: Don't know that!

Houston: Okay.

Marion Jamison: That was probably

Annie Jamison: Huh?
Marion Jamison: My daddy could tell you that.

Annie Jamison: Yeah, my daddy probably could tell you whose land that Judy House was on.

Marion Jamison: He could tell you.

Houston: And did the Judy House ... I mean, did it have ... and your mother started this so was she like the head person?

Annie Jamison: Yeah. She went to the ... you know, to tell others what to do for this group and for that group, you know.

Houston: What kinds of groups did they have?

Annie Jamison: You know -- age groups. For teaching classes. Yeah.

Houston: And the classes met only on Sunday after school?

Annie Jamison: Sunday after church. It looked like to me some of the picnics would be on Saturday at the Judy House. I don't think all of them were on Sunday but it seems they would have them several times during the year. It wasn't just no one time. It was ... You know, it was an outing for the children, for the people in the community.
Houston:  Okay.  And did ... Was there one Judy House for each church or was there like one Judy House ...

Annie Jamison:  One Judy House for all the community.

Houston:  For all of Gadsden?

Annie Jamison:  All of Gadsden -- who would come.

Houston:  And so would people come only from the church that your mother ...

Annie Jamison:  No, un-uh.  From everywhere.  Everybody in the community.  And see, all of us in the community don't belong to the same church.

Houston:  Right.  How big was the community, would you say?

Annie Jamison:  Marion, tell him how big Gadsden is.  Because it was _____ up there.  Now they've cut it off and say it's Hopkins.

Marion Jamison:  It's ... Oh, Lord.  It must be a twenty mile radius.

Annie Jamison:  M-hm.

Marion Jamison:  About a twenty mile radius.
Annie Jamison: It might be a thirty or forty now.

Houston: And were there lots of church there?

Annie Jamison: A lot of churches? Yeah. That would fit into that Gadsden area, yes. About six or seven.

Marion Jamison: No, I think ...

Annie Jamison: There's more churches than that now but back when there was a Judy House, it wasn't any more than but five to seven churches.

Houston: Okay. Were there other ... You said there were classes at the Judy House.

Annie Jamison: I was call it for age level.

Houston: Okay. Now the age levels went up to ... do they ... adults ...

Annie Jamison: Yes.

Houston: And what kinds of things would they do?

Annie Jamison: Because I remember all of my brothers and sisters, you know, being able to go to the Judy House at the same time we were going. And like I told you, my oldest sister's twenty years older than my baby sister,
see. So all of us were going to the Judy House. And it used to serve as a little island for the fellows to get with the girl too. Because I know like my brother, Doc, he used to do his courting coming to the Judy House on Sunday afternoon, you know. But they could get with the other girls and boys in unity coming from the Judy House and walking to the Judy House.

Houston: Do you remember any of the classes? Would it just be Bible lessons for all the age groups? Or would they be ...

Annie Jamison: I think it was. But you know what? Momma had a pencil where those people who were working with us would teach us how to write. So I don't know if it was ... if you would call that a part of ... helping the school a little bit too.

Marion Jamison: ... some educational too.

Houston: So there was part of it that was very much school like but another part of it that was totally all social. It was the lemonade and the cake and the two May day festivals.

Annie Jamison: Oh yes. And it was related really more, like you say, probably helped the educational system but it was more religious and social.

Houston: Okay. Were there other ways in which black people came together? I mean socially across church lines? I mean where ...

Annie Jamison: And do you know we would have church like first and third
Sunday at some churches and the other churches was the second and fourth. So that you could always visit another church. And they did a lot of that.

**Marion Jamison:** But the lodges were pretty prominent.

**Annie Jamison:** We didn't have one in Gadsden until Doc _____ started that one. Because I ____________.

**Marion Jamison:** Okay. But in a lot of areas, lodges were

**Annie Jamison:** I think they had one down in East Dover and the people from Gadsden who wanted to, you know, join, would join that. But there wasn't one right in the Gadsden area until, you know, after I got grown.

**Houston:** Okay. But do you remember which lodge people traveled to to ...

**Annie Jamison:** As I was saying, I don't remember a lot of them in Gadsden going to.

**Houston:** Okay.

**Annie Jamison:** And I know my brothers ...

**Marion Jamison:** No, I'm talking about Masonic lodges now.

**Houston:** Okay. I was thinking like Masons or Oddfellows or ...
Marion Jamison: Yeah. Basically they were Masons in this area until very recently, the Elks came about. Yeah, Shriners. Whatever.

Annie Jamison: I think that's why the Judy House was so popular because we didn't have anything other than the church where we would meet in. And, of course, they had a whole lot of cross visiting churches. It was a beautiful thing. Because you were happy that you didn't have to go to your church, St. Mark, on second and fourth because you wanted to go to Benevolent one Sunday and Red Hill the next one, you know. And most of the churches were active churches but they just had so many.

Houston: So your family would go to its own church twice a month but then on the alternate Sundays when there was no church

Annie Jamison: They would visit another one.

Houston: Did they sort of rotate around among the other churches?

Annie Jamison: Yeah. They would rotate around.

Houston: You didn't always go to the same church?

Annie Jamison: And then they had what they called the Missionary Society. And the Missionary Society would have anniversarities at all of those different churches. And then one church would invite all the other churches.
And that was a form of getting together.

Marion Jamison: And revivals.

Annie Jamison: And revivals. And they would have feeds.

Marion Jamison: And unions.

Annie Jamison: You talk about they would have feedings at those Missionary Society anniversaries.

Marion Jamison: And unions.

Annie Jamison: Yeah, they would have the union. And the fifth Sunday would be a union at a different church. Because all of the Baptist churches ... And they would together then.

Houston: Yeah, I'm not sure I know what the Missionary ... understand what the Missionary Societies are. I mean, ...

Annie Jamison: The Missionary Society is just a

Marion Jamison: ... a group of women in the church.

Annie Jamison: a group of women. And then there are some men in the Societies too. That's why I say Missionary Societies.
Marion Jamison: Yeah, some of the men too.

Annie Jamison: He was ... He was head of Missionary Society Number One.

Marion Jamison: Okay. But I think they fall in certain age groups too. The senior citizens ...

Annie Jamison: ... the Missionary Society until after you got a certain age in the church.

Marion Jamison: Yeah. You had to be a certain age and then you went in Missionary Society Number One. And then the younger people, another age group, would be in another missionary ...

Annie Jamison: But they're all older

Marion Jamison: Yeah!

Annie Jamison: Missionary Society Number One and Number Two ______. But this ... I think they had those different societies in the church where they could have affairs throughout the year so that they could visit each other's churches. Because see now Missionary Society Number One would have all of their anniversaries I would say beginning August through December. And Missionary Society Number Two would have theirs like February or March through June. See? And so you would stay visiting each other's churches.
Houston: When you say have all ...

Annie Jamison: Or get-togethers as I ____ it.

Houston: The anniversaries March through June -- when you say "anniversaries" you mean they would celebrate ...

Annie Jamison: Yeah. Like _____ would be like the first Sunday in June for Missionary Society Two. Okay? And the very first Sunday in October was Missionary Society Number One. But in between that, then you had to go to Beaulu. They had to go to Divine Benevolent. They had to go to Pleasant Grove. They had to go to Martha ________. They had to go to Red Hill. They had to go to Ta______. That many churches. So you could see out of every month you had a gathering at a different church.

Houston: Right.

Annie Jamison: That's why I say that was that much of getting together.

Houston: Okay. And what would the span of the age groups be? I mean, how old did you have to be to get into ...

Marion Jamison: Everybody.

Annie Jamison: Oh the ones shouting and having the services were I would
say ... the age would range from twenty-five or thirty until death. But they would bring their whole families. All the children and old be there for the feeding. So that's why I say it was a gathering.

Houston: Okay. So the Missionary Society was an organization that was within ... that formed within each church

Annie Jamison: within each church.

Houston: of some people who were ... fell into the age group of twenty-five and over. And the purpose was ... of the Missionary Society was what?

Annie Jamison: Visiting each churches and churches sharing religion and ... and I say socially getting together.

Houston: Okay. So it was really ... I mean, they ... It wasn't like they went around and did charity work for people in the church. You were sick, let's say, and you know, they wouldn't get together and go

Annie Jamison: No. ______ They've got more of that now for the Missionary Society where they ... they take care of families. But now the Missionary Society in each church would take care of their own members now.

Houston: Okay. But originally, how you recall, it was basically an organization ...
Annie Jamison: churches getting together to fellowship. That's what it really was.

Houston: Okay.

Annie Jamison: And like St. Margaret, they go to Beaulo, the usual thing they would take up a collection from each choir that ... or from each church ... each Society that visited. And they'll make sure that if Beaulo paid them ten or twelve dollars when they was here last year, they want to make sure you take enough so we can give Beaulo their thing back, you know. That's how well the people got along together.

Houston: That's interesting.

Annie Jamison: And that's how they kept their treasuries going, you know, so they could have these affairs.

Houston: So the Missionary Society function was largely social. I mean, it was ...

Annie Jamison: I would say social. And church cooperation.

Houston: Okay. Did they ever ... Were there ever ... So a society would go to another church for its anniversary. Each one would host an anniversary celebration to which all the other societies would go?
Annie Jamison: That's right. All the other churches would come. Yes.

Houston: Okay. That's interesting.

Marion Jamison: And that's ... the same thing is done with revivals.

Annie Jamison: M-hm. Revivals the same and

Marion Jamison: The same ... practice.

Annie Jamison: And now they revival all the way from Gadsden and East to Columbia.

Houston: You know, revivals are traditionally held in the fall.

Annie Jamison: Yeah.

Houston: And ... I mean, it seems to me when I think of revival in my own church, it's like October.

Marion Jamison: They start much earlier.

Annie Jamison: Well, ours go on ... yeah. Ours always end so that we'll have baptism the first Sunday in September.
Marion Jamison: I think some start as ... in August.

Annie Jamison: I go to Bow______ the first week in August.

Marion Jamison: Okay. Some start in August.

Annie Jamison: I go with my brother.

Marion Jamison: There may be some in July.

Annie Jamison: Yeah.

Houston: Okay.

Marion Jamison: And I think ... most of them culminate September and early October.

Annie Jamison: and early October.

Marion Jamison: and early October.

Annie Jamison: Now this could have been in the country because of the heating system in the churches, you know.

Houston: Right.

Annie Jamison: Back then. But now, they got every convenience in the
world in the church. But I guess they just keep up the time that they used to have it. I never knew why they would have them like July, August, and September. I don't know.

Houston: Would members from one church come to a revival at another church?

Annie Jamison: Oh yes. You'd have a full house every night. Now, see, you invite two choirs.

Marion Jamison: Oh yes. That's it.

Houston: And of course, the people ... the people who belong to the churches of the choirs that were singing would all come to hear.

Annie Jamison: Oh they would all come.

Marion Jamison: And they would ... and they announced ... this church was not having a revival and they've been invited to another church. The word gets out that we've got to go. So and so is having a revival and we've got to be there!

Annie Jamison: U-huh [yes]. And if two churches are having it the same week, we'd go to one on Tuesday night and one on Wednesday night. Don't get it mixed up. They were not _____ church, I guess. But it was just a beautiful thing because ... But, see, now the churches have gone to all of
them. They don't visit each other on regular church services as much as they used to because they all have church every Sunday.

Houston: Okay.

Annie Jamison: But I can see where that old thing used to be really ... that kept communities in contact. They kept communities communicating with each other, and visiting each other. Because they didn't have time, I guess, to go to each other's house.

Houston: Right.

Annie Jamison: But when they had every other Sunday and you could go to another church, you got to see so many people in the community, see.

Houston: And the ... so there was a Judy House. There were the missionaries societies and would those visitations take ... the missionary society visitations take place on Sundays?

Annie Jamison: U-huh [yes].

Houston: Okay. And then there were the revivals and those would take place some time during the week, a whole week.

Annie Jamison: A whole week, a whole week. At each church.
Marion Jamison: Every night. It was a night service.

Annie Jamison: The missionary societies used to always help sick members in the individual churches.

Houston: Okay.

Annie Jamison: And now they do wonderful things. I just look at a church that's as small as St. Marvin. It's really not that small but some of the things that they have reached out to do now. Do you know that ... they probably won't have over about ten or twelve kids graduating from high school in those churches. But they have an education committee in that church now, an education society. And each child finishes high school gets a hundred dollars. And the one ... I think you do it ... some of them by a scholarship. They give them five hundred. And I just think that's wonderful for the churches to honor children that way. Even the churches here in Orangeburg don't do that.

Houston: And this is ... this is the work of the missionary society?

Annie Jamison: No, no. This is the education committee at our church. At Gadsden.

Houston: And you also mentioned ... Well, the education committees are more recent developments.
Annie Jamison: Yes. Those are recent developments. Yeah, the missionary society used to do more of feeding and financial donations. That's what they did. And you know, back in those days, they ... I guess five and ten dollars was a lot of money to take to someone because they was sick, you know? Or they had a burn out. Now, if they had a burn out in the church, they would take up a collection for them.

Houston: Okay. ... something was burned out ...

Annie Jamison: Yes, when someone was burned out, they would take up a special collection for them.

Houston: And you mentioned also unions. Is that ...

Annie Jamison: The union is ...

Marion Jamison: That's a part of the Baptist ... whatever.

Annie Jamison: organization.

Marion Jamison: But most of the rural churches have two Sundays of service.

Houston: Right.

Marion Jamison: And then they have Sunday School four Sundays. But only ministers there to preach on two Sundays. But on the fifth Sunday ... if a
month had a fifth Sunday in it, then that's when you have union.

Annie Jamison: And how about now, they have ... they have gone
to attend church every Sunday, including the fifth. So the union is on
Saturday.

Houston: And what is the union? I don't understand.

Annie Jamison: Union is nothing but a cooperation of all the churches.
That's what it is. Uniting of churches.

Marion Jamison: A uniting of churches of the same denomination -- the
Baptists. Those who have unions. And various churches in the community got
together.

Annie Jamison: And they have unions in different areas too, they call it
districts.

Houston: So it would be like one mass gathering of all the Baptists?

Annie Jamison: Yeah. And then the most of the people who go are the
officers they elect from union. All of them go.

Houston: Each church sends a delegation?

Annie Jamison: There you go. It's a convention really. But they get
together that often, you know.

Houston: Okay.

Annie Jamison: And I think most we would probably have a fifth Sunday three or four times out of the year and that's how many times they meet. And now they meet on Saturdays.

Houston: Who were the ... the leaders in the community now? It sounds like all of the community ... it sounds like the focus of the community, of the community identity, the way in which the community came together, was through these various church functions.

Annie Jamison: The churches was the leading institution in the Gadsden community.

Houston: Okay. And the lodges came along later. So even at that time before the ... I guess the late forties, before then it was really the church.

Annie Jamison: The church. The church.

Houston: So who were the leaders then in the community?

Annie Jamison: Well, Dr. Sims was the head man at St. Mark.
Marion Jamison: Basically it was the senior deacons.

Annie Jamison: U-huh [yes]. And they called him the chief, the chief deacon.

Marion Jamison: Yeah, the senior deacons in the church.

Annie Jamison: And they looked to that person for guidance in the church. I think just about as strong as they did the pastor.

Houston: Now where you mentioned ... Sorry?

Marion Jamison: I was about to say more so because sometimes the pastor was not of that community.

Houston: That's what I was about to ask because you said the churches met a couple of times a month. And in some cases I guess the pastors were _there and traveling to other churches. Or they were coming into town from some place else._

Annie Jamison: They looked to him also. But I was thinking about respect, you know, respect him as far as position, just about as much as the pastor. But they looked to him more so for guidance I guess than ... and questions that they had. Because he was there all the time, you know. Reverend Brid ___, the pastor I'd known as a young child, was from Hopkins. But, see, Hopkins is right next community.
Houston: I may be betraying my own ignorance but when you say "senior deacon" would they be ... we're referring to the oldest deacons in the church. Or were you referring to the one who ... to the one ...

Marion Jamison: You're talking the head, the top deacon.

Annie Jamison: And they call him the chief deacon.

Marion Jamison: Chief Deacon.

Annie Jamison: And he was elected from among his peers. But I think most time the reason Marion said that is that most time they elected the person who's been on the senior ... I mean on the deacon board the longest. So that's why he said senior.

Houston: Okay. Now, if the community ... if there were problems in the community involving, let's say, economic matters or a fight between two people and they couldn't get ... resolve it, you said they would take it to ... the influential whites in the community.

Annie Jamison: Yeah.

Marion Houson: Usually the magistrate.

Annie Jamison: Uh-huh [yes]. The magistrate was the person they took
their fighting to. But now if they had an argument with each other about something about their personal family or something, they'll go to ...

Marion Jamison: ... respect.

Annie Jamison: respect, yeah. They go to somebody for respect, who's black. ______ have always come in ______. Always coming to them. You know, about marrying and living together and this and that. I think it was just a matter of respect for people in the community.

Houston: Could you give me an example? You said ... you said ... so people in the community would bring ... would bring problems to your mother?

Annie Jamison: M-hm. And my dad.

Houston: And to your father, because they respected them.

Annie Jamison: Yes. ______ as an example. There was a young man. He was my cousin. But he and his wife were having a marital problem. He carried it back home for Momma and Daddy. And he came to my daddy and asked my daddy what should he do, you know, because see, he figured he was finished with his wife. My daddy told him, "Son, you go back and get your wife and tell her you beg her pardon because teeth and tongue will fall out. So this isn't going to be the first time you and your wife fall out. You all are going to fall out again. But love each other." And he just went back. He went right back to his wife and they've been together ever since. But, you
know, that was a simple thing. But, it wasn't simple because he was young and he thought that to take her back to her parents, then he was finished with that issue. What should he do next in life, you know? And Daddy told him to go back and get her. Because teeth and tongue will fall out. I mean, he talked to him a long time. But simply, that's basically what he told him.

That this isn't going to be the first time you fall out. You're going to fall out because two people living together are going to have differences. So since your teeth and tongue are in the same mouth and they fall out sometimes, he said, "You go back and get your wife and you all live together."

Houston:  Right. So there ... there were ...

Annie Jamison:  I mean for problems like that ... you know, because that to me ... Daddy was very ... very close problem for him to feel like he needed to seek someone out to talk to him about it, that was older, you know.

Houston:  Right. And if there was a family problem like that, you would take it to ... to a third family. I mean if it's a problem between two families, you would take it to a third well-respected family.

Annie Jamison:  Yes.

Marion Jamison:  Generally ... generally there was a family in the community, or there is a family in the community that most of the community look up to.
Houston: Okay.

Marion Jamison: And ... and her parents just happened to be that family in her community. And ...

Annie Jamison: Well, I don't think it was Daddy and Momma were the only ones but they were one of them.

Marion Jamison: they would come with advice about ... I mean they would come with questions about farming and planting.

Annie Jamison: Oh yes. And he tells everybody when to plant things. And he still plants things by the signs, you know, of the moon. And they said that their farms have done so well by every ... he's Granddaddy to everybody or Uncle Frank to everybody. So they always ask him when's a good time to plant.

Houston: What about problems with animals? The same thing? I mean, ...

Annie Jamison: The same thing. And then there would ... [End of Tape 1, Side B]

[Begin Tape 2, Side A]

Annie Jamison: if they had problems with that, they would ______. Or they would come and ask Momma what to do with their babies before they'd ....
they'd take them, you know, on to the doctor. Or she'd tell them to carry them on to the hospital.

Marion Jamison: And most of the time, they never got to the doctor. Because of economics or because of ... basically because of economics. Or traveling means. But the ... those people knew

Annie Jamison: What to do or what to say.

Marion Jamison: what to do.

Annie Jamison: And I think because Momma and those were not able to get into hospitals, they had a ... a wonderful resource of knowledge that they just gathered because of problems, you know. Because I know that there were things that she could make that ... for cold or for anyone.

Marion Jamison: It was passed down.

Annie Jamison: Well, anyway, she could fix a cough syrup by taking that cherry bark off the tree. And I don't know what all she would put in it but I know that it would be better than anything now can fill a prescription for now. She could ... when ... Back then when the children had a fever, my brother Doc and ________, had that fever. And they cured them by steaming ... what'd they call it? Was it Jackson weed? Jackson weed and bathing them in it. They didn't see any doctors. They ... and I can hear my sister say, "That's what ruined her legs" right now. My sister fell through the wagon
and that nail went in that leg like that. And they took a spider web and soot from the chimney and something else they put in it. And that's what they ... they put it on her. Make sure it's a white clean cloth. And put it on there. And it was supposed to drawn, you know, the germs and stuff out of there. But that's what they did.

*Marion Jamison:* They used to ... they would put ... the spider web and the soot stops the bleeding.

*Annie Jamison:* Okay. Well, anyhow, that was ... ________ to draw it or something ...

*Marion Jamison:* They'd put a big piece of fat meat on it, after it stops ... after the bleeding stops, then they would use a piece of fat meat, salted meat.

*Annie Jamison:* Everything had to go with a sterilized white piece of cloth.

*Marion Jamison:* And then they would use cow chips [laughs] ... that was the antibiotic. And you wonder the rationale. But that's what it was for, the ... 

*Annie Jamison:* Well, hard times caused them to learn all these things and they ...
Marion Jamison: But our problem, as black people, is the rich heritage of things that we had all the way from Africa ... it stopped. It never got passed down. Because they knew everything. For any situation, they had a solution.

Annie Jamison: And the one now that we say are educated, they're even ashamed to tell you these things. And it's just ... to me, it's so wise and rich, you know.

Houston: Right, right.

Annie Jamison: And they don't want to tell you that they knew of this ... or their family probably did that. I just think it's so silly.

Marion Jamison: But it is. And I guess, we've come through such hard times until ...

Annie Jamison: until the hard time things look terrible, or bad.

Marion Jamison: Yeah, I think that's it.

Annie Jamison: To say that they were able to survive, and I guess white folks with the same thing that he didn't die from, died and they were in the hospital!

Marion Jamison: That's right. Died in the hospital. Because they ... they
didn't ... until the penicilin, the sulfurs and then the penicilin, they didn't have any antibiotics so they didn't know what to do with them.

Annie Jamison:  Uh-huh [yes].  See, we improvised.  But somehow I _ third sense.  It don't look like _______ because the ordinary sense they had, we knew that.

Marion Jamison:  We knew penicilin before penicilin knew penicilin.  Because they used to tell you drink cow's milk tea, cow chip tea.  That's the ... the cow dung and when it dries, it has a mold in it.  And you know penicilin comes from mold.  And they would make a tea out of that and it would work.

Houston:  Right.

Marion Jamison:  But nobody knew ... if it works, you don't question it!  [laughs]  You don't try to ... 

Annie Jamison:  You don't know who tried it ...

Marion Jamison:  how it got started, but it worked!

Annie Jamison:  Now there was a little green thing that grew right around the well.  It was a little bush.  And it had a little thing on it that looked almost like a Irish ... _______.  And they would take that little thing off of that green bush and chop it up and put it around a baby's neck and they didn't have any problem teething.  Isn't that something?!
Marion Jamison: But see, all those things have been lost because ... personally, we ...

Annie Jamison: Now when someone's baby cry, I don't care how many times they take them to the doctor ...

Marion Jamison: when we had

Annie Jamison: and he has diarrhea and everything with teething now. But sure ________ that! But it was natural, see? I think it was natural ...

Marion Jamison: But those things, we didn't have sense enough to ask, you know, for the various remedies that they had. And for the knowledge that they had. Now, when my wife had her twins, her mother told her that the twin boy was going to be smart.

Annie Jamison: And I asked her why?

Marion Jamison: When he was born. Being in the birth process.

Annie Jamison: Because she said ... I told her that Mark came feet first. And she said, "Uh oh. Don't you worry. He's going to be a smart child." He was just born. I was telling her that because I thought it was terrible.
Marion Jamison: And it was terrible because the doctor thought he was going to lose her.

Annie Jamison: Yeah, he thought he was going to lose me.

Marion Jamison: But there is something significant to it.

Annie Jamison: But I didn't ask her.

Marion Jamison: But we don't know what it is. But we know she knew what she was talking about. So, so many of those things are lost because we ... are knocking it.

Marion Jamison: Of course, now there was the old rationale of parents and children and old people and children that children were to be seen and not heard. So you didn't question where you felt that you might run into a little ... 

Annie Jamison: Yeah, because they would think that you're thinking that they don't know what they're talking about. See, so you'd never ... there were a lot of things you didn't ...

Marion Jamison: Or it was grown people talk. They'd tell you, "Boy, go and go play." And that means you get out of this conversation because ... well, you're not in there but you're listening. But they don't want you listening.
Annie Jamison: When they'd tell you, "Boy, get out of this room now" and you got out of there.

Marion Jamison: But there's so much knowledge that's just lost. Some many herbs and things that they knew exactly what to do with. And ...

Annie Jamison: It's like the people now, the women have so many problems now with their menstrual cycle. And there was a thing they used to give us called "a woman's tea" and I don't know what the bush is now. Isn't that something?

Houston: That would take care of menstrual cramps?

Annie Jamison: Yes! I never had any.

Marion Jamison: What's that other thing that women have problems with? Not false labor. When they eat the dirt out of the chimney?

Annie Jamison: Morning sickness.

Marion Jamison: Morning sickness okay. And they still don't have anything for that!

Annie Jamison: But they used to give them clay.
Houston: Out of the chimney?

Annie Jamison: Up under the house, you know where that dirt is ________? They'd get that clay from in there.

Marion Jamison: See, a lot of the chimneys, they didn't have a mortar as such. The old houses, they used a clay type for the mortar. And the clay, they used to get clay out of the banks for polstices and stuff, I think. But they would eat some of that clay. But, just ... just things too numerous to name that are lost.

Annie Jamison: M-hm. Horehound tea. You had to make

Marion Jamison: That was terrible.

Houston: What was it called?

Annie Jamison: Horehound tea. But today still ... in the health food store, they still have that now.

Houston: It's called hoehound?


Marion Jamison: If you've ever had quinine, quinine's got a start to it.
Annie Jamison: [giggles] That thing ... that thing ... _____ buy in the health food store isn't as good as

Marion Jamison: No. Because that was fresh!

Annie Jamison: Uh-huh [yes]. That's why I say that bush.

Houston: And it's h-o-h-o-u-n-d?

Annie Jamison: Uh-huh.

Marion Jamison: It's h-o-e, isn't it? I think that's ... I think it's h-o-e-h-o-u-n-d. I believe the "e" is on the end.

Annie Jamison: Uh-huh [yes]. But we had all ... and what was that thing they would spread or put to your head now?

Marion Jamison: Elephant leaves.

Annie Jamison: U-uh [no]. It's not elephant leaves. It looks like elephant leaves but it's different. Momma used to grow them in the garden. If you ever had a headache or your head was feeling bad because you were out in the sun too long, put one on ____________. It's like putting ice to your head.
Marion Jamison: Yeah. Things we remember.

Annie Jamison: Oh, I remember those things. But they did their own medicine stuff. They really did.

Marion Jamison: But you talk about stop, clotting some blood, that spider web and that soot, and you have some nasty _____.

Annie Jamison: Well, you can look at it now and see how deep it was. And I guess she would have bled to death if they didn't know what to do for her. They didn't have any doctor down there.

Houston: So it sounds like the community was cohesive and was held, was bonded together in lots of different ways, all of them through the church.

Annie Jamison: Oh yes. It was ... like people shared everything they had. I remember you just didn't do without, you just ran to your neighbor to get it. I know there was a lady right around my Momma. Her mother had ...

Marion Jamison: She sent

Annie Jamison: Yeah, she was sent for everything. And would send a different child ... two or three times for her to get everything for a meal, you know. You know, flour this time, and salt this time, and pepper the next time. And a piece of meat the next time. And then that's how we shared. That's how they shared in the community.
Houston: So was this done with the expectation that ... that if you borrow from somebody they would borrow from you?

Marion Jamison: Yeah. That was ...

Annie Jamison: The older one would share. But Viv just didn't have any way of ... of being able to share back with anyone because of her condition, you know. She didn't ...

Marion Jamison: But that was the common practice. A matter of sharing. And like I said, if they butchered a hog, the community came. And everybody helped ... helped to do ... had a part in it. And everybody went home with a piece of meat. And if you had a good garden, somebody got peas and somebody got tomatoes.

Annie Jamison: I know you all are going to stand around here and get peas. I've got plenty of peas this year. Or I've got plenty of collards. They would grow their own potatoes.

Marion Jamison: Collards and potatoes, what have you.


Marion Jamison: Turnips. But it was ...
Annie Jamison: And sweet potatoes! Oooh, _______ sweet potatoes. _____ sweet potatoes. And you haven't seen a sweet potato in the past twenty years. Because you can bake them 'til ... for seven hours and you'll never get any sugar to run out of them. Those old potatoes that they would grow themselves? When you bake them ...

Houston: You get sugar ...

Annie Jamison: that stuff comes out.

Marion Jamison: It would stick to your hands.

Annie Jamison: Oooh, yes it would. And that's what's you call a sweet potato!

Marion Jamison: I've got some this year that I'm going to see whether ... They're supposed to be ... they come from Puerto Rico. Whether that's the old potato. _______ to me for the whole potato. They don't ... See, they don't bear as well.

Houston: Right.

Marion Jamison: They don't make the ______ potatoes for the commercial market. But, man, you could stick one of them fellows in there, in the chimney hearth when it got hot in the ashes, and when you take it out, it'd stick ... the syrup would stick to your hand.
Annie Jamison: You wouldn't let that syrup stick ... have any_____ to take it out ...

Marion Jamison: it would burn it up!

Annie Jamison: You would burn your fingers. Oh, my! That used to be a big burn.

Marion Jamison: But you could lick that hull ...

Annie Jamison: because it was sweet! That's _____ really a syrup coming out of the potato.

Houston: I've never seen a potato like that.

Annie Jamison: No. You ______.

Marion Jamison: And see, you could take those potatoes ...

Annie Jamison: You buy a white looking thing that don't have a thing you can think of for ______ in them!

Marion Jamison: No, there's nothing in them. But these potatoes would keep because of the sugar content ... it would preserve it. And you would put it in a bank, in a straw bank, and cover it with dirt. And they'd keep the
whole winter.

**Annie Jamison:** They were piled up like this, all of them together like that. And put straw on them. And then they would put a pole in the center for some reason and around that pole, they had something like a ... a sack or something. And I think that was for the air to get around in there.

**Marion Jamison:** Yeah, that was it.

**Annie Jamison:** Then after they put the straw on, they would put the dirt on top of it.

**Houston:** These were uncooked potatoes.

**Annie Jamison:** Uncooked potatoes.

**Houston:** And they'd store them outside?

**Annie Jamison:** Yeah. And they would only let you go to that bank and open it in a certain spot so you could get potatoes out of it on Wednesdays. Because they'd keep all winter.

**Marion Jamison:** Yeah. That was their way of preserving the food.

**Annie Jamison:** There's nothing better than a baked potato where the ___ out of it and it's ______.
Houston:

Annie Jamison: [laughs]

Marion Jamison: Well, if you've never had a potato like that, you've never had a potato.

Houston: No, I've never had a potato.

Marion Jamison: Never had a sweet potato. Talking about a sweet potato; that's a sweet potato. And that's how it got its name.

Annie Jamison: Like I like tomatoes. And I don't eat them unless I get it out of Marion's garden. Because some in ... in the grocery store after you fix your own, __________!

Marion Jamison: Yeah, they don't have any taste.

Annie Jamison: And so they don't like me because I ate too much when I was young, I think now. Because see, Momma had what's called -- I know now -- it was a little salad tomato bush. And I would just stand up and eat them just like you would eat a ______. So I think I just got that afterward. I don't mind scratching now because _____ tomato out of Marion's garden. But I told Marion, "ain't no sense in me scratching for sawdust." So [laughs] ...
Houston: So was it ... was it ... I mean, was it different here in ... you know, outside of Albany which was ... which was ... which was probably not quite as rural as Gadsden? I mean, different in the sense that ... that the community of Gadsden was held together by these various church functions and ... and people were ... were ... were reliant on each other and on themselves to solve problems that came up in the community. Unless, of course, it was something you took to the white man, which was ... which was in a sense ...

Annie Jamison: Yeah. But it was more of a business resolution when you took it to the white man.

Houston: Okay. Was it the same or different here?

Marion Jamison: It was ... Okay, basically, as far as altercations and what have you, most of those were resolved but if it were not, we were right at the sheriff's department.

Annie Jamison:

Marion Jamison: We were more urban. Okay? And ... but as far as ... the thing that I remember so well about the community is that the homeowners ... it was so unusual that this whole community, each person had his own. And, of course, the neighbors shared like ... like they did in Gadsden. Whatever they had -- fruit or vegetables or meat, they shared and they shared in the raising of your children. Or rearing of children or whatever you want. It was the same.
Okay. And what about the ... the way in which the community came together? I mean, as a community. Was it ... Did you have the same kinds of institutions? Was the Judy House unique or was there a Judy House ...?

Marion Jamison: No. I've never heard of Judy House in any other community than that one. It's very unique. Very unique.

Houston: Okay.

Marion Jamison: Now you had the churches and you had the various services and what have you.

Annie Jamison: _______ had a few centers too, way back then.

Marion Jamison: Yeah. Now this community, when I was a little fellow, we had that park. And the community kept it up.

Houston: Which park was that?

Marion Jamison: This is Highland ... Highland Park.

Houston: And it was a black _____?

Marion Jamison: It was a black ...
Annie Jamison: It was a center ... They finally reopened it. It went down.

Marion Jamison: It was a black park. And my grandfather and Dr. Dunton who was then the President, the President of Claflin, got together and ... I think it was six acres of land and they saw that it was given ... and it was just for the community to use as a park. And they had beautiful flowers ...

Annie Jamison: ... for children.

Marion Jamison: Beautiful flowers and a building. And they could do like they do at Judy House. You can make that lemonade and stuff. I remember as a child going ... And then every so often, we'd say we were going to clean it up. And the elders in the community would bring tools and we would clean up. It wouldn't stay clean very long. But an attempt was made, even when I was a little fellow, to do it. And then it just went to pot when most of the elderly people who were homeowners up in this community passed on. It grew up to a wilderness. But it's right directly across the by-pass here. 21 by-pass.

Annie Jamison: Right next to the drug store. It's up the street between the ______ and the drug store.

Houston: Here, along the other side of the street that I cross into town?

Annie Jamison: Yeah.
Houston: I thought that was land that you donated for a park.

Marion Jamison: No, no. My grandfather.

Houston: Your grandfather donated the land.

Marion Jamison: Right.

Houston: Okay.

Annie Jamison: Was one of the people. I think it was three. It was Dunton and ... and old man Jamison and somebody ... But you know where you're going to find it? In that book that boy has written.

Houston: I'm sorry? The book that ...

Annie Jamison: I've got the ... Dr. Glovesy book. You said you're supposed to

Houston: Right.

Annie Jamison: Now I've got one of the deed things downstairs, you know. If you want to see it. But you would be able to see just the names. Of course, if you wanted to see it, I believe I can get it.
Annie Jamison: But, see, I have had a time getting it back over. But I think ________ kind of got tired of me and they keep it up for me now. But since I've ________ because when I first started, I just got tired of seeing the children in this area having no place to go to play when they went out school, you know. And no programs organized for the summer. And so, when I first started, I was working to kind of a beautification committee. And I got the community people to help me clean it. But I finally realized that we didn't have the equipment to keep it up. And then, the young children wouldn't have _______. They started to make order ________. I don't know where it comes from. But anyway, the county _____ keep it up ____ short term. Marion went on down and signed some forms and that. They keep it up. And since, the organization I have organized in the community, we bought some play equipment pieces down there and we put a shelter down there. When it became a part of the city ... city limits, they had a man working there over from city recreation. He came down there and he did everything he could. And, because it was a part of the city and put a shelter down there with restrooms in it. And put up lights in the park. Then he went downtown and read the deed because somebody must have asked him a question about it. And he realized he couldn't take it. So it went back to the park and took everything down!

Houston: There was something wrong with the deed so ...

Annie Jamison: He can't ... The city can't own it. The way those old
people wrote it, they were thinking about this day and time that nobody could ever take it from this community.

Houston: Oh, okay.

Annie Jamison: So ... he came, the man, when they first came up and told him that he had put all this on someone else's property, he came to Marion. The first thing he asked Marion, "Would you lease it to the city for fifty years?!" Of course, he said, "No, I won't give it to the city." He said by that time nobody would ever know what happened and what he wrote down there would be changed completely after fifty years because nobody could recall it.

Houston: Right.

Annie Jamison: So the county got it and keep it up for us on a short term lease every three years. But, I had to work ... you know, it takes the work of good people to get this kind of thing done. But the county keeps it up and it's in the city limits. So, it's ... I just think that they would ... I'm just very greatful to them that they keep it up for us. We can have our functions down there now and the children go down there. They keep it nice for ____________.

Houston: Did you want to take a break or ... 

Marion Jamison: No, no, no. I'm just used to standing.
Houston: Oh, okay. Was the ... Did the church play a similar role here then? I mean, you had the park which was different than ... than Gadsden.

Marion Jamison: As far as unity in the community, no. Not like Gadsden.

Houston: Not as unified?

Marion Jamison: Not as ... not ... not ... the church wasn't that big a factor. I think you had the same communication. But I can't recall that the church was that ... in the rural areas ... In the rural areas, you had basically churches as far as everything -- entertainment and so on. And we were a little different. We were close to the schools and colleges and we had programs and we could go to swimming and so on.

Annie Jamison: Play areas.

Marion Jamison: Yeah. Play areas and we had a recreation that was ... The city sponsored it.

Annie Jamison: And I think just looking at _____ areas

Marion Jamison: It was sort of different.

Annie Jamison: ... since I've been here, I think they've had ... churches that one was trying to out do the other if that spells anything to you. And because they had different denominations. And one is trying to have a bigger
program or a bigger church.

Houston: You mean here? There was competition?

Marion Jamison: There was competition.

Houston: And you mentioned that ... you mentioned that the colleges had programs that kind of brought people together.

Marion Jamison: When I was a kid -- of course, I don't want to generalize because I ... I went to Felton, which made a difference with me from most of the kids in the community. See, I was private school. I was fortunate ... or unfortunate enough to go to a private school. Most of the kids went to public school. So I have a little different perspective because I was always a part fo the colleges.

Houston: So you went to ... Felton was a school on the college?

Marion Jamison: On the college. On State Street, yeah.

Annie Jamison: They would look on us as private but it really is a public school.

Houston: And was it Claflin?

Marion Jamison: No, but you paid to go to ______.
Annie Jamison: Yeah, you had to pay.

Marion Jamison: So that meant

Annie Jamison: ______. Yeah. But ours was more of a school.

Marion Jamison: Yeah.

Houston: Okay. That was at Claflin?

Annie and Marion Jamison: State.

Houston: State, okay.

Annie Jamison: And that's the school we told you that works with the School of Education at State College, where they give

Houston: It was a teaching school

Annie Jamison: ... school ... teaching ___, teaching experience.

Marion Jamison: And see now when Claflin still had a private school too. Because Byron ______ and that crew went to ... Al Williams and them went to ... to Claflin. But Claflin, I think ... I don't know when they discontinued
that school but it wasn't long after that.

Houston: Well, would you say that these private schools then pulled the community together? Or did they help kind of divide the community into separate groups? I mean, was the community ...

Marion Jamison: I ... It definitely didn't pull the community together.

Houston: Okay.

Marion Jamison: There were members of the community ... most of the kids ... or not most, but a goodly number of the kids went to Felton, were kids whose parents were college teachers and so on. Okay?

Houston: Right.

Marion Jamison: And so it didn't have any ... any menas of unifying the community. The schools ... because most of the non-college people sort of stood back from the colleges. And ... 

Annie Jamison: And you know how students, little _____ students who can do or can go to those ___ places.

Marion Jamison: But I'm thinking about the colleges in ... the broad aspect of the colleges to the community.
Annie Jamison: Offered facilities and different aspects that they could associate with Audie Joy that we really didn't have in Gadsden. So we had to have something like a church or the Judy House.

Houston: Okay. What ... what kinds of ... I assume some of these resources, events, facilities that you had here that you wouldn't have had in Gadsden has something to do with the competition between the churches. I mean, what kinds of things ... what kinds of ... what were some of the alternative ways in which the community identified itself? I mean, how did the community identify itself as a community? Or was it ... you know, was it a matter of there being many groups within the community like the college group? And ...

Marion Jamison: Well, there were basically two groups. Those who were college affiliated by work or by attendance. And those who were not.

Annie Jamison: And I think even Marion knows back in ... even in his day, they had started scouting. See, that's something almost new to Gadsden. They had scouting programs and things like that where their children could get together.

Houston: Oh, okay. You mean ...

Marion Jamison:

Houston: And when did that start?
Marion Jamison: Oh, it started before me.

Annie Jamison: It must have been in the ... if it wasn't in the thirties, it had to be the early forties. And you see, by having a college that had know-how how to organize those kinds of things, they all had scouting a long time.

Houston: Okay. What were some of the ways in which the churches here competed?

Marion Jamison: Oh ...

Annie Jamison: Building the biggest building. And ...

Houston: So, did they have church here every Sunday, for example?

Marion Jamison: Yep.

Houston: Okay. So you didn't get the kind of cross polinazation.

Marion Jamison: Right.

Houston: polinazation.

Marion Jamison: Yeah. That's true. Yeah. And all of the churches here
had ... had every Sunday church. And I would say that most ... almost all of the people in the community were educated to a point that they could read and see, a lot of those country churches, you had people who couldn't read. And they had to line out the hymns and what have you. But that was different and you had a more ... kind of service.

**Annie Jamison:** They could participate better. I would say that.

**Marion Jamison:** Yeah. The service was just on a little different level I would say. Because of the amount of education that you had in the various churches in the community.

**Houston:** Okay. A different level. What would have been some of the manifestations?

**Marion Jamison:** Some of them ...well, since you were in a community with two colleges and a ... well, then you had two high schools and the educational level was pretty good for blacks.

**Houston:** Two black high schools.

**Marion Jamison:** Yeah, because Claflin had a black high school. And then we have Wilkinson. And two black colleges. So your education level was a step higher. And sometimes I feel that Orangeburg got kind of caste -- caste-y, because of that.
Houston: Was one considered to be more elite than the other? One of the high schools? Or ...

Marion Jamison: Well, I kind of feel that if you were paying to go to school, you were more elite.

Houston: Okay.

Annie Jamison: And that ________. But we have a caste system among blacks that has more levels ... much more levels than just saying black and white.

Marion Jamison: Yeah. That's everywhere but it's particularly bad here because of the two colleges. And the chasism is so wide between those people who are not college related and those who are.

Houston: So were there ... were there no occasions or instances where ... where people from the two groups came together? Or did they pretty much keep apart socially?

Marion Jamison: They kept apart socially. They kept apart socially.

Annie Jamison: I think even when they ... the community people were invited, they knew they were invited but they felt different.

Marion Jamison: Yeah, they didn't ... you know ...
Annie Jamison: And I think that's why they didn't have the participation, or they didn't participate in ... they didn't participate like they should have.

Houston: Would you say that ... that land owners fell in one group or the other? Did the people

Marion Jamison: I really don't think so. I think people who were just not college connected, regardless of the status, didn't feel a closeness to the schools. And I don't think the schools tried to bridge the gap.

Houston: And many of those would have been land owners.

Marion Jamison: Many of those would have been land owners.

Houston: Okay. Was there ... was there a difference in as much as the colleges then were ... at the time that you were a young ... young boy and then a teenager ... and in high school, were the colleges then in ... within the city of Orangeburg?

Marion Jamison: Yeah.

Houston: Okay. And this then ...

Annie Jamison: They were? State was in the city limits?
Marion Jamison: Part of State's always been in the city.

Annie Jamison: Okay. Well, because I just had to say now all of it just got in the city limits within the last five years!

Houston: Oh, okay.

Marion Jamison: Yeah, but most of it was always in it. Because see, that back part, it was farm, was the farm part.

Houston: Was there any difference among ... within the black community between those who lived in the town and those who lived in the countryside? Was there a difference between ... sort of a chasism between those groups?

Marion Jamison: No, I don't think so.

Houston: Okay.

Marion Jamison: Well, I didn't feel it. And I think most people in my immediate community, you wouldn't feel it because these people were land owners and they were very proud people. Ownership type pride. And many black people who lived in town were poverty people. Okay? So that ... really, if anybody were casty, we were.

Houston: Okay.
Annie Jamison:  And since I _____, the caste system ... Like I say, the black people to me, basically they had three things. That was their pride and their families and the church. And I don't see why we're trying so hard to destroy all three of them. Because I feel that with pride come what we're trying to ... throughout this country to build back our self esteem and respect. And if you've got pride, self esteem and respect are already in there. And if you respect yourself, then you respect others. And so much of that is gone now. But, I think that maybe what Marion is saying is like the land owners and all that in the colleges was a thing that they started the caste system on. But we are now at a point where to me they think so little and are not strong thinkers that we've got our caste system on what we think another person has. And that's money.

Houston:  Right.

Annie Jamison:  And we've got a caste system on that thing. And they don't even know if the person ... because if you don't talk all your business, they think you've got something. You don't have a dime. But they ... you know, they ... I don't know how blacks got on that wave length. But they're casting themselves on finance.

Houston:  Right.

Marion Jamison:  That's always been a part of it. Finance is always a part of it. In any caste system. Finance gives you those things that
Annie Jamison: the others can't get -- you think can't!

Houston: And if it's land, it gives you independence and some autonomy.

Marion Jamison: Right.

Houston: And more control. From what I've been reading, I get the impression that the early 1940s was ... was a time of ... kind of racial awakening to blacks in South Carolina. The statewide chapter of the NAACP was ... the statewide conference, excuse me.

Marion Jamison: Much of ... much of what progressed from the forties on was due to World War II, the exposure that many men were ... and women were able to get just from traveling. Going to foreign countries, seeing things and the women ... many of them were moved into jobs where they learned skills and made more money that they'd ever thought they'd make in their lives. And it was just a revolution.

Annie Jamison: It was a revolution by learning. Because I think one thing is that they realized what they were doing for our country where they were being treated. And I just think it was an awareness that came along during World War II. I don't ...

Houston: By that, you were still ... when World War II broke out, you were obviously still living in Gadsden.
Annie Jamison: Uh-huh [yes].

Houston: And you were here. Now, were there ... What was the ... What evidence was there, the impact of the war on your communities? I mean, did you have relatives going off to serve in the war?

Annie Jamison:

Houston: Yeah. Or people going off to work in factories, either in South Carolina or in the north?

Annie Jamison: And my daddy had ... my oldest brother was at State at that time. And he was in the first group that volunteered to go to the service and serve.

Houston: Okay. Your oldest brother?

Annie Jamison: My oldest brother. ________ And it was a time of ... That to me brought ... I mean, part of ______ kept the community together because when people had children away in the Army, everybody worried about them. Not only just the parents, everybody worried about them. It was such a thing that when they thought a lot of people were getting killed until people went to all lengths to keep their children from going into the service. They would go ... see, that ______ white man, I'm telling you about. To see if he could do something to keep their son from going into the
service, you know. And in many instances, he helped a lot of them in our community.

**Marion Jamison:** Well, there were certain regulations. If you were farming, there were certain stipulations that would keep you out of the service.

**Annie Jamison:** Keep you out of the service. If you were the only one who could help your family, they would do that. But even with that, with some black people, they paid them no attention. So that's why they had to go to the white man to get that kind of help, you see?

**Houston:** Okay. So you had a brother who was here and ...

**Annie Jamison:** South Carolina State.

**Houston:** at South Carolina State. And who joined the military to serve overseas.

**Annie Jamison:** U-huh [yes].

**Houston:** And were there other people that you know of from your community who were kind of touched immediately by the ...

**Annie Jamison:** Uncle Johnnie Harry went. I know he went. What's the name ... Doc went. There were several people that went. But I was very young and I remember more Momma worrying than where he went or where he was. You know,
I just didn't know. But I remember Momma worrying and praying every day.

Houston: Right. What about people leaving to work in the war industry? I mean, ...

Marion Jamison: There were a good migration to areas where they could get work in ... in the cities or in the industrial plants making, you know, war materials.

Houston: Were those any in South Carolina? Or were they out of the state?

Marion Jamison: No, South Carolina didn't have any factories as such. I think the ... There might have been some in the larger areas. I know many people got work in the military facilities.

Houston: Okay.

Marion Jamison: Like the naval base at Charleston. Ft. Jackson which is a big Army base. And then some ______ at those bases, some to ... They even had a temporary little base up here at north.

Annie Jamison: And one right there east

Marion Jamison: At East ______, yeah.

Annie Jamison: Up there.
Marion Jamison: So people got jobs there. Steel, there was some steel mill company up near Columbia that a lot of people worked there making, you know, material.

Houston: How did these things affect ... you said that the war was a turning point of sorts in the awaking of black consciousness, or of African-American self awareness here. What were some of the manifestations of that? And how would working in these factories affect it?

Marion Jamison: Well, it affected women primarily because women were making five or six dollars a week in a white household taking care of children and doing every other thing they was. Washing and ironing. And then you get a job in a factory making forty, fifty dollars a week. It's a great difference!

Houston: Right.

Annie Jamison: And then, like you say, the women _____ conscious. We didn't know what was happening to them as black Americans. But they could see it ________. By being exposed, they could see some of the things. I think that caused ...

Marion Jamison: Yeah. The exposure was the great thing!

Annie Jamison: Yeah, the exposure was a great thing.
Marion Jamison: For the men and the women.

Houston: So was it mostly women then who were kind of leaving the community to go work in ...

Annie Jamison: Men left too.

Marion Jamison: The men went in the service.

Houston: Okay.

Marion Jamison: But the women were left basically to do the jobs in the plants, to make whatever military items were needed.

Houston: So ... I mean, there was actually a good number of black men from this community?

Marion Jamison: Oh yeah. From all communities.

Annie Jamison: All communities.

Marion Jamison: All communities.

Annie Jamison: I think so much that

Houston: Now, I mean, do you remember any ... during the forties, you
know, and moving into the fifties, do you remember evidence, local evidence of a change in attitude among blacks as a result of this broader exposure and better income during the war industry years? Or any problems, racial problems?

Marion Jamison: I think that was really ... World War II greatly a result in the establishment of the civil rights movement. Because so many people had ... were exposed to how they were treated ... and even in the service. You know, blacks were segregated. And say you're sent to the firing line, segregated. That's a ... that's a tough thing. And you were fighting for the same country. And they send you to a war segregated. And when you think about that and those who were able to survive and some of them injured and got back and started thinking about how they were treated, I think that was how the civil rights movement got started.

Houston: What was the evidence? I mean, do you recall ... what's the earliest evidence of the civil rights movement that you recall here? I mean, was there a time at which you became aware of the NAACP, for example? Or racial problems?

Annie Jamison: When us kids went down there to Pres.

Marion Jamison: I'm trying to think now. We started ...

Annie Jamison: ... had happened in Greensboro, North Carolina.
Marion Jamison: No, that's '63. We started before then.

Annie Jamison: We started before then because now, the first one that's on the campus was when we wanted a voice in the student government. And the President told us we couldn't have one. They ... they expelled my classmate because he was President of the Student Body. And I mean, that's just among blacks. See? Because I think, like you said, the consciousness was coming and it did not stop, you know.

Marion Jamison: But I must have been in eleventh ... eleventh grade, some tenth or eleventh grade, somewhere along there, that I could feel the movement coming. And that's 1950, 1949 or '50, I could tell it as a youth that there was some differences. Things were changing.

Houston: You know, that's about the time that the military was desegregated. I think the military was beginning to desegregate about that time. Do you recall any particular instant ... incidents or instances?

Marion Jamison: Not any specific things but I can remember blacks grouping, meeting in churches, that kind of thing. You know, enough for me to, at that age, to remember. [End of Tape 2, Side A]

[Begin tape 2, Side B]

Houston: ... we just fought this war.

Marion Jamison: ... Because Orangeburg was very active. And many of the
meetings were held at my church. Reverend Macolm McCullom, he ...

Annie Jamison: And that's when our ________ union would come down there. 

__________ come down there. And there were a lot of meetings were 

held at ________ because McCullom ... he was the pastor of _____.

Marion Jamison: Yeah, my church was very active.

Houston: Who was the pastor of ...

Annie Jamison: Reverend Matthew McCullom.

Marion Jamison: That's spelled M-c-C-u-l-l- ... C-o-l-l-o-m, right.

Houston: And meetings were held at his

Annie Jamison: his church, which is right across from State College.

Houston: And these were meetings having to do with ... with the ...

Marion Jamison: organization and strategies, I guess. I'm just assuming 

that. But they were civil rights meetings.

Houston: Okay. And this was around 1950.

Annie Jamison: It looked like for awhile, right after that, it kind of
died down a little bit ______ like you say, down here. And then country-wide. And then it got started back up again in Orangeburg.

Houston: Do you recall the ... you know, the Brown decision in '54 being announced here?

Marion Jamison: Oh yes.

Annie Jamison: Oh yes. And federal marshalls came to Columbia U. You were very conscious of it, you know.

Houston: He came to Columbia ... when was this now? This would have been ...

Annie Jamison: When they started the part here in South Carolina when they ...

Marion Jamison: Clariton County.

Annie Jamison: Yeah, the Clariton County case. He came to South Carolina.

Houston: So that would have been as early as 19 ...

Annie Jamison: '51 it must have been.

Houston: And then in '55, there was the ... the Montgomery bus boycott.
Were there things also happening at the local level? I mean, in ...

Annie Jamison: Now that's when Fred was expelled from State College.

Marion Jamison: Well, there was a lot of activity in Orangeburg. I guess because of the colleges and the meetings places and so on and the educational level or whatever. But it was a busy place, you know. And I can recall activity, a lot of activity.

Houston: Was there any racial tension here?

Marion Jamison: Yes.

Houston: Between ... I mean, new racial tension, other than ...

Marion Jamison: I think so.

Houston: Okay.

Marion Jamison: I think it filtered down to students and what have you. They kind of got involved in it. And, of course, the others of the community became concerned. They just kind of lit up.

Annie Jamison: I really think that maybe white folks realized they had to work together to form some strategy as to what to do with what they didn't want to do, you know? But I think that was maybe
the time when they realized they had to find someone from their group to work with someone from our group.

**Houston:** And when was this approximately?

**Annie Jamison:** In the early fifties, '53, '54. Because when they had those ... when they had those meetings at ...

**Marion Jamison:** Because they started ... The whites started putting economic pressure on blacks who they felt were active in the groups.

**Annie Jamison:** M-hm. And people lost their jobs. But then when they started, like you said, the bus boycott and then they ... those kind of things started coming by and they realized that money was going to be ... not going in the cash register, I think that that was one of the things why they ... they had to form a committee to work or see what they could do and what they didn't have to do.

**Houston:** So blacks initiated a boycott here against whites?

**Annie Jamison:** No. I'm just saying they became conscious of the different boycotts they would have in other places. And the unrest -- you could feel it, you know.

**Houston:** Right. You mentioned that that some class ... that a classmate of yours was expelled because ... because there was a student movement to
voice greater ...

Annie Jamison: They weren't ... wanted ...

Houston: control, student control.

Annie Jamison: or student ... they wanted more ... we wanted more in-put into what kind of restriction they were putting on students and we needed a voice in the ... what they would set up for students privileges and things on the campus. And Fred was President of the Student Council and they figured that he was ... if they got rid of him, I guess, the students wouldn't have all these meetings where they wanted to plot things and meet with some of the officials and be on different boards, you know. Like the ... Like Marion, when I was on the Board of Trustees at State College, the Student Council President met with the Trustees every time. And see, back there in those days, they didn't have it. So those were things. They were just asking to be heard and to be a part of what they were planning for students because we were the students. And so they expelled Fred. And we had a march on the campus and they were going to get rid of so many students because when they expelled Fred, they felt that that would close mouths. And that that didn't close them. The students were unhappy, you know, because they expelled him. It just was an unrest on the campus.

Houston: And what was ... Do you remember Fred's last name?

Houston: Fred Moore.

Annie Jamison: He's an attorney now in Charleston.

Houston: This was like 1957?

Annie Jamison: Un-uh [no]. I finished in '56 so it was '55, '54 or '55. I don't know if he had to go to Howard two years or one but he finished Howard University.

Houston: And ______ the issue was? I mean, if there was a particular issue that sparked it? Or students were just ...

Annie Jamison: Students were meeting at the ... The student government was meeting so that we could meet ... plan with the college officials things that ... laws that they were having concerning us. We needed more voice in what they were doing concerning students' rights.

Houston: Okay. Were these white college officials?

Annie Jamison: No! They were black.

Houston: Okay.

Annie Jamison: President Turner was the President then. ______ Turner.
Houston: So there ... there ... I mean, in terms of ... in terms of visible change in racial attitudes ... I mean, those visible changes came more in the sixties in terms of

Marion Jamison: Right.

Houston: in terms of activities. I mean, but there was a sense ...

Marion Jamison: There was evidence in the fifties.

Houston: Okay.

Marion Jamison: There was evidence in the fifties.

Annie Jamison: They'd made some changes.

Marion Jamison: And again, I think much of it had to do as a result of the war. There were a lot of dissatisfied people and rightly so. They felt that they were cheated. You go to serve your country and put your life on the line and you get treated as a black sheep. And expect ... the whites expected to treat you just like you were treated before you left.

Houston: Right.

Marion Jamison: And you weren't ready for that. So, I think that's where
the ... where it all started boiling.

Houston: Yeah, then there was Little Rock in '57. I mean, was there any sense that ... that ... that any events that marked an increase in racial tension as a result of ...?

Marion Jamison: I think in the ... particularly in Orangeburg community, because they were ... this was sort of a ... a group of people here who were up on everything that was happening nationwide. And so much of the strategy involved in it was determined here.

Houston: Okay.

Annie Jamison: And I think because of tension that we had to steer away from certain things in order to get some things. I say this in light ... the blacks were even ... Even though we were separated in the theatres, they were afraid to go to the theatres during those years when it was so conscious over the nation. You know? They felt that something would happen to them because they were constantly meeting and they knew the white community knew this. And they felt that something would happen to them if, you know, they would see them at certain places. But, that's when they were doing all the planning and ______. They had a lot of meetings in Orangeburg.

Marion Jamison: Yeah, a lot of meetings were held.

Houston: Where would these meetings take place?
Annie Jamison:  Most of them at Trinity Church.

Marion Jamison:  Most of them at Trinity Church.

Annie Jamison:  Uh-huh [yes].  But they had meetings at some of the other churches.  But I think it might have been because of Reverend McCollom but not only that because it was the closest to the campus here.

Marion Jamison:  Yeah, that's right.

Houston:  Now Trinity Church, is that ... That's Baptist?

Annie Jamison:  No, United Methodist.  It was Trinity Methodist Church then.  But it's United Methodist now.

Houston:  I think I almost went to Trinity, thinking it was the ... thinking it was the Catholic church you mentioned.  Said there was a black Catholic church in town.  And I went down Russell Street looking for ... looking for Trinity.  Is that how you get to it?  Go down Russell Street?

Annie Jamison:  You can go Russell Street and you know where

Marion Jamison:  You can go Russell or you can go 601

Annie Jamison:  Then you have State College ...
Marion Jamison: It's right across the tracks from State College.

Houston: Yeah, that's the one I was ... Somebody gave me directions.

Annie Jamison: Right across the tracks.

Houston: They told me it was Roman Catholic.

Annie Jamison: [laughs]

Marion Jamison: No, you've got to go a long ways to go to the ... Holy Trinity. Holy Trinity.

Annie Jamison: ... But see, see, the Catholic church and the Catholic school was right there where what is now Trinity Yard because it was separated. See, the Catholic church was segregated too. They've got a Catholic church out there where the Catholic church is now. Everyone. And then they had the black Catholic church right here on Frederick Street and the school was right there where Trinity Yard is now. Trinity ... Trinity kindergarten is a part of what used to be the Holy Trinity Church ... Holy Trinity School.

Houston: So there was a black Catholic school here in town?

Annie and Marion Jamison: M-hm.
Houston: As well as a black Catholic church. And they were ...

Marion Jamison: The school came much later after Claflin. We're talking about when I went to school. Because ...

Annie Jamison: Oh yeah. Much later.

Marion Jamison: much later the Catholic school started. But maybe in the fifties though.

Annie Jamison: It had to be because the little ______ children weren't the first ones to go there.

Marion Jamison: Harold went there.

Annie Jamison: It had to be the fifties.

Marion Jamison: It had to be the fifties, yeah.

Houston: But getting back to Trinity, you were saying that in the fifties, whites knew that ... that change was coming and they were going to have to deal with blacks because there were constant meetings at Trinity Church under Reverend McCollom.

Annie Jamison: ... with the civil rights movement.
Houston: Okay. Now, ...

Annie Jamison: Now he wasn't really the head person. I think ...

Marion Jamison: The NAACP, I think, was ... was the basic thing for the ...

Annie Jamison: That's what I was about to say. The NAACP. But he was a member of it. And like you said, this was a community where I guess you could get some kind of cooperation. So they met at his church. He was the pastor then at Trinity.

Houston: Okay. And were there any ... any ... any black initiatives coming out of any of these meetings that you can recall? Any kind of local initiatives? Or ...

Marion Jamison: Much of the ... much of the strategy that came out of that was on a state level because most of the officers and stuff that came, I guess Trinity just happened to be the right place for them to meet.

Annie Jamison: Of course, now, Orangeburg wasn't the only place that they ... They met in Columbia a lot.

Marion Jamison: You say you're going to talk to Jim Sullivan?

Houston: Yes.
Marion Jamison: All right. He can ...

Annie Jamison: He can give you all of that.

Marion Jamison: He can give you all that.

Houston: Well, I'm sure there ... there are lots of things that I ... that I perhaps should be asking but I can't think of at the moment. Are there, you know, any things that ... that we haven't discussed in terms of your experience during the period of Jim Crowe, you know, from ... from growing up in this area in the late thirties, forties, and fifties ....?

Annie Jamison: The only other thing ...

Marion Jamison: In our age group, the separatism was so great and parents tended to keep you away from situations that might turn into something than ... undesirable. So you really didn't have contact with whites.

Houston: Even here in the city, I mean, ...

Marion Jamison: You didn't have any contact with whites. Now, I played with white kids when I was a little ... like we would ______ or something like that when we were little fellows, ten, eleven years old. But there's an unwritten law that goes way back to slavery, I imagine, where you can associate and play as children together. But when you get a certain age,
then that ... that ... there has to be a severance and a complete severance. And then you go to two different worlds. And if you want to start venturing in the other world, then you were asking for trouble. That's basically how it worked out. So, I probably saw more white people than the average person because, like I say, at eleven, I started helping my daddy in the store. And there would be basically white salesmen -- no customers, of course. But white salespersons that I met and learned to deal with and so on. So, I probably had more exposure from that aspect but the average person didn't even come in contact. You saw them on the street or something or saw them in the stores and you knew your place. And maybe the Superintendent of the schools would come once or twice a year and you'd see him. Or some white person in some other capacity in administration would come to your public schools and you'd see them. But you didn't have any contact with any children in school. So you were ... you were separate. You were ...

[chuckles]

Annie Jamison: A totally different world.

Marion Jamison: You were equal but you were separate. [laughs]

Annie Jamison: You know I think that ________ did themselves an injustice because it comes all the way down now until you ... South Carolina can still feel it. But Marion wanted to go to pharmaceutical school. He applied to the University of South Carolina. But see, by being separate still, they didn't want to have him come. ____________ they wanted to offer him out of state ...
Marion Jamison: There's no way for me to go because I couldn't go to ...

They had two schools. One in Columbia and one in Charleston but I couldn't go there.

Annie Jamison: They were telling him they would offer him out of state ...

that he would go somewhere else.

Marion Jamison: They had it ... They paid a ... out of state ... I don't know what they called it then. I forgot what they called it. But they paid you to go elsewhere.

Houston: Right.

Annie Jamison: And now that Marion went to Xavier to get his pharmaceutical ... or pharmacy degree, then see, now they want to know why you don't let your children go to college here because they were good students, you know. Especially on the high school level. But the children wanted to go back to their dad's school. They wanted to go to their daddy's school. Now if they let him go to the University of South Carolina, they would probably want to go to their daddy's school there. But that's why I said, that's where they did themselves.

Marion Jamison: It's a different day.

Annie Jamison: Yeah, it's a different day but I'm just saying that that
was something because of their regulations then that probably comes back to haunt _______ now, you know.

Houston:   Right.

Annie Jamison:   But I just believe in the black kids miss a whole lot in this day and time if they don't get that first degree from a black school. There's something you can never tell them about if they do that. But, you know, some people who don't see it that way because they feel that we should be able to go. But until things get different from what they are now, they can fool themselves that it's ... it's okay and everything is all right but it's not.

Houston:   You mean in integration?

Annie Jamison:   Yes.

Houston:   Right.

Annie Jamison:   As far as the treatment of the students.

Houston:   Right. So you didn't ... your parents limited your contact with whites. In your case, it wouldn't have been difficult because there were ... there were mostly blacks.

Annie Jamison:   That's right.
Houston: But there were more whites in this area. And you said you actually had some interaction with them as a boy. But ... and would that have been with the children of land owners or farmers, locally or ...?

Marion Jamison: Yeah. Yes.

Houston: But then as an older person, it was limited to ... as an older ... as a youth, it was limited to contacts through your dad's store.

Marion Jamison: Right.

Houston: And I suppose observations you've made going with him into the city.

Marion Jamison: M-hm.

Houston: Were ... You said there were lots of black tradesmen. Were there black tradesmen in town whom you visited for things? I mean, would you go to a black tailor or to ... I don't know, a black barbershop?

Marion Jamison: Black everything.

Houston: Okay. But would those have been in a black part of town or would they have been out here in the country?
Marion Jamison: In a black part of town.

Houston: Okay.

Annie Jamison: Right across the street from State College.

Marion Jamison: Yeah.

Houston: Oh, that same area that's on the other side of the tracks.

Annie Jamison: There had to be a black theatre across there. A black soda shop. A black ... two or three black barbershops.

Marion Jamison: Black ...

Houston: There still are barbershops.

Annie Jamison: Yeah.

Marion Jamison: Black five and ten

Annie Jamison: Black five and ten store. And there's a little restaurant right on the corner.

Marion Jamison: A restaurant.
Houston: So ... so blacks didn't even go to the Jim Crowe balcony of the white theatre. They had ... there was ...

Marion Jamison: They could. But most of them went to their own. But the white man owned it. [chuckles] The white man owned the theatre but it was operated by black people. But the other businesses were black operated and owned.

Houston: Okay. Was there a difference in the movie ... would the same movies be at that theatre?

Marion Jamison: Oh yeah. You'd see the same movie. Not at the same time.

Houston: Okay.

Marion Jamison: No. You'd probably ... It'd come ... probably go to one of ... go to three theatres.

Annie Jamison: Even the whites at downtown would have the same movies that ...

Marion Jamison: No, they wouldn't have the same movies.

Annie Jamison: That's what I said. They wouldn't have the same movies.

Marion Jamison: Movies are not like movies today. You know, like here they
come out and the kids say I'm going to see this and you just go to the movie.

Houston: Right. You saw what was there.

Marion Jamison: Yeah. You're going to see a cartoon. You're going to see a serial. They used to have a serial which was a continuous thing.

Houston: Like Buck Rogers or ... 

Marion Jamison: Right. Yeah. You'd see that. And you'd see the news! And you saw it all for nine cents! If you had a quarter; you were in heaven! Because you could go to the soda shop next door and buy some ice cream or a soda. You know, well all your towns basically the size of Orangeburg, you've got a black section. And the same thing is true in Columbia. What is it? Center Street?

Annie Jamison: M-hm. We had to stay over to Center Street. You had go on Main Street to spend your money with them white people, then go across main to go to the restroom. But you come back on Center Street and wait in the cold, or in the heat, until somebody pick you up and carry you back to Gadsden, on the corner.

Houston: So you ... one of your relatives, you mean, by ...

Annie Jamison: Yeah, or somebody in the community who had transportation.
Marion Jamison: Yeah.

Annie Jamison: ... carry anybody.

Marion Jamison: The person who took you there.

Annie Jamison: ... who took you there and come back and get you.

Houston: Right.

Annie Jamison: But see, you probably would carry daddy and momma or he would carry some of those students and so everybody would do different shopping, you see. But you had to wait until he finished his and everybody else finished theirs before you could go back.

Houston: Right. And you'd do this once a week?

Annie Jamison: Huh?

Houston: Do this once a week?

Annie Jamison: They would do that once a week or ... buy enough stable things ... sometimes they'd go once a month. Because they grew so much stuff of their own. And, of course, they didn't take you to Columbia for you to do shopping for school but once a year.
Marion Jamison: And see, you didn't have no money to buy nothing no how.

Once a week.

Annie Jamison: No. You didn't have to go but once a week. But when you think about it, they had everything on their own. Because they grew wheat and they had their own flour. And they had corn. And ...

Marion Jamison: The only thing they had to buy was rice.

Annie Jamison: And you see, when they had milk or corn, they had grits too. They've got the meal and the grits out of the corn. And then they got the flour, their own flour.

Houston: And you would do that in Gadsden?

Annie Jamison: Yeah.

Marion Jamison: You've got your milk and you've got your butter and you've got your ____ and you've got your chickens and you've got your eggs.

Annie Jamison: And my daddy had what you call ...

Marion Jamison: ...

Annie Jamison: The meat house, you know, they would cure their own meat.
They called it the smoke house.

Houston: Right.

Marion Jamison: So, you had everything you needed. Clothing. Rice was ... rice you bought. Fruit like bananas and oranges.

Annie Jamison: And sugar.

Marion Jamison: And sugar. And that's funny because they had a lot of syrup mills but they never made ... they made syrup but they never made sugar.

Annie Jamison: No, they didn't make sugar but they made syrup.

Marion Jamison: That's funny. I don't know why. Because it has to be a refining process but I believe you could do it. With black ingenuity, you could do it!

Annie Jamison: Oh yeah.

Marion Jamison: Because we can ... we can do anything.

Annie Jamison: Anything. And _____________ six home runs.

Marion Jamison: ....
Annie Jamison: .... back to back.

Houston: This has been very enlightening for me.

Marion Jamison: Okay.

Annie Jamison: I'm glad you enjoyed it. I hope it has helped you some.

Houston: It certainly has helped a great deal.

Marion Jamison: If you need to make another trip, you know, ... need to expand. Or if you need some ...

Annie Jamison: ... especially when I get back now, come back to see us.

Houston: When are you ... 

Annie Jamison: I leave on Friday of this week but I'll be back next Thursday. Will you still be here?

Houston: Oh yeah. I'll be here at least ... Well, I'll be here at least until the twenty-third. I mean, we're scheduled to go to Beauford County the twenty-third. But there's a possibility I may be staying over.

Marion Jamison: You'll enjoy Beauford County.
Houston: Well, I know I will. But ... but there's so much to be done here that if I can stay, I will. I'll turn this off. I also, if you have time now, would like to do the family biography form. But I can come back and do that later if you'd rather.

Annie Jamison: No, if you want to do it now.

Marion Jamison: If you would prefer to do it now.

Houston: Yeah, actually I would.

Marion Jamison: Okay.

Houston: And let me just turn this off. [End of interview.]