

Gift and Release Agreement

We J.C. Bynum ^{Thelma Parker} and Heather Hayes
Interviewee (print) Interviewer (print)

do hereby give and grant to Dr. Suzanne Marshall, Assistant Professor of History, Jacksonville State University, all literary and property rights, title, and interest which we may possess to the audio or video recording(s) and transcript(s) of the interview(s) conducted at

Home of J.C. Bynum / Home of Sue Ford

on the date(s) of 3-22-95
for the oral history collection being compiled by Dr. Marshall.

J.C. Bynum Thelma a Parker
Interviewee's signature
Address 2600 SANDY LAKE Date 3-22-95
HOPES BLUFF, AL
Phone 492-8964
2620 Sandlin Lane

Heather Hayes 3-22-95
Interviewer's signature Date
Address 1124 Hillsboro Dr.
Gadsden, AL 35903
Phone 494-9183

INTERVIEWEE BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Name: Jack Bynum M/F Male

Address: 1026 Sandlin Lane

Phone number(s): 492-8964

Approximate age or date of birth: June 8, 1920

Mother's Name:

Father's Name:

Places lived and when: Jacksonville, Fla. - growing up

Gadsden, Al - adulthood

Education: High School graduate

Religion: Baptist

Business, political and social memberships (past and present) Insurance

Sales agent/manager,

Present occupation: Retired

Former occupations: Insurance manager

Special Skills:

Major Accomplishments:

National Events in which interviewee has participated: Great Depression

Local Events in which interviewee has participated:

National born U.S. citizen? Yes/No

Naturalized Citizen: Yes/No Date:

Country from which he/she emigrated:

Documents, photographs, and artifacts which are in the possession of the interviewee:

Individuals recommended by the interviewee who might be candidates for an oral history interview:

Additional information:

Name: Thelma Parker M/F Female

Address: _____

Phone number(s): _____

Approximate age or date of birth: 1902, 93 years old

Mother's Name: _____

Father's Name: _____

Places lived and when: Gadsden, Al., presently resides in Fl.

Education: Nursing degree.

Religion: Baptist

Business, political and social memberships (past and present) _____

Present occupation: Retired

Former occupations: Nurse

Special Skills: _____

Major Accomplishments: _____

National Events in which interviewee has participated: _____

Local Events in which interviewee has participated: _____

National born U.S. citizen? Yes/ No

Naturalized Citizen: Yes/ No Date: _____

Country from which he/she emigrated: _____

Documents, photographs, and artifacts which are in the possession of the interviewee: _____

Individuals recommended by the interviewee who might be candidates for an oral history interview: _____

Additional information: _____

Great Depression : Two Views

Contents In Brief

- Side 1 Interview with J.C. Bynum, dealing with the Great Depression.
- Part 1- Childhood-Place and date of birth, age during the depression.
- Part 2-Feelings of the depression-Appreciation, closeness, coping.
- Part 3-Family-Death of Father, Life with Grandparents.
- Part 4-Work-His mother worked full time, Mr. Bynum worked with his grandfather on the Truck farm, raising a variety of vegetables.
- Part 5-Meals-Blacked-eyed peas and rice, butter beans and rice, was never able to eat meat with any bone, simple but enough to keep healthy.
- Part 6-Neighbors attitude-Pulled together to help the livelihood of each.
- Part 7-How the depression affected Mr. Bynums attitude-Appreciates what he has and makes the best of every situation.
- Part 8-Social Activities-Movies and their prices, using a Crystal set radio for enjoyment.
- Part 9-Medical Care-Family doctor would make house calls, prices. Doctors would deliver babies in the home.
- Part 10-WPA/CCC-Mr. Bynums brother was a part of CCC. Went to Louisiana, planted trees and improved the environment.
- Part 11-Sports/Fun-Playing baseball by making do with the equipment that was available. Shrimp incident.
- Part 12-An open letter-Summarizes Mr. Bynums feelings about the depression. Gives different examples of prices; such as jeans, hair cut, etc. Discusses his job, wife, and the youth of today.

Side 2 Interview with Thelma Parker, dealing with the Great Depression

Part 1-Work History-Nursing training, duties,

Part 2-Wages-Discusses the different wages she received as a nurse.

Part 3-Childhood-Date and place of birth, age during the depression.

Part 4-Doing without-Talks about the things they had to do without.

Part 5-Feeling of the depression-felt like they had plenty.

Part 6-Togetherness-neighbors came together to plow fields, quilt quilts, etc.

Part 7-Medical care-Doctors came to home, home deliveries, prices.

Part 8-WPA/CCC-Brother dug ditches, very appreciated.

The Great Depression

Interview with Thelma Parker and J.C. Bynum

**By;Heather Hayes
Oral Report
11:00-12:30
History 202
Marshall**

The Great Depression

You have a family. Your last cent is gone. They have cut off the gas. The lights are next, and your children are looking to you for their next meal. You wonder when it will end. You wonder if it will end. ^{you're} Your living in a time called "The Great Depression." Unfortunately, for the people of this time, there were no definite beginning or ending dates. There was only confusion, desperation, and depression and wondering how to deal with the matter at hand. I will discuss and compare two such cases. This will involve two individuals ^{who} that experienced this period at different stages in life.

Few people anticipated the stock market crash in 1929. But even after the collapse of the stock market, few expected the entire economy to go down hill. My grandfather, Jack C. Bynum, grew up in Jacksonville, Fl. He was approximately ten years of age during the depression. Mr. Bynum was born on June 5, 1921 in Jacksonville, Fl. His father died when he was only two years old. His mother worked full time, therefore, he had to live with his grandparents until he was around ten years old. He worked with his grandfather on the Truck farm, raising assorted vegetables. Their meals consisted of peas, rice, butter beans, and other assorted vegetables they grew, with rice being the main staple.

Mr. Bynum recalls neighbors and friends pulling together what resources (gas, tools, food, etc.) they had to improve the livelihood of each. There were close relationships between people because of the respect they had for each other. Everyone depended on friends and family and worked together. No one worried about violence or crimes because they knew how hard times were for everyone.

For entertainment, they played games using worn out and second hand equipment or making do with what they had. Only occasionally were they able to walk the two or three mile walk into town to see a movie. They could spend most of the day at the movies for only 10¢. This was a much appreciated treat in that the theater gave away free ice-cream bars. The refreshments would actually off-set the price of the movie.

His family owned a Crystal set radio, one of the first radios ever made. Because it required the use of head phones, only one person at a time could enjoy it. In this case it was not a source of family entertainment.

When asked if he could change a period of his life, he simply responded that he would not change anything but wished the values of friendship, trust, loyalty, and honesty instilled in him during his youth, could some how be instilled today. Instead, they are being passed over due to haste, greed, and a lack of appreciation for ones situation in life.

When the stock market crashed, Thelma Parker was approximately twenty-one years of age. The previous viewpoint was that of a child growing up during the depression. Mrs. Parkers viewpoint is that of a young adult. The depression was particularly hard for her family in that her father was injured during the Spanish-American war and was unable to work. Her family received its sole monetary support from the government in the form of an army disability check for the amount of eight dollars a month. Her father was not totally helpless, however. He was able to do light farming and pastored a local church, on a volunteer basis. In return for this, he received vegetables from those members that could spare them

Mrs. Parker remembers how close the people were in her community. Neighbors would all come together to help the needy because they were all needy. For example, the men would get together and plow each others field while the women came together and made quilts to keep everyone warm. If they had enough materials after meeting each others needs, they would take the remainder and try to sell the quilts. If they were able to sell them, they were not sold for very much.

Medical care was much the same everywhere in those days. Most of the doctors still made house calls. In fact, Mrs.

Parker delivered her first baby in her home. The doctor only charged her twenty-five dollars, which in those times still seemed fair and reasonable. Mrs. Parker herself was a nurse and worked in a hospital. She was asked to work twelve hours a day for only five dollars. Her duties included nursing as well as cleaning duties such as doing the laundry and various other chores such as collections. She sometimes felt that she was being taken advantage of, however, she was grateful for the job because it provided a regular income.

The depression was a time of change and turmoil. Although we only get a glimpse of the depression, through the eyes of Ihelma Parker and J.C. Bynum, we are probably unable of imagining what the depression was actually like. We have always been catered for every need. We as *middle class* Americans need to learn to be more thankful for what we have and not for *granted* granite. As Mr. Bynum said, "Americans today are too concerned with material things and not what really counts." For many Americans looking back on the decade of the 1930's, the most vivid memory was the shame and guilt of being unemployed, helpless, and the fear of what was yet to come. When it was *finally* over, they looked for security, a rare *comidty* in those days and one which wouldn't come

nearly as quickly as it had left.

Both parties that I interviewed said they were better people for having lived through this period of time. I believe the depression has affected them throughout their lives. It has made them appreciate what they have and all the little things in life. It was a pleasure and honor interviewing both of them.

*Good paper
95*

Questions for the Interview

1. When and where were you born?
2. About how old were you during the Depression?
3. What do you remember most about the Depression?
4. Did you ever feel that there was no hope?
5. Were you ever homeless or did you have friends or family who were homeless?
6. What kind of meals did you and your family eat?
7. What kind of occupation did your father have during the Depression or was he even able to have a job? Did your mother work? Did you or your siblings work?
8. How has the Depression influenced your life and attitude?
9. Did neighbors pull together during this time or was it each for their own?
10. How did the Depression affect your confidence for the future?
11. Were you able to participate in social activities such as movies, radio, etc.? What did you do for fun?
12. Did your family own a car or radio?
13. Were you able to attend School?
14. Taking into consideration what you've become, realizing that we are shaped by our environment, if you could go back in time and change a period of your life, what would that period be?
15. What was medical care like? Home remedies? Herbal Medicines?
16. Midwife or Doctors for birth?
17. Did anyone work for WPA or CCC?