

Gift and Release Agreement

We Jerry Dodd and Bethany Odom
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 Geraldine Dodd Sumiton, Al.

on the date(s) of 2-4-95

for the oral history collection being compiled by Dr. Marshall.

Geraldine A Dodd

Interviewee's signature

Address BOX 1069
Sumiton Al. 35148
Phone (205) 648-5261

Date 2-4-95

Bethany Odom

Interviewer's signature

Address 316 Amory AVE
CORNOUA, AL. 35550
Phone 483-9053

Date 2-4-95

INTERVIEWEE BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Name: Geardine Dodd M/F Female

Address: Box 1069 Sumiton, AL, 35148

Phone number(s): (205) 648-5261

Approximate age or date of birth: ~~1920~~ Oct. 1921

Mother's Name: MAE York

Father's Name: NEVER SAID father's name - step father

Jimmys
Cummings

Places lived and when: 1930's ALABAMA, West Virginia

+ Detroit

Education: High Graduate from Kingston High in 1939 in Virginia

west

Religion: Church of God

Business, political and social memberships (past and present) Church leader,

Sunday School teacher, towns leader.

Present occupation: Retired

Former occupations: Owner of A Hardware/Toy store in Sumiton

Special Skills: Drawing, Art, Music

Major Accomplishments: UNKNOWN

National Events in which interviewee has participated: Great Depression,

World War II, + Vietnam

Local Events in which interviewee has participated: Church, School,

And important towns women of Sumiton.

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:

She couldn't find Any.

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

history interview: Her husband Howard Dodd

Additional information: _____

Geraldine Dodd
Bethany Odom
February 4, 1995
Sumiton, Alabama
Great Depression

The Great Depression

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Homelife

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- C. Family

School Days

- A. Place *, mining camp. - Walker Co. AL.*
- B. Difficulties *moved to Detroit*
- C. Transportation

Boarding House *W. VA*

- A. Place
- B. Description
- C. Duties Performed

Coal Mining Life *ALTA COAL CO. W. VA*

- A. Place
- B. Description
- C. Social Life

During the late 1920's to the early 1940's hard times had fallen on the United States and many felt it's struggle. On February 4, 1995, Mrs. Gearldine Dodd of Sumiton, Alabama remembered the struggling times she had felt during the Great Depression. As a small child growing up in Sipsey, Alabama she did not understand the meaning of the depression but she could see hard times through her family and friends. Mrs. Dodd recalls, " I remember I was a very outgoing little girl and I visited all the neighbors and on one occasion, (you know I was born in October and this particular time was mid July) I had "time on my hands" and I had told all the neighbors that it was my birthday, so I had a real nice party." So even though times were had and money was scarce, her childhood, as she recalls, was a happy time.

Gearldine lived in a mining camp in Walker County, Alabama. She attended Fairfield Elementary School. Her mother, Mae, often would ride into Birmingham to look at dresses for her and her sister, Betty. Her mother would sketch the expensive dresses then would buy material for 25¢ a yard and come home and make the dresses.

Gearldine and her family later moved to Detroit, Michigan where her father found work in an automobile factory. As a child moving to a northern school she found herself "behind" the other children because they were more educated and the

studies moved more quickly than she was used to.

Recreation was an important time to a child and even though there was little money, Geraldine found that she and the other children could ice skate and often would catch the Milk Man as he was finishing his days' work and he would give them rides on his "milk sleigh".

Geraldine and her family moved ^{what year?} to West Virginia and began working in her grandparents' boarding house which was near the coal mines in the Allegheny Mountains. Her grandmother, Sarah York, ran the boarding house for Alta Coal Company and her grandfather, Edger York, worked in the mines.

When Geraldine was ten years of age, her father left her mother. This was a very hard time in her life, but since she was living in the boarding house with her mother, sister and grandparents, she busied herself with all the chores she and her sister had to do. The boarding house was near the river and she and her sister would hurry and do their chores and join their friends at the "swimming hole". In the winter, the river would freeze and she and her friends would ice skate. There were also dances and other social events provided for the children in the coal camps. Music was a happy part of Geraldine's life. Often musicians would stay at the boarding house and they would play their blue grass and country music and have parties

(3)

on the sun porch at the boarding house. Dancing was the one thing that brought smiles to everyone's faces. While in high school, Geraldine and her friends would travel to Charleston to hear the famous Glenn Miller Band. Geraldine love to dance and often performed as a dancer for benefits in her hometown.

Geraldine graduated from Kingston High School in 1939. During this time, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was organized. This was a governmental program for young people to better themselves. When they joined the CCC, it was like going to the Army. Many would sign up for 2 years and during this time, the young men would help build beautiful State Parks and buildings of stone which are still standing today. Schooling, housing, meals and payments were offered to the members of the CCC.

The women who lived in the coal camp wanted their children to attend church and after speaking with the men of the Coal Company, the Coal Company offered an old theater building to the families to have church. A minister for Charleston would come to preach and everyone attended church and Sunday School. There was also a "company store" in this mining camp. The miners could have a scrip card which was a card for the workers to spend at the company store. This was taken out of the workers' pay checks and the balance of money given at the end of the month. Doctors

were also provided by the Coal Company. Medicines and other medical necessities were also provided by the Coal Company. If a home burned, the Coal Company would give the families a new home and furniture and the families would pay the company in payments.

After high school graduation, Geraldine went to work for the Coal Company and made \$3.50 per day. She worked in the office. During the Depression, she could buy shoes for 99¢ a pair. Usually these were worn longer than they should have been worn. She wore broom stick skirts and knee socks. She learned to sew and made most of her clothes.

During the depression, she remembers food trucks coming in the night to bring food for the needy. The trains ran twice a day and would bring mail and food to the stores. During this time, Geraldine was told that you could buy a new Dodge car for \$700.00. Her family did own a car at this time which was a 1939 Ford Roadster with a rumble seat. Buses were provided for the children to go to school which was seven miles away. "The bus had to cross the creek to get to the school but when it rained, the bus could not cross the creek so we had a lot of holidays," Geraldine recalls. Most of the children brought lunches because the school did not have a lunchroom, but you could buy food to eat. Geraldine remembers, " a hot dog was 5¢".

Later, Geraldine's mother married a mining superintendent and they moved to Alabama where they lived in "the mining superintendent house". Later, her grandmother moved back to Alabama and bought a farm house in "what is now the 78 Highway".

Although, Geraldine lived during the Great Depression and this was "her way of life" she later understood what the world meant by the Great Depression and even though times were hard, the American people struggled, worked hard and fought for a better country and those hard times during the Great Depression made our country a stonger and better place to live.

*Very
Good job!
paper
Interesting women. I
enjoyed the information
A*

Bethany Odom

HY 202 Sec.07

Tue. & Thur. 11:00-12:30

I will be interviewing Mrs. Jerry Dodd of Box 1069 Sumiton, Alabama. October 13, 1921 is her date of birth. I will conduct my interview at her home on February 4, 1995 from 9:00 a.m. until

The subject of my interview will be "The Great Depreesion." Mrs. Dodd is a very unique women who knows a lot about history. She can also give specific dates and events. This topic is an important part of our history because it was a time the world learned and grew from and will never forget.

I have spoken to Mre. Cain on several occasions on my subject when conducting research at the library. I have also read the two books given in my sources. I have spoken with family and friends who also lived during this time to learn facts and dates.

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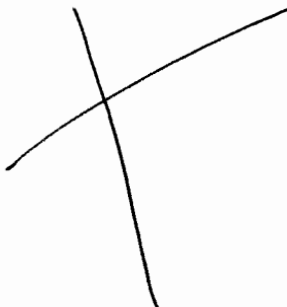
Sources:

The American Dream in the Great Depression

author: Charles R. Hearn

The Age of the Great Depression 1929-1941

author: Dixon Wecter



INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

1. Who were your parents?
2. Where were they from?
3. Did they have jobs? If so where?
4. What was their average day?
5. What was their appearance? (hair, clothes, shoes, etc.)
6. Did you always live in the same area?
7. How old were you during the depreesion?
8. Did you attend school? If so where?
9. What was your average day?
10. What did you wear to school?
11. What kind of lunch did you carry to school and how?
12. what kind of clothes and shoes did you wear?
13. What was your hair cut like?
14. How did you travel to school?
15. What were the other children like? (same questions as 10,11,12,13)
16. How did this time affect your family?
17. What did you and your family do for recreation?
18. Did you attend church? If so where?
19. Was relig^{at}ion important to other families?
20. What kind of business' were there where you lived?
21. What were the prices like?
22. Did your family have transportation?
23. Did your mother make most of the clothes and household things?
24. Did your mother and father grow most all the food for the household?
25. Describe the house in which you lived in and the area around it?
26. did your family have any appliance? If so what?
27. Did you have any brother or sisters?
28. How old were they and descibe their appearance?

29. Did your brothers or sisters have jobs? If so where?
30. What your families average income?
31. Who were your Grandparents?
32. Where did they live?
33. Did they have jobs? If so where?
34. What the mining camps like?
35. Did you know anyone who lived there?
36. What did your family ^{think} like of President Hoover?
37. What did your family ^{think} like of President Roosevelt?
38. Do you remember any world events during that time?
39. Did you know any thing about the National Recovery Administration?
Was ^{the WPA, the CCC}
40. Were there anything where you lived to help the hungry or needy?

I did
ask

What medical care was available?

Midwives or doctors for births

Folk medicines used? ^(f's) How did sk use & learn about them?

Good!!