

Oral History Tape Recording Release Agreement

I, Mary Massey, hereby give and grant my tape recordings and their contents to Dr. Suzanne Marshall, Assistant Professor of History Jacksonville State University, and authorize her to make them available for scholarly research purposes.

INTERVIEWEE Mary Massey ADDRESS 1223 Windsor St
INTERVIEWER Meredith Alexander Hatsfield, Cal. 35703
DATE OF INTERVIEW 11-25-93
NUMBER OF TAPES 1

DATE OF AGREEMENT 12-2-93

SIGNATURE OF INTERVIEWEE/DONOR Mary Massey

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- I. As the interviewee was asked questions regarding specifically her work in a Southern mill, it is the main topic discussed on the tape, with only brief mentions of other topics being brought up as she was trying to explain a point or provide some background information.

Mary Massey
interviewed by
Meredith
Alexander

QUESTIONS

1. What is your name?
2. What is your age?
3. What year were you born?
4. Where were you born?
5. How long did you live there?
6. At what age did you go to work in the mill?
7. What was the name of the mill?
8. How long did you work there?
9. What circumstances caused you to go to work in the mill?
10. Describe the outside of the mill; what did you see as you were walking up on your first day?
11. Describe your first day at work; how did it feel? Were you scared?
12. What kind of reputation did the mill have? Was there any hearsay about it?
13. How did you get the job?
14. What was the inside of the mill like?
15. What did it smell like?
16. What did it sound like?
17. Would you say that the work was dangerous? Did you ever see anyone injured or maimed?

18. Did any children younger than you work there?
19. What were your hours?
20. What kind of pay did you receive?
21. What were your duties?
22. Did you ever work any different jobs?
23. Describe the jobs that white men worked.
24. Describe the jobs that blacks worked.
25. Describe the jobs that white women worked.
26. Did you gain a kind of fellowship with people that you worked with? Did you get close to those that worked around you?
27. Was there ever any discussion of labor laws? Were you aware of laws concerning labor being passed?
28. Was there ever any discussion of a strike?
29. Were there ever any demands of the workers that you felt needed to be met?
30. Was there ever any issue that the workers were upset enough about to want to change things?
31. What was the attitude of management toward the workers?
32. Did people come from out of town to work in the mill?
33. Were there any discussions of unions?
34. Under what circumstances did you quit work in the mill?
35. Did you enjoy your work there?
36. Is the mill still open?
37. Is there anything else you can tell me about the mill?

CHRONOLOGY

1920's -

National-

Woodrow Wilson was president until 1921. Warren G. Harding was elected president in 1921, but died in 1923. Calvin Coolidge succeeded him and served from 1923 until 1929. Herbert Hoover followed him and served as president 1929-1933.

Amendment 19, giving the vote to women, was proclaimed Aug. 26, 1920.

This decade has been referred to as the "roaring 20's." Post-war jubilation led to great spending and a "era of wonderful nonsense." (1) Henry Ford had America on wheels, flappers were scandalizing everyone, and prohibition was still enforced, prompting the opening of "speak-easies."

The Great Stock Market Crash of October, 1929, was to have a shattering effect on most of the nation. The Great Depression began. It lasted into the next decade.

State-

Thomas Erby Kilby was governor until 1923. William W. Brandon succeeded him until 1927. Bibb Graves was governor on into the next decade.

In the mid-20's, new port facilities were constructed in Mobile. This greatly increased trade in Alabama. In 1929, there was a huge flood in southern Alabama when the Alabama and Tombigbee rivers flooded. In the Great Depression starting that same year, more than 60 banks failed, work was scarce, and life was not easy in Alabama, which has never been a wealthy state to begin with.

1930's-

National-

Herbert Hoover was president until 1933. One of our most loved presidents then succeeded him, Franklin D. Roosevelt. He was in office from 1933 until the middle of the next decade.

Roosevelt's New Deal was aimed at relief and recovery from the Great Depression. Many new programs were started to help the nation recover, and labor laws were also being passed at this time. Tensions were high in Europe in the last half of the decade, which would later lead America into World War II.

Amendment 20, the Lame Duck Amendment, and Amendment 21, repealing prohibition, were both proclaimed in 1933.

State- Bibb Graves served as governor until 1931. Benjamin Meek Miller was in office from 1931 until 1935, when Bibb Graves came back into office. Frank Dixon was to lead Alabama into the 1940's.

The federal government, through Roosevelt's New Deal, created the Tennessee Valley Authority. The TVA deals with electric power and flood control.

Local- Mary Etta Frazier was married to Roy Massey on December 7, 1935. They had thirty five dollars between them and felt fortunate to have that. They lived with her parents after they were married.

1940's-

National- Franklin D. Roosevelt served as president until 1945. When he died, Harry S. Truman was brought into office as he was the vice-president for Roosevelt. He presided until the early 50's.

America was plunged into World War II on Dec. 7, 1941, when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. While the men went to fight, America's women took many of the jobs that were traditionally held by men, in factories and foundries all over the country. Of course, the men got them back when the war ended in 1945. The United Nations was chartered, and Truman proposed his "Fair Deal."

State- Frank Dixon continued as Alabama's governor until 1943, then Chauncey Sparks governed the state until 1947. Jim Folsom then began his first gubernatorial term.

Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville was established in 1941, and Alabama's first oil well began producing in Gilberttown.

Local- Mary and Roy Massey had their first and only child, Jimmy Dan, on February 18, 1940. Mary's father Patrick passed away in 1948.

1950's-

National-

Harry Truman was president until 1953, and was followed by Dwight D. Eisenhower, who served two terms in the presidency.

Amendment 22, setting limits to the number of presidential terms one man can hold, was proclaimed in 1951.

The United States fought in the Korean War from 1950-1953. Vietnam was heating up already, which would later plunge us into another war in southeast Asia. The cold war was on between the U.S. and Russia, and Joseph McCarthy was having a grand time searching out subversive Communists in America. Population boomed, and the economy was booming also.

State-

Governors were:

'Big Jim' James Folsom until 1951,

Gordon Persons 1951-1955,

'Big Jim' Folsom again, 1955-1959, and John M. Patterson carrying out the last year of the decade.

Russel Cave, a fantastic archaeological find, was discovered in Jackson County. At this time, Alabama was becoming more of an urban state. It was also known nationally for the unrest resulting from segregation and the civil rights struggle. Martin Luther King, Jr., led the Montgomery bus boycott after Rosa Parks was punished for sitting in the front of a bus.

Local-

Mary's son went into the Navy in 1959 and served aboard the U.S. Essex.

1960's-

National-

Serving as president was Eisenhower until 1961, who was then succeeded by John F. Kennedy. Kennedy was assassinated in November of 1963, and his vice-president,

Lyndon B. Johnson was sworn in and remained in office until 1969, when the unfortunate Richard Nixon was elected.

In the sixties there was great domestic turmoil in our country, with the riots in Watts and unrest due to the civil rights struggle. Kennedy established the Peace Corps, Communism overcame Cuba, the Berlin Wall was erected, and we found our sons, brothers, and fathers fighting in a tiny southeast Asian country named Vietnam, with much of the population not understanding why we were there in the first place. Hippies roamed the country at will and protested the war with Haight-Ashbury as their unofficial headquarters, Woodstock was the place to be, and the Summer of Love in 1967 brought forth no real solutions, but quite a few babies and future flashbacks of acid trips. Amendments 23, 24, and 25 were proclaimed as law.

State-

Alabama's governors during the 60's were as follows:

John M. Patterson,	'til 1963
George C. Wallace	1963-1967
Lurleen Wallace	1967-1968
Albert Brewer	1968-1971

Governor Wallace tried to stop integration of our schools in 1963, as he stood at the door of the University of Alabama to keep two black students from entering. In 1965, Martin Luther King Jr. led a civil rights march from Selma to Montgomery to protest discrimination in voting. George C. Marshall Space Flight Center was established in Huntsville, which would grow to be very important to the federal government.

Local-

Jimmy Massey, Mary's son, married Patricia Ellen Morgan in 1964. Her first grandchild, Ellen Paige Massey, was born in October of 1967.

1970's-

National-

Serving as President were Richard Nixon (of the infamous Watergate scandal), Gerald Ford, and Jimmy Carter. Vietnam ended with the U.S. pulling out and cutting our losses, and polyester seemed to be the grossest national product. Disco reared its ugly head. Unemployment rates were high, and gas was more expensive and harder to get. Amendment 26, setting the legal voting age at 18, was proclaimed.

State-

Local-

Mary's second grandchild, Anne Meredith Massey, was born in January of 1971. Her son was killed in an accident on November 22, 1972. She then began helping to raise her two grandchildren.

Women's ALA Hist

Millwork

Ft. Payne, AL

Domestic Women's roles

1920s →

Interview by

Meredith

Alexander -
granddaughter

INTERVIEWEE BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Name: Mary Etta Frazier Massey M/F F

Address: 1223 Windsor St. Gadsden, AL 35903

Phone number(s): 492-3323

Approximate age or date of birth: April 23, 1915

Mother's Name: Dora Chitwood Frazier

Father's Name: Patrick Mullin Frazier

Places lived and when: Fort Payne, Alabama 1915-1940

Gadsden, Alabama 1940-1993

Education: 8th Grade

Religion: Southern Baptist

Business, political and social memberships (past and present) n/a

Present occupation: n/a

Former occupations: mill worker

Special Skills: knitting, quilting

Major Accomplishments: _____

National Events in which interviewee has participated: n/a

Local Events in which interviewee has participated: n/a

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:

n/a

Individuals recommended by the interviewee who might be candidates for an oral history interview: did not know of any

Additional information: _____