

Oral History Tape Recording Release

I, R.K. Coffee, 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 Ms. R.K. Coffee

INTERVIEWER NEIL PARKIN

DATE OF INTERVIEW February 2nd, 1993

NUMBER OF TAPES 1

DATE OF AGREEMENT April 18, 1993

SIGNATURE OF INTERVIEWEE/DONOR R.K. Coffee

**CHRONOLOGY SHEET:**

Mrs. Clifford R. K. Coffee.

**Born:** August 26, 1900. Hartsalle, Morgan County, Al.

**Parents:** Robert Clyde and Molly Mayhall Sharpe.

**Marriage:** To Red Coffee in 1924.

**Siblings:** Two sisters and three brothers.

**Education:** Athens Methodist College. Undergraduate Degree in Music.

**Occupations:** School teacher, newspaper columnist, editor, advisor. Public Relations for Jacksonville State University.

**Children:** One daughter - Marion.

**Religion:** Methodist.

**Political Membership:** Republican.

**Special Skills:** Piano mastery, published writer.

**PLANNED CHRONOLOGICAL INTERVIEW:**

World War I  
Lucitania  
Woodrow Wilson, election 1920, League of Nations  
Warren G. Harding  
Calvin Coolidge  
Herbert Hoover  
Stock Market Crash  
Depression  
Franklin Roosevelt  
New Deal  
Huey Long  
Harry Truman  
Pearl Harbor

[SPECIFIC TOPICS]

Race Relations  
Red Scare  
Ku Klux Klan  
Sacco and Vanzetti  
Suffrage  
Prohibition and Al Capone  
Sports, Babe Ruth, Tunney-Dempsey  
Charles Lindbergh  
Duke of Windsor  
The automobile  
The radio and radio programs, including "War of the Worlds."  
Literature, including Earnest Hemmingway and William Faulkner  
Art, including Alfred Stieglitz and Georgia O'Keefe  
Alabama, the South and the North  
Religion

The above outline is planned largely chronologically but with room to be flexible. Although Mrs. Coffee may have been too young to remember the build-up to World War I, I am going to attempt to elicit her opinions and observations on this era due to the advantage of her age.

My goal is not so much to denote her personal life although that is important. Fortunately I met with her for two hours previous and obtained this information (unfortunately unrecorded). My purpose is to enhance what I have learned and what Historians can observe; By bringing forth every interesting and seemingly important issue of the age up, for her opinion and recollection. Of course, it is of my own judgement to pick the topics and I believe I covered a wide range. By discussing the topics learned through books with someone who was actually a witness to the age is of greater significance I feel. If you were somehow to magically meet an archaic personae alive during the reign of Alexander the Great, could you feasibly resist talking about the Macedonian King?

## SUMMARY

The interview with Mrs. R.K. Coffee generally followed the plan intended. Most of the topics listed in the outline were covered. What follows is the contents of the tape in detail:

Personal Background from 1917 through to World War II in brief.  
[ Family, Education, Career moves, Marriage, Family Business.]

Ft. Mclellan  
The Depression  
Franklin Roosevelt  
Harry Truman

World War I  
Woodrow Wilson  
League of Nations  
Warren G Harding  
Suffrage and the Rights of Women  
Calvin Coolidge  
Herbert Hoover  
Depression  
Effect on Farming (parents) and Publishing (family)  
Red Scare and Russian colleague in Jacksonville  
Sacco and Vanzetti  
Race Relations  
Ku Klux Klan and husband's brief affiliation

Huey Long  
The Automobile and their first ownership of.  
The Radio and radio programs  
Orson Welles  
Sports, Baseball in Anniston  
The Lindberghs  
Prohibition  
Al Capone  
Religion and Jewish peoples in Jacksonville  
Pearl Harbor  
Duke of Windsor and Mrs. Simpson

As one can plainly see the interview did not stay within its sequential boundaries. Mrs. Coffee was a very informed, alert and energetic interviewee and thus, I did not have to add any input except to keep the conversation in bounds at times. I feel there are interesting anecdotes, valuable views and insights of the age within this interview. However, with the benefit of hindsight I believe the surface was only scratched as many of the topics were just skimmed. Mrs. Coffee, as amiable as she is, should be approached for further interviews by more qualified persons than myself.

Although I admit the interview's weaknesses I also feel I covered a wide range of topics to keep the dialogue fresh and interesting. Moreover, Mrs. Coffee's observations (often vivid) offers fascinating introspective analysis on so many subjects. Another plus was the her ability to discuss national events and then subsequently link them to her own life. Although no one issue was explored to any great revelation, the entire age was dealt with as designed in the outline. This in fact, may be of greater learning.

INTERVIEWEE BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Name: <sup>clifford</sup> Mrs. B K Coffee M/F F

Address: 605 5th Ave Jacksonville

Phone number(s): 435-6102

Approximate age or date of birth: August 26 1920

Mother's Name: Molly Mayhall Sharpe

Father's Name: Robert Clyde Sharpe

Places lived and when: Hartsale, Morgan County Ala <sup>Adrian</sup> West Point Ga, Andalusia Ala, Jacksonville Ala.

Education: Athens Methodist college 4 year - Piano

Religion: Methodist

Business, political and social memberships (past and present) Methodist church, University PR, newspaper editor, literary clubs, bridge clubs, Republican

Present occupation: part time columnist, retired

Former occupations: School teacher, newspaper columnist, <sup>editor</sup> advisor, PR for JSU.

Special Skills: Piano mastery, writing

Major Accomplishments: Editing newspapers including Jacksonville Times, Teaching an accomplished published musician (Wendy Burdette)

National Events in which interviewee has participated: Capital hill, history places

Local Events in which interviewee has participated: Tea, numerous tea parties, From dances at Ft McJannet in WWI to restoration of Methodist House 1993.

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: Plaques from JSU, ~~from~~ women of confederation, Jacksonville Times

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

Additional information: married 1924 daughter Marion

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