A.A. Young

Interview by Alvin Jackson with Mrs. A.A. Young in April 1994. Topics discussed include her first years of teaching at Willow Hill, the changes made in education as a result of the integration laws, teaching at Willow Hill under principals Lawton, Abraham, and Wilson, the presence of the KKK in Bulloch County, and her personal life.

\AJ: Today is April 7, 1994. We are in Bulloch County, Statesboro, Georgia, at the home of Mrs. A.A. Young. She is a former teacher of the Willow Hill School. And I'm currently interviewing her to get some recollections of her past memories of Willow Hill and her early life. And we were just talking and she said that, what were you saying about Middle Ground?
AAY: Well, I was about to say, how, going into Willow Hill Community, I grew up in the Middle Ground Community, which was almost separate from the Willow Hill Community, but I'd like to consider myself as being a Willow Hill-ian. But anyway. When I first went to Willow Hill to teach, it must have been around '55, and '56, that school year, cause I started off at Polk's Academy.
AJ: Oh, did you?
AAY: And that was in the Middle Ground area. And that year they had built the new schools, and they went into them, not at the very beginning of the year, but it was about the middle of September or first of October, so I was transferred from Polk's Academy up to Willow Hill. And I had never been in a close knit community, and it was my very first year teaching too, and I was just shocked at how the people, and it was, you know, back in those days it was all black. And I was shocked at how the people were really connected together up there. They were all family, you know, they were interested in what went on in their community, in a positive way. They supported the school, they supported the new teachers, and you weren't considered like an out, a person out of the community if you came in to work with them. But they let you know, that you were not a Willow Hill-ian if you were not, you know. But it was really fun. It was my first year working, and I will contribute some of that to it too. But it was the best job that I have ever had, working with the people up there. Like, Mr. Wiggins, and your mother, and, let's see, the...
AJ: The Holloways up there.
AAY: The Holloways. She has a daughter at Georgia Southern now, that works out there. Parrishes.
AJ: The Parrishes. The Burkes were up there.
AAY: The Burkes.
AJ: The Greens, I don't know if you knew them.
AAY: Yeah, the Greens. Then, there was another big family over there, by Mrs. Lester. Now, most of the Lester children had already graduated, I think. But, Lawrences.
AJ: Lawrences. Yes.
AAY: Hardens.
AJ: Hardens.That is great.
AAY: And I was talking with Reverend, Reverend, what is his name? He lives right back here. Reverend, I can't think of his name right now. The other day, he came by with his grandchildren, you know, and I was telling him, you know, it would have been so nice if we had had yearbooks back in that time, cause I constantly sit down and try to think, some good people come out of that school up there, you know. We have several ministers that come out of that school, you know. We have people like you, who've gone off to do good things. People who even stayed in

the community, Gordon Mintz's, a contractor, there's some other people up there, not Lovitts, well the Lovitt's too, I didn't know them too well when I was up there. But, Jones, are contractors, so there's some good people. And if we just had a little background, you know, or could remember, or get together and sit down and talk about all the good things that have come out of those schools. I'm sure that I've missed a lot. Like, Theresa, you know, went off doing well for themselves. And Gordon and I usually talk quite often and he always would tell me something like, "See when I was in school up there, y'all thought I wasn't going to be anything." I said, "No, nobody ever thought," and I always tell him the same story, you know. Like, that's the only school that I have ever taught in, and a lot of good people, now, I mean I know everybody's not going to get a college education but they are doing well, at the level where they are, you know? Cause, I just thought of another, the Harrises. They were up there, he came out, nice preacher, has two or three churches here in Bulloch County, or two or three churches in this area, you know. Has a nice family, sends his children, you know, continuously to school and doing well, you know. And if we just had something that we could look back on and really see all of this good stuff that has come out of that school.

AJ: Well, that's certainly one of the things that I'm going to do. We are, have on the drawing board some plans for having a Willow Hill reunion. And the other thing we are interested in doing was starting what we would call a Willow Hill Foundation, and that is endowing a certain amount of money, so that then we could give out scholarships. And, also putting together the history of the school, because we think that's important. But I was down at the Board of Education today, and trying to get their records and they can only go back to '38, but, they can go back that far and what, from what I was looking at today, they have the name of a lot of the church schools, you know, Noah's Ark, Free Chapel. Your mother taught at Free Chapel, I saw her name there.

AAY: You did?

AJ: So your mother's name is in the records as a teacher at Free Chapel. So they got all of that, so they are going to putting that together and they're going to be sending it to me and I'll be putting it up. It's going to be in publication form. So I saw your mother, Veronica, the name was Veronica, at Free Chapel.

AAY: Yeah, and you know, that's another thing, cause that was more like in that Middle Ground, you know, community. I was talking with someone about, about a month ago, and they were carrying on their revival, and I have been saying for about two or three years, I want to go back to Free Chapel. And I thought about it so much, I said, "Now I wonder if this is a signal. Am I fixing to die or something?"

AJ: Naw! [laughter]

AAY: [laughter] And so I kept saying, "I want to go to Free Chapel," but I never got up the energy, whatever I needed to get up and go on up there, you know. Well, one thing, their church Sundays are on first and third, like our main church Sundays are, so I never got up there. So when I head about this, the revival was going on, we was sitting around, cause I always eat dinner around at my aunt's house, and we sitting down there and we were saying we ought to go to church somewhere, and I said "Well, we don't ever go anywhere but the Mt. Zion, that's my church." And I say, "I've been wanting to go up to Free Chapel for two or three years." I came back home and [unclear] Lester, a cousin of mine, was on my driveway, he was backing out, cause he had left me a program of the revival, so I went up there, and I hadn't been there

since I was a little girl, well we had the, they had the anniversary and they made the lemonade in the big [unclear] and if it wasn't, we didn't know it. And they served food on a big table out in the back.
AJ: Like they used to do all the time?
AAY: Yeah. But I didn't get to go to the back of the church, because it was night, but I could see the graveyard, you know, from the view where we were. And the church basically looks the same. They had done some outer work on it, but its one of those old churches. It's standing in the same spot, so I got to go back up there. And I met some people, I couldn't remember them too well, but they told me who they were, you know, that were sort of from the Willow Hill and Portal area like. But, all of this, if we just had, I'm suprised that the Board of Education still had that material.
AJ: Yeah, they have that. At that point, they kept the records separate for white and black and I was curious because they had a different pay scale. And I was looking at that, how much more the whites made than the blacks with the same level of education. And, so I think they have that. And I'm wondering if they have more. They told me they, I spoke with this Nadsen fellow, who was very good. I got him because he was very interested. I got him, I got someone else first, but eventually got to him. And he took an interest and could see what I was doing [unclear]. He said there may be some information up at the place where they used to store potatoes, corn.
AAY: Yeah, the potato house, right.
AJ: He said they used that to store information, and if there's any there, he said he'll try to find.
AAY: I knew that some of, some people had been looking for William James, you know, sort of geneaology like, and they could not come up with some of the material, which had upset some of the people. It had gotten misplaced, in, you know, the turmoil of schools here. And people were saying, that if we had just got them thinking and got together, a group of us had went down and sort of made sure that this material was put away.
AJ: So they, when the integration came, they'd lost some of the material?
AAY: That's what happened. They'd lost some of the material.
AJ: Did they lose it or did they destroy it?
AAY: They lost...[laughter from both]. I think they destroyed it, because William James was full of like trophy's and so forth, and we couldn't find any of those trophies. They said they went to the potato house, they found only a few of them. Like pictures of some of the educators back in those days, Julia P. Bryant and William James.
AJ: They couldn't find any of that?
AAY: They were destroyed. Cause you know, like over at this school here, when they redid that school about two years ago, some people went into the office and found a lady's picture on the floor. And so, people really think it was destroyed, but we felt guilty ourselves, that we didn't take an interest.
AJ: For not protecting.
AAY: Right, in trying to protect this for ourselves. But I think that's a good idea, you know, some history of your people. We don't know what we are missing, until we let this chance pass by, you know?
AJ: Absolutely.
AAY: You know, so you're working in that area, it's called geneaology?
AJ: Geneaology.

AAY: Right.
AJ: And so, I will, first, like I said, it started off with the Willow Hill, but then after I started looking at Willow Hill and I started seeing all this other, I said, anything I see black, I'm going to grab it. And so that's when I, then I, I really went down there for Willow Hill but after I saw it, I told him I was interested in all the black, cause I said, if I don't get my hands on it now, something later may get lost, thrown away, whatever. At least I'll have a copy.
AAY: Well that, that's good you're working on that. It's a big thing to tackle, you know? And it's not something you can do overnight. You know, it takes a lot of energy to do that, you know. But that's great.
AJ: Now, the other thing I wanted to tell you we have. We have an exhibit on the Willow Hill School and we got some funding up in Ohio, and the exhibit has been on display, this is the second year it's been on display at Black History Month, for the whole month.
AAY: Here?
AJ: No, it's in Ohio. And I have a fifty picture exhibit on the history of the Willow Hill School. The Willow Hill School started in 1874, so we go from that time period to the present.
AAY: And you have that material from back then?
AJ: Uh huh. We got the first teacher at Willow Hill, who was Mrs. Georgianna Riggs. And I can tell you who Mrs. Georgianna Riggs's daughter was, you might know of her. They call her Cousin Goodsing, was Lola Parrish.
AAY: Yeah.
AJ: Her mother was the first teacher at Willow Hill.
AAY: Oh yeah, aw.
AJ: And then Mrs. Amanda Bill, I don't know who that is, was the second teacher. You ever heard the name Amanda Bill? I don't know that name. And the third teacher was Mr. George Smith, who was the brother of Mr. H.W.B. Smith.
AAY: Senior. Uh huh.
AJ: His brother was the third teacher at Willow Hill. And I have a list of teachers that has been compiled through people, what people have said, and what I've been able pull out. We have a pretty good list and then we have some description of the early school life. It was founded on Dan Riggs's place, we know that, in a turpentine shanty.
AAY: In that same area?
AJ: In the same area. Now, Dan Riggs's place, the former Dan Riggs's place, is the same place that Cousin Cleve Hall, you remember Cousin Cleve Hall?
AAY: Yeah.
AJ: Where he used to live up there, and James Hall and them. You know, I think Roberta Burke has bought that place now. That's the original Dan Rigg's place, and that is where the Willow Hill School was originally founded.
AAY: So it's basically in the same place.
AJ: Basically in the same area. Now, for, around 1890 though, it left the area and moved on Mrs. Sara Lee's grandfather's place. Handy Donalds, and then he stayed from about 1890 to 1895, then around 1895, Moses Parrish donated some land where the old wooden building was, and it was there until it moved around 1954, to the brick structure, where it is now. That was land that Troy Polk had donated. So we can pretty much follow the school, and Willow Hill is the oldest continuous school in Bulloch County, white or black. Cause there are other schools, but

they werent started as early as Willow Hill. And then the ones that were started earlier, they had discontinued. So, it clearly has a history and I certainly want to document it, and that's why I come around and try to talk to teachers and any bit of information I can get, I just interviewed, had a good time interviewing your aunt and I really enjoyed that, cause she had taught at Willow Hill, and then she certainly had been around to a lot of other places. So while I was talking to her, I got a little bit of her life history.
AAY: Yeah, well that's really, that was my first place teaching and when they sort of closed down, integrated in '69 and closed the school, I was shifted to Marvin Pittman, all together a different situation from what I had been used to. But of course, I enjoyed out there because it was new to me and well, I did about as well as I could do, you know. And then, I sort of came back into the county, instead of, Georgia Southern was like the University of Georgia. It was a different kind of pay scale and benefits were basically the same, but the college sort of chipped in because it was a working school with a calling. And then I left from there and came back to the county, and then I was moved back out there, and I accepted it and stayed for a period of time before coming back to the county.
AJ: Now, you're teaching now?
AAY: No, I'm retired now. This is my fifth year being retired.
AJ: Ok. What school did you retire from?
AAY: Julia P. Bryant.
AJ: Oh, you were teaching right there? Ok. Now, so, the very first school, let's start from there. Now, where did you go to school when you were young?
AAY: Oh, I went to, I went to, down in the Leefield area, to Mt. Zion.
AJ: You went to Mt. Zion School?
AAY: The one teacher school.
AJ: Who was your teacher?
AAY: My mother. [laughter]
AJ: Oh, really?
AAY: Yeah. My mother was my teacher. And then my second teacher was Mrs. I can't think of her name, I can't think of her name. Can't think of her name right now, but.
AJ: But she taught at Mt. Zion?
AAY: Yeah, uh huh. And then, my next school that I went to was, I went to Free Chapel to school too. Under my mother.
AJ: How long were you there?
AAY: I can't recall how many years I went there.
AJ: Ok. Ok. But Mt. Zion first.
AAY: Yeah. And then I went to Free Chapel. And then I went to Bennett Grove.
AJ: Bennett Grove. Who was the teacher there?
AAY: My mother. I went there with her. That was up near Mrs. Lester. I think part of that little building is still standing there.
AJ: Is it really?
AAY: Uh huh. I think that little shelter is still standing there. I'm not sure.
AJ: Is that where, Mrs. Dolly Bennett and them live up there somewhere?
AAY: Yeah, uh huh. Right on the road going to [unclear].
AJ: And some of that school is still there?

AAY: I think that little, the last time I was up there, it's been about three years ago, a little part of that school was still standing there. And then I transferred back down to New Sand Ridge. I lived with my grandmother, I was the only granddaughter they had and I, they were getting elderly and so I lived with them. And then after New Sand Ridge, I, cause I never went to Willow Hill to school. I came back and went to, I was in my high school area then, and went to William James and finished from Williams James.
AJ: Ok. And what year did you finish? That would have been Statesboro High and Industrial, now wouldn't it?
AAY: Yeah. No it was William James. The year I finished, '49, it seems to me, that it was changed from Statesboro High and Industrial the year of '48, it was between that '48, that '48 school year, because I have the year book from that '49, you know graduating, you know, cause it was William James.
AJ: Ok, now, did they have yearbooks at Statesboro High and Industrial?
AAY: I'm not sure.
AJ: What's the oldest yearbook you know about?
AAY: The only one I know about is '40, I mean '49 [unclear].
AJ: Do you still have a copy of it? Could I see it?
AAY: Uh huh. And I'm going to be able to put my hand on it right quick cause [unclear]. And I had [unclear].
AJ: Do you have any pictures of the Willow Hill School?
AAY: You know, I sent you some of those pictures from Willow Hill.
AJ: Ok, and those are the only ones you have? I didn't never send you those back?
AAY: Yeah, you sent them back.
AJ: Ok.
AAY: William James. Wait a minute. This is '51.
AJ: This is '51.
AAY: Oh, I'm sorry. I went there in '49, so I graduated in '51.
AJ: Ok. Do you have any other than the '51?
AAY: No, I don't have any other, other than the '51.
AJ: Oh, and you've got everything here.
AAY: [unclear] you know, one that I graduated.
AJ: Ok, let me just take a minute to look through this.
AAY: Yeah, cause some Willow Hill schoolmates are in there.
AJ: That's what I want to see. Alma Mater. And you don't know if there was a yearbook before this one?
AAY: [unclear] But I did not get one. I just got one my senior year when I graduated. Cause I started there in '49, '50, I must have been in, I must have been in 10th grade cause I think New Sand Ridge went to the 9th grade. And I don't know why I didn't get a yearbook before then. And I don't know if anybody else had one, I don't know of anybody who has.
AJ: Is this the oldest one you know in, the oldest yearbook you know of?
AAY: That's of William James. That's the oldest one that I know of of William James. I don't even know if they had one before that year. [unclear]I think, but I don't know for the years before I went there.
AJ: Well, that's nice. I was trying to see because in some of the other books like this they used

to put this around in schools like Willow Hill and Edward Johnson, but I don't see it in this one. And it didn't [unclear].
AAY: Well, have you seen one earler than the '51?
AJ: No, no. This is the earliest one that I've seen. And so, you've even got your program?
AAY: Yeah, I just put all that, as the years went by, stuck all that, I was trying to think if I had my report card. But I didn't go to Willow Hill, I went to Bennett Grove. Cause I have my report card.
AJ: From Bennett Grove?
AAY: Uh huh. My report card from Bennett Grove.
AJ: All of that? Well, now those are the kinds of things I want to make copies of. At some point. Even the yearbook. And these kinds of things, because this, you won't find a whole lot of. Presentation for the school, [unclear], you got a little.
AAY: While you looking at that, let me see if I can find that Willow Hill pack of [unclear] I had. I know some of them [unclear] put them in an album or anything. They got stuck together and I [unclear, AAY is too far away from the recorder for voice pickup].
AJ: Oh? How'd you do that?
AAY: [Speaking far from recorder, cannot hear]. Got stuck together, and you couldn't tell all, you know, what they were.
AJ: Well, I declare. Well, that's wonderful. Well, but you've got it organized though. You have it organized. Things like, you have a report card from Bennett Grove, so I can make copies of stuff like that, and...
[heavy feedback in recording]
AAY: This, that's the little Cone girl there, Zetta Mae Cone. But now these kids, I wouldn't be able, cause I don't have their names on there. That's another thing that I didn't do and I know, these are some students of Willow Hill here. I think I sent you those but I'm not sure.
AJ: These you didn't send me.
AAY: I didn't?
AJ: Uh uh.
AAY: Well, these are Willow Hill students here. This is a float we had for Homecoming. We came down to Statesboro and see old Mrs., this is Mrs., let me see, what were their names? They had the store right across from the school.
AJ: From the Willow Hill School?
AAY: No, uh uh. This is here in Statesboro, but the house there, I think they've remodeled that house from William James. This might be where most of these pictures are.
AJ: Now all of these are Willow Hill?
AAY: Yeah. All of those are Willow Hill. And this, this right here is not. But these are Willow Hill students here. Wait a minute now. Who is this little boy here? Yeah, this little boy is a Prince. That's the little Wilson boy. This little boy might not be a Willow Hill boy. This little boy might not be a Willow Hill boy. I don't think he is. This little boy is. He's a Jackson. This is a McCray boy here.
AJ: And these are all Willow Hill. No, I don't have these pictures. Now, who, do you know who these children are?
AAY: I sure don't. I don't know. I should have put the names on the back of those pictures.
AJ: Were these your class pictures?
AAY: Yeah, yeah they were my class.

AJ: Ok. This is your class. Well, I'll have to get copies.
AAY: And this is, well let me see, what's the girl's name? She's a grown girl now, and married.
AJ: These are all Willow Hill?
AAY: These are all Willow Hill's. Yeah, this is a McCray girl there.
AJ: You going to let me copy some of these?
AAY: Yeah! Give them back!
AJ: Cause what I'll do, you know I'll send them back. Just as long you tell me.
AAY: Yeah, yeah you know. And I don't have to have them back right now. I know some of the children. I know this is, this is a Davis here. This is the Johnson man's little girl, up at Pole, she's married now. These are pictures in my class, and these, this is a little play I had. And these are some of the, that's a group, that might be a carbon copy of one, no it's not quite the same.
AJ: No, it's different.
AAY: I thought I had some of the, oh, some of the teachers here. These were some of the teachers. Now, I don't know what this was.
AJ: I know that's Mrs. Rincher there.
AAY: Uh huh. She's from South Carolina.
AJ: I remember her.
AAY: This one is from Alabama. I can't think of her name right now. This is the Lawrence boy here.
AJ: Isn't it a Holloway? One of the Lawrence?
AAY: Yeah, Holloway.
AJ: Uh huh. I can see that resemblance.
AAY: But yeah, you can have those and, you know. They don't have very much meaning and I still [trails off].
AJ: I'll get them back to you. Well let me ask you, are there any Willow Hills in that? Cause anything you have on the Willow Hill, I'll try to get.
AAY: No, this is all [unclear].
AJ: You said some of the other ones were Willow Hill earlier. I thought you were showing me.
AAY: Wait, wait a minute now. There's some here. [laughter] I got them all scattered everywhere. Ok. And see, I should have grouped them. But I guess I just put them in the book.
AJ: The Willow Hill ones I want.
AAY: Can I take that page and just let you have the whole book? Cause here's one there.
AJ: Just show me, if you show me which one are the Willow Hills and I'll just, those are the ones I want to pull off.
AAY: Is this a Willow Hill? No, no, this is not.
AJ: What about that page there?
AAY: [unclear] No this page is not. That's not. That's not. And that's not. None of that. [unclear] Can't see with my glasses on. [unclear]
AJ: That's Willow Hill?
AAY: And this is Willow Hill. Let me see if they will come out. Yeah, this is a Willow Hill. This is a Willow Hill.
[heavy feedback]
AAY: [unclear] This is a little play here.
AJ: Now, the ones that have people in it.

AAY: Yeah. I don't know who these kids are. They [unclear].
AJ: Whoa, whoa, whoa. I'll take it.
AAY: Ok.
AJ: I have a file that I put these in. And what I do, I'll organize it under your name and so that way, I'll know, you know, where they come from.
AAY: Now, I'll tell you, this, this little girl here is a Willow Hillian and her sister in law lives rght across the street. The Boles.
AJ: Is that Annie Pearl Boles people?
AAY: Yeah.
AJ: Is that Annie Pearl Boles?
AAY: That's, let me see, is her name Annie?
AJ: Annie Pearl. Used to walk like this.
AAY: Yeah, she's a very quiet little girl.
AJ: Yeah, that's Annie Pearl.
AAY: Uh huh. I almost forgot. She has come over.
AJ: I remember Annie Pearl.
AAY: Now, this one is a nice clear one. You know, well you say you have something that will hold that up.
AJ: Yeah, now these are from the '50s and '60s, aren't they?
AAY: Yeah, yeah. They got to to be, because I left in '59.
AJ: Now, you went to Willow Hill in 1955?
AAY: I went the '55 and '56 school year. That's when I taught.
AJ: Ok, and how long were you there?
AAY: I was there for thirteen years, because I left in '69.
AJ: Ok, and from there you went to Marvin Pittman. And then from Marvin Pittman, how long were you at Marvin Pittman?
AAY: I was at Marvin Pittman for a year, came back to the county, cause what they did, they transfered you, cause this was during that time they were, you know, making you integrate. And I happened to have my Masters and what they were looking for was not the best teachers, but teachers who had something on record. You know, to say that you went a little bit further in school. So, I had my Master's so I took for granted, that was why they picked me and shipped me out there. I did not know I was going out there until like the week that the school opened. When I contacted the superintendent then, who was Louis Windrow, that was in office at the time, and asked, you know, well why couldn't I have known that I was going out there? Well, he explained that it was a court order, you know, and they had to do what was right, and it wasn't really a choice of teachers. If you wanted to work, you had to sort of go with this federal law. So, I was not the only one that was put out there. But I think I was the only one from Willow Hill, becasue there were other teachers in the county. But it seems they got all the teachers who had above the four year degrees, you know, and put out there. And then, I was sort of angry, I guess, because I wasn't contacted before, I had to go find out, well what's going on, myself. And I decided, well I'm coming back to the county. I might work out there one year, but you didn't give me a choice, I'm coming back to the county. So '70, '69 and '70, I worked out there. And then '70, '71 school year, I came back and went over to Julia P. Bryant. They gave me a school in the county. But '72 and '73, I was thrown right back out there. So I just stayed out there for

'73, until about '80, about '81. And then my mother was ill and you had to put in a lot of hours cause you worked with those college students, it was a training school for people going in to secondary elementary education. And I just didn't have a lot of time to put in with planning with the girls, and so forth. So, I sort of asked to be transferred back in the county, with this whole thing that my mother was ill, and she was at the time. And so, I came back, but I went over to Salley Zetterower, and worked there for about three years. And then they had another grade arrangement that shifted me from Salley Zetterower, cause I was working with third graders, over to Julia P. Bryant, and they only had kindergarten through second grade, so I had to shift over here. And I worked over there about six years and then I retired. So I put in thirty-one years, thirty-three years, of service, you know, in the county, and never worked anywhere but in Bulloch County.
AJ: Ok, now where did you go to college?
AAY: Fort Valley State.
AJ: You went to Fort Valley. Now, these are all Willow Hill's?
AAY: These are all Willow Hills.
AJ: Ok. Great. Ok. And what year did you graduate from Fort Valley?
AAY: I graduated from Fort Valley in '55.
AJ: In '55? Ok.
AAY: '55. These are Willow Hill's there. I had another bag of Willow Hill, I don't think those, I had those just in like a plastic, but they going to be basically the same thing as there. And if I found, if I find some others, I could send then, you know, I can send them to you. But I think those are basically, cause the other thing that I had was in the plastic bag, and she sent them back in a brown something. I took them out and put them in a plastic bag and they kind of got too hot and stuck together. These are all the other schools where I taught. And when they stuck together, I thought they were no good anymore, so I thought I'd pick out the best ones and threw the others away. Now, let me see, I have a book of some teachers, I forgot about that. [unclear] We really kept up, but even at Willow Hill, we didn't make a little yearbook or something. It was just individual teachers making pictures.
AJ: Making pictures, that's real nice.
AAY: Yeah, these are Willow Hill.
AJ: These are Willow Hill students?
AAY: I got these [unclear]. These are Willow Hill teachers here, I know you want this.
AJ: Oh, let's see. That's Mrs. Young, Mrs. Kent, Mrs. Wilson, who's that?
AAY: Chapel, Mary Chapel.
AJ: And Mrs. Beckett.
AAY: Uh huh.
AJ: Oh, yes, I would love to [unclear] some of that.
AAY: Well, I'll just pull this sheet out. That's a little girl, you already got one of her pictures. [unclear] family here.
AJ: Oh my goodness, look at that.
AAY: These are some of the students that [tape skips]
AJ: Calvin Washington, Donnie Wilson, Anne Harris, Charlene Holloway, I don't know who that is but yeah I'd love to have some of those.
AAY: Ok, well I'll just pull these two pages out. Let's see, I think that's all [unclear] family. That's

Mrs. Martin's daughter. She didn't go to, this is one of the teacher's babies. This is Irma when she got married. I think that was when she got married.
AJ: Well, it looks like it. '57. Cause she then became Mrs. Beckett.
AAY: Uh huh. Yeah. Right. Now this is one. Queenie Evans. I think you have her picture there.
AJ: Yeah, I think this is her picture here. Is that her there?
AAY: Yeah, that's her. Uh huh.
AJ: Yeah, yeah.
AAY: Oh, here's another one. See, I got Willow Hill pictures all scattered everywhere.
AJ: All over the place.
AAY: Ok. But these are basically, these might be carbon copies of what you already have.
AJ: I don't know. Let's see real fast.
AAY: Ok, now, this must have been Christmas party.
AJ: Mr. Leo Hall, Mrs. Odessa Hall, Mr. Jack Lee, where is this? Is this Willow Hill?
AAY: No, this is at the American Legion up there on Carver Street. This is Queenie Evans.
AJ: Marvin Davis. These are Willow Hill people though. This must have been the Willow Hill group having it there.
AAY: I think it is. Willow Hill group had it there. Now this is something else. Yeah, this is something else. [unclear] Oh, this is sort of like family here. Oh, I had forgotten about this book. And I found more than I thought I had in here, cause I knew I had the teachers. Let me see. Those are glued on there. So, you might have to cut that out around there, and I'll just give you the whole sheet.
AJ: I can see about [unclear]. I'll just get the pictures and leave you the rest. I can handle that. That is great. I'll take the very best care of it for you.
AAY: I wish I had something in writing that, you know, that [unclear] Holly's there. Holly's friend. Uh huh.
AJ: That's Willow Hill. I do remember them. These are the teachers.
AAY: This is Willow Hill.
AJ: Definitely remember him.
AAY: This little girl here, you have one of hers.
AJ: Now, who you say this was?
AAY: That's Myra Chapel.
AJ: Mrs. Chapel.
AAY: She lived right down the street.
AJ: She still, she taught at Willow Hill?
AAY: Yeah. She taught there.
AJ: Is that Alonzo Wilson's mother?
AAY: Yeah. Uh huh. Al Wilson, Alonzo's mama.
AJ: And that's Mrs. Kim. See, its funny how you instantly remember these because that's how you remember. [laughter] It's been so long ago. Now, those weren't Willow Hill children there?
AAY: No, uh uh. Those are my cousins. You don't want none of those?
AJ: Well, I'll take it, if it's...
AAY: This is one girl's baby. Whose baby? Wait a minute now. Is this Hazel's baby?
AJ: I don't know.
AAY: I know Hazel gave me of her oldest daughter. Oh no, uh uh. This is college. This is college

still. But I have, I have a picture of, I'm just going to tear this one in two. (paper rips) Ok, and then, Queenie. You want her?
AJ: Yeah, I'll take it.
AAY: Oh yeah, cause that's Willow Hill on the back.
AJ: Oh yeah, that's Willow Hill there.
AAY: Ok, now this is Willow Hill.
AJ: Right, now that there...
AAY: I think, yeah, this was a party and we invited, yeah.
AJ: It's got to be, cause these are all the Willow Hill people.
AAY: Uh huh. Willow Hill teachers. And some of them we probably just didn't get on the pictures. I don't know why I got a bug in here, but this is the time of year they fly around. Let me see what's on the back.
AJ: That's something else on the back.
AAY: Oh, this is something else. This is the club, but now some Willow Hill people here. There is Mr. Hall, and his wife.
AJ: Mrs. Beulah.
AAY: Beulah. And this is [unclear] or what. This is a Willow Hill teacher here.
AJ: Who is she?
AAY: I can't think of this girl.
AJ: Oh, this is, this is Mr. Lowell. This is Willow Hill.
AAY: Yeah. Some of these are Willow Hill.
AJ: This is Mr. Lowell. That's you. I don't know who that is.
AAY: Uh huh. That's me again. That's Benny Smith. He lives, he worked as a nurse at the hospital.
AJ: Ok. Now, this must be Willow Hill stuff. Because I know Mr. Lowell was my teacher in the seventh grade.
AAY: But, I think this was the club that gave this and sort of invited some Willow Hill people in.
AJ: Oh, that's nice.
AAY: Well, you know, cause on the back of that is that. Now, that's all of that. Cause this is family. That's all of that.
AJ: Well, that's a little gold down here I ran into.
AAY: Well, I found more than I thought I was going to find there.
AJ: Ran into a little gold mine.
[phone ringing, AAY answers, tape cuts off]
[tape comes back]
AAY: This morning. But I had not been but three days this year. Because I kind of work part time for Ogeechee Tech. Two hours, two days a week. And I kind of enjoy that. It's working with adults. And, I enjoy that. And I sub sometimes, and they call you at all different times. You know, when you don't want to be called. But, the schools have gotten so bad now, the children, you know that.
AJ: Disrespectful, aren't they?
AAY: Yeah. And you can't, they will not allow you to teach. They will not. It's the behavior kind of thing, and you can't get one thing, one idea, you know, across. It's really a sad situation.
AJ: It is a sad scenario.

AAY: And the children, there's nothing you can say or do that will tell them, someday you're going to need this, you know? There's nothing you can do.
AJ: I tell you. It's just very unfortunate that, you know, sometimes I think we've gone two steps forward and four back with us. [laughter] I tell you, it's really interesting. So, we were talking a little bit about where you had gone to school, and you was telling me all the different places, Bennett Grove and all like that. So after that you mentioned [unclear] Statesboro High, you graduated, went to Fort Valley, came back and taught, and we've kind of gone through all that transition. Now, your father was Young?
AAY: Johnson Young, uh huh.
AJ: Ok, now what was his brother's, who were his brothers?
AAY: His brother was Henry J. Young, who passed earlier. Tom Young. Frank Young. Who was, those were the brothers he had.
AJ: Now, Mr. Arthur Young. Was he related to him?
AAY: That was his uncle.
AJ: Now, ok now, Arthur Young. He married Mrs., what was his wife, for Mr. Arthur? Mrs. Etta?
AAY: Yeah, [unclear].
AJ: I don't know what she was.
AAY: But anyway, the Johnsons up there now?
AJ: Yeah.
AAY: They are cousins. They like my second cousins, cause that was my daddy's, his daddy
AJ: Mr. Floyd Johnson's people? What Johnson are you talking about? Oh, Mrs. Johnson up by Mrs. Lee's?
AAY: Let's see, what's his name? I know he's a Johnson.
AJ: Aaron Johnson?
AAY: Aaron. Aaron Johnson. Was that his grandfather that raised him or his father?
AJ: His father was Mr. Floyd Johnson.
AAY: Oh. Well, that must have been his grandfather that was Arthur. Was it Arthur, you know? His grandfather was a Young, was my daddy's uncle.
AJ: Arthur Young? Was your, ok I'm not sure about how that works then.
AAY: Uh huh. I never knew him very well. My dad didn't take us around, you know, to see a lot, it was just the little people right in that little cluster. But I know Arthur Young lived up around Portal or Willow Hill.
AJ: Portal. Willow Hill.
AAY: And I'm not sure who he married and that was Aaron's grandfather.
AJ: Right. That is your daddy's uncle. So that means your grandfather and this man were brothers?
AAY: Brothers. Right.
AJ: Ok. Now what was your grandfather's name?
AAY: Henry Young.
AJ: Henry Young. Now where did the Young's come from?
AAY: They came from Screven County. And I think originally they came from South Carolina, but from Screven County. Is where my dad was born and then they came to Bulloch County.
AJ: Now, so, who, your daddy's name was, tell me?
AAY: Johnson Young.

AJ: Johnson Young. His daddy's name was?
AAY: Henry Young.
AJ: Henry Young. And who was Henry Young's daddy?
AAY: I don't know. [unclear]
AJ: You don't know that. Ok. Alright. And then, your mother's people, I think your aunt told me a lot about those. Harris's and all of those. Williams's. Ok. Alrighty. Do you know the slave ancestry of the Young's?
AAY: I sure don't. I sure don't know that. You putting all that in there?
AJ: Well, I, any information is always good. Cause I'd like to, cause I when I do this, a lot of times I see different connections [unclear] when you start going far and farther back so.
AAY: That's interesting too. A guy gave us, I think I can put my hand on that right now. At our teacher's meeting [unclear] and he gave out some stuff like this. I believe it was in '59?
AJ: Tracing your family roots?
AAY: Yeah. And it talks about geneaology...
AJ: This says the Statesboro Regional Library. Yeah.
AAY: Yeah. Cause I wonder if they might have something for Willow Hill in there or not? But its supposed to be a pretty well developed kind of thing at the Regional Library. And they work on that pretty hard around here. They really got basically the old churches, you know, and not families as such. But he was interested in, you know, somebody around here help people write up their family backgrounds and so forth. So I remembered that when you said you were in that area.
AJ: Ok, now, so this was an article in the paper in, this is the Atlanta Journal Constitution.
AAY: You have to [unclear, loud noise over speaker]
AJ: I went down to, not this time, I went before. But I've not found anything on Willow Hill there. Ok. But I, I just want to read this so I can, I want to read this so I can have the information, I'll put this on my page. Ok, this is...
AAY: Well, you want to keep that?
AJ: Yeah, well cause it tells me where you can go and find things.
AAY: Uh huh.
AJ: But I don't want to destroy your records, you see, so that's why I want to read it. Cause you already got that.
AAY: How long are you going to be here?
AJ: I'm leaving Saturday morning. What I wanted, let me see now, as far as, so now, when you went to Willow Hill, how long were you at Polk's Academy?
AAY: I was there only about two months at the most.
AJ: Ok, now who was the principal when you were there?
AAY: Let's see.
AJ: Julia Pearl Bryant?
AAY: No, she was the supervisor. She was the curriculum director.
AJ: Ok, she was the curriculum director. Was Mr. Aaron Polk there at all? Now, this was in '49 or '50?
AAY: Yeah this was in '51, '55 and '56.
AJ: Ok, '55 and '56.
AAY: '55 or '56.

AJ: Ok, so no Mr. Aaron Polk wouldn't have been there. Ok, do you remember any other teachers that were there?
AAY: [unclear, sounds far away]
AJ: Ok. And who, do you remember any other teachers there, other than Butler?
AAY: No, its hard for me to remember and I shouldn't have forgotten that. But I was there only two months.
AJ: Ok, and then you came, how did you get to school out there to Polk's? You lived out in the community?
AAY: No, I drove out.
AJ: Ok, you had a car then?
AAY: Uh huh.
AJ: Ok, and then when you came to Willow Hill, you drove from Statesboro there too?
AAY: No, wait a minute. I didn't have a car when I first started at Polk's. I rode out there with someone. And I forgot who I rode out there with. I didn't get a car until I taught for a year. And then when I started at Willow Hill, we would share rides.
AJ: Y'all would ride as a group?
AAY: Uh huh.
AJ: Ok, and so the year you was at Willow Hill, '55, Mr. Lawton was there. Mrs. Laude Martin
AAY: Yeah. Laudelle Martin.
AJ: Mrs. Wilson.
AAY: Wilson. Lee.
AJ: Mrs. Lee. Mrs. Beckett.
AAY: Beckett.
AJ: Was Mrs. Chandler there?
AAY: No.
AJ: She wasn't. Mrs. Riley wasn't there?
AAY: No. Mrs. Riley wasn't there.
AJ: Ok. Mrs. Kent was there. Mrs. Alma Kent.
AAY: Oh, yeah. Mrs. Eleanor Kent was, uh huh. Bryant.
AJ: And now, was Mrs. Ethel May Brinson there?
AAY: Mrs. Pope.
AJ: Mrs. Jonny Pope. Mrs. Ethel Brinson was there?
AAY: Mrs. Brinson was there too. I'm not sure she was there the first year.
AJ: But she eventually came?
AAY: But she eventually came.
AJ: Mrs. Richard came.
AAY: Mrs. Richard.
AJ: Mr. Lowe came.
AAY: Uh huh.
AJ: Mr. James Middleton came.
AAY: Yeah. Johnny Tremble.
AJ: Johnny Tremble. Was he ever at Willow Hill?
AAY: Yeah, uh huh.
AJ: Ok.

AAY: He was there in the later years.
AJ: Ok, I don't remember him.
AAY: I think he must have been there in, after, he might have been there during John Lawton's last years as principal.
AJ: Ok. What kind of principal was Mr. Lawton?
AAY: He was very good. I enjoyed him as a principal. He was very interested in being a [unclear] school, like you know, things fit right in with the people up there and his teachers. I don't of anybody had any real major problems from him, you know. We had our major problems when we didn't do our work, and he made sure we got our work done, you know.
AJ: What about, was Cousin Ruth Hall ever there when you was there?
AAY: No, she was not. But seemed like she subbed some during the time I was there.
AJ: Ok. Was Mrs. Eva Moore there?
AAY: Mrs. Eva Moore was there.
AJ: Ok, so she came there.
AAY: Did I mention Jonny Mae Dalton? She was there.
AJ: Yes. She was there. Ok. So, that pretty much covers most of the fields of the people that were there. Now a lot, now they closed down a lot of schools in Bulloch County, kind of consolidated. Do you know what year that happened?
AAY: That must have been '69, the year that...
AJ: No, no the year the church schools closed. Like Polk Academy.
AAY: Oh, like when Polk's Academy and all those, that had to be '55.
AJ: Were they closing Polk's Academy when they were shifting you to those?
AAY: Yeah, uh huh. They closed Polk's, New Sand Ridge, and all the like one teacher schools, you know. Cause they still had a few of those one teacher schools around in, like, Neviille's and you know, far distantly. And Polk's, and New Sand Ridge, and Willow Hill were the biggest schools. Maybe they had one at [unclear], with the bigger schools, but you know they had those areas like Neville, might have had a school but then they built schools, now you're not talking, you're talking about before the '55 building?
AJ: I'm talking about the schools that closed when Willow Hill opened in '55, '56, or whenever.
AAY: Ok, ok, yeah that's right.
AJ: Now, did they close some other schools prior to that time?
AAY: Yeah, I think they sort of closed some of those one teacher schools.
AJ: Back in the late '40s or so?
AAY: Yeah, that must have been around the late '40s. Like Bennett Grove, like the one teacher school, and they went in to Polk's or went to Willow Hill, they did some closing then. But they left some of those one teacher schools, like, that were in that Neville's area, until they opened up in '55 when they built the new schools and then they went to either Mary Jackson or...
AJ: To New Hope. Was New Hope one?
AAY: Yeah, New Hope.
AJ: Mary Jackson. Edward Johnson.
AAY: Mary Jackson. Willow Hill. Edward Johnson.
AJ: Willow Hill. ANd those were kind of like, Julia P. Bryant.
AAY: Julia P. Bryant.
AJ: And those were kind of like, were like the major schools that they had. Ok. Well, that's a

pretty good wealth of information. I really appreciate it.
AAY: [unclear] But it's funny how you forget things, you know, back then, and you really shouldn't. And I'm amazed at the way you remember, you know?
AJ: Yeah, you know, I enjoy this kind of thing. So, this is kind of like a hobby for me. You know, to try to remember and put it together.
AAY: Well, what is your kind of work?
AJ: I'm a physician.
AAY: Oh, yeah? Medical?
AJ: Yes ma'am.
AAY: Sho' nuff?
AJ: Uh huh.
AAY: Oh, I never knew that. And you do this on the side.
AJ: This is just a hobby.
AAY: Oh yeah.
AJ: Yeah, and I took two weeks from the office, and my second week, this Sunday I'll be going up to Boston, to Harvard University. I'm doing a one week course because the healthcare industry is really changing fast, and there's probably going to be some form of universal coverage and just a lot of things are going to change, and so I just want to be in the forefront. I'm getting a lot of the issues and so I thought I'd go and do this course.
AAY: Well, you know, I didn't ever, I just, I never knew exactly what profession you were in. See that's what I'm talking about. All these Willow Hill great people that came out. And I don't know of another school in a community or area, you know, like the little towns Polk, Brooklet, Nevilles and so forth, that sent out so many of its students and they, not that you had to make something big, but they are progressing. You know?
AJ: Yeah, cause Jerry Wilson is a lawyer. I know Willie Shavers there, I think he's doing law. Donnie's doing television or radio or something to that effect. And so, you know, I think, and that's what I'm finding, you know, when I look at Willow Hill's story, that there's really something significant. So then, I'm looking back at what it is that made Willow Hill special. And a lot of it had to do, I think, with the fact that many of the Willow Hill people were land owners. And then, as opposed to the sharecropper system that a lot of other people had.
AAY: Uh huh. That was in the other counties. Yeah.
AJ: And that they supported the school, and the school was important. And that school had been started by a lot of their ancestors in 1874. So it was a family tradition.
AAY: They took pride in that and kept it going.
AJ: Absolutely. Pride. That's the key word.
AAY: Yeah, you know, I've always wondered about [unclear]. You know, the other sections of the county, cause I don't know a lot of people in the Brooklet [unclear] area. But I just can't recall people who have gone out and done good and contributed back to the community, you know, the way the people in the Willow Hill area, you know. And I wonder, now why? But I did realize the fact that a lot of people up there were land owners, you know, cause there are sections around there, you just didn't see anybody but black owners who kept their land, you know. Or kept it within families, you know.
AJ: Yeah, and I think that's a real important point.
AAY: Yeah, it is.

AJ: It's a very significant point. My wife, from Baltimore, has a PhD. She has it in pharmacology.
AAY: In what?
AJ: Pharmacology.
AAY: Well, tell me about it.
AJ: Well, pharmacology, you know, pharmacy is very similar but it studies how to produce and make medicines.
AAY: Oh, that's the thing I have so much trouble with. Cause I'm on medication for bad habits. Smoking, that's my bad habit.
AJ: Are you on the patch? You on the patch?
AAY: No.
AJ: Ok.
AAY: Are they good?
AJ: Well, they can help but with most kinds of things, it's the behavioral modification that's the key.
AAY: Yeah, that's what I got to do.
AJ: So you have to think, and you have to, first of all, think, why do I smoke? And you have to look at those times when you do smoke. You have to really study yourself. Some people smoke when they first get up in the morning, some people smoke just after they eat, some people smoke because they're nervious. There's a reason why people smoke. And there's certain things you're getting from the smoke. It's the nicotine, and it's the certain level in the blood stream that you're seeking and once that falls below that level, people get...
AAY: Yeah, get jittery like.
AJ: Exactly. So what people have to do is figure out how to get beyond that. So basically what the patch system does, it gives you nicotine. But it gives you decreasing dosages of nicotine over a certain period of time. And, you know, we have certain patch system where you would start out, say at 22 millligrams of nicotine, you wear that patch for say, one, two, three weeks, and then after that you wear 11 milligram nicotine patch, and you wear that for a period of time. Then after that, you wear the seven, and you wear that for a certain period of time. And then after that you should be gradually weaned, because what is that [unclear] a lot of people is that cold turkey, is that shock. Now, if you went cold turkey, you would go through some problems, but if you could get beyond that first week of it, then you could do it. But what happens is then it becomes a behavior associated with the ritual of smoking. There's a certain ritual to it, you know? Of the way you feel, or what you do, what kinds of thought processes it creates when you do it.
AAY: Well, when I lay off the cigarette and then I get one, then I feel my shoulders, I'm just relaxed when I get that cigarette, you know?
AJ: Exactly.
AAY: But my brother went cold turkey, say he, just, he woke up one night and he was wheezing like, and he knew he didn't want to [unclear], he knew he didn't want to do that. And but he has the will power I guess, and he made up his mind, he wasn't going to smoke. But he say he had fits the first one or two days, but he kept him some old cigarette butts, and when he got that urge that he couldn't go without a cigarette, he just went and smelled on that cigarette, and say that was the worst smell that you could ever smell. And he's been off them, this is his fourth year being off it. I tried that.

AJ: Oh how wonderful. How wonderful.
AAY: And I cut down real good, and I was doing so good. So good. And then it gradually went back up. Now I don't call, consider myself a chain smoker. A pack will last me over 24 hours, you know, if I open one today, it'll be, I believe, tomorrow night, or you know, later.
AJ: So you're about a pack a day person.
AAY: That's a pack, don't tell me its a pack a day. [laughter] Well, that's 24 hours.
AJ: That's about a pack a day.
AAY: That's a pack a day? I think it lasts a little bit longer than that I think.
AJ: But as an average, probably if you thought about, it would probably be more like a pack a day. And so you can, I've seen people, you know, I've kept a lot of patients. That's one of the things that I do. I try to do a lot of preventative medicine.
AAY: Yeah, I like the president's program of preventative, like you know.
AJ: And so, smoking is one of the kinds of things I talk about.
AAY: I know it's bad.
AJ: Now, if you stop smoking, you would really have to have a substitute in your life for a while or something. You would have to get into some type of exercise program because when most people stop, they're going to gain weight. You know, and so you...
AAY: I walk every morning, you know, basically three times a week because Mondays and Fridays I don't walk. But I walk for about thirty minutes. They have a place out at the mall to go walk every morning and that has been good to help me keep my weight down, cause I have high blood pressure and cholesterol. And I was just put on Zocar?
AJ: Uh huh, Zocar.
AAY: Yeah, I couldn't take it. I'm allergic to it for some reason. I would wake up and [unclear]. I thought, well am I coming down with some kind of illness? And I thought insects were biting me. But I found out. And then I had the swelling in the lips, so I called my doctor and he told me [unclear] and I came off it.
AJ: How high is your cholesterol?
AAY: My cholesterol? Now I haven't had it checked since back in, it must have been in March. But he told me it was like two hundred and something, and it was my cholesterol. No, three hundred and something. It was like still going up, like. But I'm on high blood pressure medicine, and I'm taking Maxide, and I take half a Maxide. And I'm taking [unclear], one a day. And I'm not sure, I believe one of those pills is sending my cholesterol up.
AJ: Maxide will send your cholesterol up.
AAY: Maxide?
AJ: That is correct, because the Thiacide diuretics, diuretics will increase cholesterol.
AAY: I knew it was something or other cause I don't eat that many fats, I don't go crazy and fry.
AJ: Ok, so, I would, what you got to be very careful about, got to be very careful about giving diuretics because that, diuretics work very good in blacks. That's what Maxide is. It's a diuretic, where it can cause you to urinate a lot. It works very good, but it also will elevate your cholestorol a little bit.
AAY: Well, that's what he keeps telling me, my cholestorol is keeps punching up like, you know?
AJ: But now he's got two, he's using, the other thing is cigarette smoke will elevate blood pressure so it's just like you're taking the medicine to bring it down.
AAY: [unclear]

AJ: No, that's ok. Don't worry about it. You're taking the one thing to bring it down, on the other hand your behaviors are helping to keep it elevated. Now, exercise is good because exercise will help to bring it down.
AAY: [unclear] Can't help me cause I don't, you know, change my behavior, you know. I could do everything, I can [unclear], I can change my eating habits, cause I run wild with them every now and then. But if I could get off those cigarettes, it would be the [unclear] thing ever. Cause when I cut down, about two months ago, I cut down, and I think a pack would last me about four days and I felt good. And I was so proud of myself. And somehow or another, I don't know why, but I got back on that. But I got to do it myself.
AJ: Well, what you got to do is, some things that help some people are support groups. And they do have support groups so that when you want to do something, you call in and you talk to somebody. Because the idea sometimes of just being by yourself forces you to smoke a lot or do something you derive from it, so. I would say try to find support groups, more exercise, and make up your mind, ok on such and such a date, this is what I want to do.
AAY: I want to be through with it. And I know I just don't have that will power to do it. Because I did cut back, and I felt great, I was telling everybody, I do not smoke. Don't you smoke in my house. [laughter] But I was stealing one every now and then, and I don't know how I got back on it. Now I'll do sugar that same way too. I'll get off that sugar and before I know it, I put just a bit of sugar in my coffee. And why I did do things like that, I don't know. But I want to live a long time. But yeah, I like that preventive medicine idea. I think I would have had good teeth, a good sound body and mind and everything had I known this. And then I don't know, some people you can't tell but you got to show me. And I must be that one that you have to show me.
AJ: Now, you have two other brothers, right?
AAY: Three.
AJ: You have three other brothers? You were the only girl?
AAY: Uh huh.
AJ: Ok. And, you have two brothers here in Statesboro?
AAY: No, I have one brother that lives in Statesboro, and I have one that's in Virginia, Arlington, Virginia, and then I have one in Savannah.
AJ: Ok now, you and the one here are the only two teachers?
AAY: Uh huh. That's right.
AJ: Ok, ok. Now, where did he go to school?
AAY: He went to Fort Valley also.
AJ: Oh, both of y'all went to Fort Valley.
AAY: Uh huh.
AJ: Now how is it y'all went to Fort Valley? What made you want to go to Fort Valley?
AAY: Well, my mother, cause my mother and daddy separated my first year in college. When I came home, they was separated. Which was a shock to me. And so my mother had, was the sole supporter, we didn't have any kind of scholarships or anything. And I was the first one to go to college, so, she had to do it herself. So, a state school was the best thing for me. We couldn't go at Georgia Southern, you know, cause I probably would have gone to Georgia Southern. So, she went to Fort Valley also.
AJ: Your mother had gone to Fort Valley?
AAY: Yeah, she went to Fort Valley. She finished there. So, I think that was the big determining

factor that made me go to Fort Valley.
AJ: What year did your mother finish at Fort Valley, do you know?
AAY: She must have finished, cause she taught after she got out of high school and they went in the summer and on Saturdays to finish up. So, she must have finished in '40, '48. It was before I finished high school, but it was late in her teaching when she finished, you know, all of her courses. Back in that time they let you start, you know, when you drop out of high school, and then you could go back and take the corresponding courses, go on Saturday and go in the summers.
AJ: Where did she finish high school?
AAY: She finished high school from Calla in Savannah.
AJ: Calla?
AAY: Uh huh.
AJ: Ok. And do you know what year she finished high school? Was that an academy?
AAY: Yeah, it was sort of like an academy.
AJ: So she had to be sent from Bulloch County to there, and she went to like a boarding school.
AAY: They didn't have any high schools. Yeah, like a boarding school. They didn't have any high schools here for them to finish, you know.
AJ: Uh huh. Now, some of the people used to go to Guyton to school.
AAY: Yeah, there was some people over there. Uh huh.
AJ: I've heard that name. Do you know anything about that school?
AAY: I don't know anything about that school, but I've heard from people, there was a high school over there. Like a private school or something. Uh huh.
AJ: Exactly. Now, this Calla was a private school?
AAY: Yeah, it was like a private school, too. I don't think it was public like. But there were some public schools in Savannah. I think Calla was more or less like a private school. Cause I know my aunt went there too. But my aunt finally finished her high school at Morris Brown.
AJ: That's right. Well, let me see, is there anything else you can think about?
AAY: I know I haven't helped a whole lot [unclear].
AJ: No, actually you have, you have. You have helped quite a bit actually. Did you ever hear anything about the KKK when you were growing up?
AAY: Yeah. They weren't very visible to me, and I guess it was because I didn't really look for it, you know, thinking they was such a bad thing. But I heard a lot of things they did in the county, you know. And a lot of threats that were made on people, you know, even after I was in high school and in college, you know. And even during the time, well I don't know whether they were, they didn't admit they were KKK's but it was the other race that made the little threat, cause some fella out at Georgia Southern was trying to show how the integrating of school was a forced thing and people do not respond very positively under forced law. And I don't know what his book was all about but it was a professor out there and he called me sometimes back in November, I believe, he was writing a book too, and he wanted to know how did the people in the Willow Hill area behave when they were forced to close the school and how that, you know, how did the people act, and how did teachers react to being forced to, to go into white schools. And I basically told him the same thing, that that community was a very proud community, you know, and they were very receptive to school interacting within the community and doing what was best for their community. And he, he was writing an article, I said a book, but not a book, an

article for some professional magazine, and he said when his article came out he was going to let me see it and he hasn't called back, so I don't know he got it.
AJ: How long ago was that?
AAY: This was back in November.
AJ: Uh huh. What was the name of the person?
AAY: I don't recall the man's name.
AJ: But he was from Georgia Southern, you said?
AAY: Georgia Southern professor.
AJ: He teaches out there?
AAY: Yeah. And he was trying to show how some of the federal laws, that forced people to do things, is not good. When you force people, but when they do it on their own. So I thought his paper might have had a negative kind of reaction to forcing people to do right. Because they weren't forcing people to do things, they were just enforcing equal opportunities for everybody but they take it the wrong way, you know? So, I want to, I really want to see his article and I had his name down, and I never put it in an important place and I don't know, I think discarded, I mean I put it away somewhere or another. But I really should [unclear] cause I really want to see the article. And I can't remember what the man's name was. But I mean, I have given him some information, I want to see what he put in there, what I say, you know. And that was [unclear] on my part.
AJ: Exactly, what he said. Do you remember that '62 brown Bonneville Pontiac you used to have?
AAY: Yeah. [laughter] Yeah, that was, cause I said earlier that I had a car, but that was first car that I had got. A big mistake. So glad to get my car, and that old thing was no good, cause it, when it was not running it would lower itself, and then when you cranked it up, it would rise up, you know? That was a mistake to buy that thing.
AJ: Yeah, I remember you used to come up there in that car. I remember that car. [unclear] [laughter]
AAY: Yeah, and my first check, my first check was like, it was a hundred and something dollars, I felt that [unclear] for a while. I think it was two hundred and something dollars for gross pay. But when I got it, it was like a hundred something dollars, and I thought I had some money in my pocket. I thought I had some money in my pocket. I wanted to go shop, the whole city over.
AJ: That was quite a bit of money back then, with what most people were making.
AAY: Yeah, that was a lot of money, I'm telling you.
AJ: I tell you, things have changed.
AAY: But those were my best years of teaching up there. John Lawton, and you know, all of them. Now we, we were, I picked up some good habits and I picked up some bad habits because back in those days [unclear] and say, yeah Mrs. Shirley, you pulled my ear. You know, but I say, but you mean something. And I would tell them, I say, you remember Mrs. Pearl, they didn't know her, she taught me in high school over there at William James, and I took music under Mrs. Pearl. Mama wanted me to play music. And I wasn't interested in music, cause my rhythm and my fingers and my brains didn't work together. My timing was off. And this was the hand that Mrs. Pearl always hit me on, so must have sat on that side of me. And she had one of those pencils that you get at the, at the, I don't see them now, but they had the big erasers on them, at amusement parks like, you know? And I would make a mistake in playing that, and

Mrs. Pearl would crack, she knew and I had not, I had not practiced my music, and she would come down and look like the only thing that hit my knuckles was that rubber, and ooh, I was so mad with her, and my little tears would come out my eyes, well not my little tears [unclear]. My little tears would come out my eyes, I'd take my fingers and rub my eyes and [unclear] and I'd make another mistake, and she'd come again, you know? But that still didn't get me to learn music. [unclear] That's how I picked up that habit of smoking, cause at that time too, they were going through, they were advertising tobaccos, you know, and they were giving out these little packs of four cigarettes in each. And girls, we'd go out, go out there and get a handful, they wouldn't give you but so many at a time. Go out there and get a handful of cigarettes, and the guy knew we were coming back for more cigarettes, go back and get another, and look in our room, you couldn't see the ceiling for the smoke. And that's how I learned how to smoke. And I just, I hate myself for doing that now, I just, I just didn't know, you know?
AJ: So, you started this in college?
AAY: I started it in college.
AJ: And that's because they was handing out free samples?
AAY: Just because they was there handing out free samples. That's where I learned it. Cause mama didn't allow smoking, you know, and I'm glad she didn't. She'd bust until she passed, don't smoke them cigarettes in here, cause we'd go back in the room and smoke, or outside and smoke or find someplace to go and smoke. But I was glad she, cause I probably would have been a chain smoker, sure enough. But I don't do any other things. I never tested any drug, I have drank the alcohol and the beer, and I don't like either one of them, alcohol can stay around me forever. But smoking is the only bad habit that I don't want to, just have not controlled yet. I don't have any other bad habits.
AJ: Well, you'll get the victory on that, it's just the time factor.
AAY: I know I need to. I know it's my age and it's my life now that I need to protect. Yes, sir. But this is a nice family. And you say your daughter is a?
AJ: She's a second year.
AAY: Second year?
AJ: Yeah, she's in her second year now. Majoring in biochemistry.
AAY: That's like, what will she do?
AJ: She's going into medicine.
AAY: Medicine? Oh, the whole family. Now, I'm telling you, you got to be smart to go into that medicine area.
AJ: Well, I don't know if it's smart so much as you just got to stick with it. It's hard though, it's a lot of work.
AAY: And I mean it's not, it's so many years of hard work like, you know. So many years of hard work.
AJ: You got that right, it's just years and years and years. So you got to have the discipline to stick with it.
AAY: Now, your two sons. What are, they are still in high school?
AJ: The oldest one is fifteen. He's, they're all tall.
AAY: Uh huh. Nice looking too.
AJ: Fifteen and then my youngest son is eleven. And then my little girl just had a birthday, she's nine. And that other one, eleven will be twelve [unclear].

AAY: Uh huh. Oh yeah, the little girl here is your. You have four kids.
AJ: Four kids, two boys and two girls.
AAY: That's a nice family. And Theresa only has one?
AJ: Just the one.
AAY: One. Uh huh. Yeah, you know, I don't know why, cause I remember there were two of you. And I don't know why I had forgotten Theresa. And she's coming back to me now. Was she here when [unclear]?
AJ: Yeah, she was here when we had the wedding anniversary.
AAY: She was?
AJ: She was there. And, let me see now, Theresa and Francis were friends, Francis Parker. And Em and Bett, who were the twins, they all used to hang together. Made Jessie Jones. And I think all of them were in your class. They were in your class.
AAY: Uh huh. No, I don't so, now Emma and Bett?
AJ: They weren't in your class?
AAY: I don't think so, cause I don't remember Theresa.
AJ: She was in your class.
AAY: She was?
AJ: Uh huh, she was in your class.
AAY: You ask her now.
AJ: I know she was in your class because she was in your class in 1956, '57.
AAY: Oh, that was that first year there.
AJ: '56, '57. That might have been your second year.
AAY: No, that would have been the second year.
AJ: She was in your class then. And that was the only time she would have been in your class, because I was in Mrs. Lawton's class and she was in your class, I believe. And then I think the next year you had William James Cooper, Betty Brown, that group in your class? You remember William Cooper?
AAY: Yeah.
AJ: And Betty Brown. You had that group. And Betty Brown works at the hospital now, she used to be married to Carl Gibbons. Had a brother named Willie Brown. Now Willie might have been in my class, but I think Betty was in your class. Cause they got skipped in school, Betty got skipped.
AAY: Now, were they, was that a big family?
AJ: I don't remember how much was in there, but I know Willie was a big old guy [unclear] and Betty was in your class. Of course, there was a group of kids they skipped out there. But that was a long time ago. Cause I know when I came first, second, and third grade, I was in Mrs. Lawton's class. Incidentally, I saw Mr. and Mrs. Lawton in Atlanta about three days ago. And they told me to tell all the Statesboro people hello.
AAY: The last time Mr. Lawton was here, one of the churches honored the retired teachers about two years ago, he came down to speak, but she didn't come with him. And, oh I'll tell you another teacher that taught out at Willow Hill for a while. But that was in the later years, after Mr. Wilson was principal, was Ruth Pearl Akins.
AJ: I don't know her.
AAY: No, you probably, you don't know her. Cause she was a Kirkland. And she's just around

here, the Statesboro area, and the other schools. But she came there, I thought Mr. Wilson was there.
AJ: Now, you was under Mr. Wilson?
AAY: [unclear] was out of the county teaching. And she came back to county and came to Willow Hill.
AJ: Ok. Now were you there under Mr. Wilson too?
AAY: Yeah.
AJ: Ok, now, what kind of principal was he?
AAY: He was nice. Very easy going, you know, whatever you did, it was alright with him, you know. He didn't want to hurt anybody's feelings. But he made sure that we did what we were supposed to do as teachers, you know.
AJ: Was Mr. Abraham there when you were there?
AAY: Yeah, [unclear].
AJ: What kind was he?
AAY: He was the kind that would, he was nice, but he was more or less critical like, you know. You could never do enough for him, to satisfy him. Mr. Wilson was the easiest. Mr. Lawton was not very critical but he made sure you got your work done. And Abraham was probably the most critical, to me now. You didn't please him, not very easily.
AJ: Now, was he the principal out there when Willow Hill closed for a couple years?
AAY: No, Mr. Wilson.
AJ: Mr. Wilson was. Now, who came first? Mr. Lawton, then Mr. Abraham, then Mr. Wilson?
AAY: Uh huh.
AJ: Ok. And then after that Jerry Brown came back, it's a white man. And now what I understand, Jerry Brown retired two years ago and they just had another person up at Willow Hill, and they told me at the Board of Education that he'd been arrested.
AAY: Yeah, that was really a shocking thing too.
AJ: I don't know what. Was he a white man?
AAY: Yeah, white.
AJ: Was he a young fella?
AAY: Very, like he might have been like in his forties, could have been like middle forties.
AJ: What happened to him?
AAY: Newspaper accounts, cause I had heard nothing of him before they arrested him that night. But it seems the county had been like, I mean the law enforcement had been on his trail.
AJ: Surveillancing him?
AAY: Yeah. And he was not really molesting children but was pornography, no, pornographic kind of things, you know, like into that. And [unclear] the children, and they really got him because he sent a letter to a child as if some girl had written the letter, and asked the child to agree to take a picture, no to have himself on videotape with him whipping the child, and that was just strange to me.
AJ: He did what?
AAY: Yeah. Something like he wanted to be whipping the child and I'm not sure he had videotape but his intention was to videotape.
AJ: And he sent a letter?
AAY: Yeah, sent a letter as if somebody else had written, some girl had written the letter. But

the child was supposed to respond to him, and he would give that letter over to the girl. But the girl was supposed to be asking him to let the principal whip him and be videotaped or something like that. But that's how the letter got to the child's mother. She turned it over to authority and that's how when the boy went out there that night, to be whipped, videotaped, whatever, that's when they, you know, came in. They didn't catch him in the act of doing anything but they did catch, find some pictures and things.
AJ: Where was this all supposed to be happening at?
AAY: It happened at the school.
AJ: It was at Willow Hill School?
AAY: That's where they arrested him, and found all his equipment. And the pictures.
AJ: They arrested him at the school?
AAY: They arrested him at the school. Non-school hours, in the afternoon. So it must have been, I took for granted, it must have been near dusk or night or something.
AJ: How long ago was that in the paper?
AAY: It must have been in the paper, it must have been [unclear]. It hasn't been that long ago.
AJ: Where is he now?
AAY: I don't know. Something about, in the paper, one paper said he is in North Carolina now. He's not allowed back, he's got to come back one time for the Grand Jury. But they let the man out, and I was shocked at that.
AJ: They let him out?
AAY: Yeah, they didn't hold him on bond, you know, in jail. They held him for a while. And then they let him out on bond, and I thought you were supposed to, if somebody...
AJ: And then he ran?
AAY: No, he didn't run. They made him leave the county, and he could not go to Glendale, back in that, so he's living with relatives, one paper said, he's living with relatives in North Carolina. But he did come back for his Grand Jury hearing. And the guy had been teaching over at Statesboro High as an assistant principal.
AJ: Do you know what his name was?
AAY: But they didn't find any connection over at Statesboro High. They found at Willow Hill, and at Glendale. Cause I think he had, no, cause Glendale was with a church. Cause he was minister too. With a doctorate degree.
AJ: You know what his name was?
AAY: Mizell, was it Tim Mizell? But I had never heard of him until he went to, I think this was his second year at Willow Hill, his second year. And his wife, and show you what they will do. And I know you shouldn't hold the wife responsible. I don't see how something like that could have been going on and she didn't know, but they did say they found all the pictures, and I'm sure they searched his house. But they didn't find. Now, the paper didn't say this, it only said they found the materials at school.
AJ: Oh, he had it in the school house?
AAY: He had stuff there, the cameras, the pictures that he had taken, you know, of children. And his wife had been very active at Willow Hill, working with, you know, teachers doing volunteer work, and they gave her a job, as an aid, you know, a paraprofessional. And they [unclear] you know, even considered her, you know, being that close to something like that.
AJ: Under the jail house. And the person would have never gotten out of jail.

AAY: Right, right. But it shows you how they still got us under slavery, but it's a different form of it, you know. Different forms. It's sad.
AJ: Oh my goodness, I cannot believe it. That is sad. Cause they put the taint on the school.
AAY: Uh huh. You want me to get you, I have a [unclear].
AJ: Something to put that in. And could I use the bathroom for a second? Alrighty.
[tape cuts out]
AAY: Didn't look so bungle-y, but it'll cover everything.
AJ: I really appreciate that. That's awful nice of you. And how long have you been living here? I didn't realize you were here, I thought you still lived over there, over where your mom and them was living. I didn't realize you were here.
AAY: I've been here since '78.
AJ: Oh, and I didn't realize you had built a home. It's a nice home too.
AAY: Well, it'll do. I wish I had done a whole lot of things differently though.
AJ: You mean with the house?
AAY: Yeah, I would like, I like living in, I feel secure in a bedroom, you know? I like my little corner in my bedroom. A den is fine. But I sit there, like on Sundays, I make that special. But I have a chair in my bedroom, I just love it. I feel so comfortable in it. So I wish I had made my bedroom larger.
AJ: Larger?
AAY: It's not a large bedroom. And I always did like my bedroom, you know, for looking at tv and reading and that kind of thing. [unclear] bed right quick, cause I'm jumping on the bed. I just washed the bedspread today. And it's one of those old big things. I don't know why I bought that big old, thick thing. And I don't want to, well I did have it cleaned once or twice, and it came back looking about as dirty as it did when I sent it. And I washed it once, in the washing machine, I don't have, say, an extra big washing machine, and it came out dirty like, and I washed it again today and I see all the dirt rings. I say, well now, it didn't come out clean, I'm fixing to pack that rascal up and it can go somewhere, I don't know where. Cause I'm not going to send it to the cleaners to have it cleaned. And I tried washing it on my hands one time, but its too thick to even wring out, you know. It was was just the wrong thing to buy. But I wish I had made my bedroom a little bit longer so I had me a nice chair in there, cause I like to lounge around sometimes when I'm reading, you know.
AJ: Well, you have a nice place. A lot, the yard is well kept, and the azaleas are very beautiful.
AAY: Yeah, I can make the most mistakes in doing things and planning things. I didn't get them all the same color. So they come out at different times. A little bit now, and a little bit then. And I'll get out there, I do most, I do get my, my brother cuts my lawn, so. But, the little trimming and so forth, I get out there, that keeps me a going, exercising, you know. And he also plants the garden, so I get out and dig in the garden sometimes. Until the weeds stop growing real fast and then I'm reading to put it down and [unclear].
AJ: Well, I've certainly enjoyed, you know.
AAY: Yeah. I'm sorry I wasn't cooking dinner, I usually do.
AJ: No, don't worry about that. No, no, don't worry about that.
AAY: I usually do, every other day, and I keep telling people, you know, one of these days, I'm going to go walking out of here, cause I eat around there. And I always the food around here, but I cook here, sometimes I'll cook around there. But if I cook here, I can probably put my food

in the over or whatever and do my little ironing, or washing or something, and get some of my little chores done. So, I usually cook and I pack it up in a box and I carry it around, and I said, now one of these days I'm going to walk out of here with a box. I have a big, you know those old big paper boxes that the memograph paper will come in? Leo will bring me the tops from over there, so I'll just stuff two or three of them together and put my hot dishes in there. And I'm going to walk out of here with a pack of hot food and it's going to sliding all down my side and I'm going to get burned. But I've been lucky so far. I haven't burned myself.
AJ: Don't do that.
AAY: But I really have enjoyed talking to you. Where is you are living, with Hazel or you came over from?
AJ: Well, I have enjoyed that. I'm staying up there with her right now. My wife is over, like I said, in South Carolina, with her people.
AAY: In South Carolina, uh huh.
AJ: And then she, she knows I like to go around and do this, and I don't want to keep [unclear].
AAY: Yeah, come on and lets go. So she's probably doing the same thing when she's over there.
AJ: Well, she is going to see a lot of her people, that is true. Well, I, this has been fun. It certainly has been fun.
AAY: Well, I've really enjoyed this. This has been nice.
AJ: Listen. Do you know where Solomon Circle is?
AAY: Yeah.
AJ: It shouldn't be too far from here is it?
AAY: Solomon Circle. It's bad you don't even know your streets. If somebody, if I had gotten a map, a city map, and I said [unclear] I'm so embarrased cause somebody ask, Where is Zetterower Street, I don't know that street, where is it? And then I have to do all this turn this way and turn this way to give the directions. But I, I'm going to study. My [unclear] project this summer, ok Solomon Circle, yeah that's Solomon Circle right over there.
AJ: Ok, but we're in the neighborhood though right?
AAY: Yeah.
AJ: Ok, I can find it. Cause I'm looking for Mrs. Hettie Wallace, I know. You might not, she's related on my grandfather's side. She's related to the Reeves. And I wanted to, she has some old photographs I'm going to get a copy of and give the pictures back.
AAY: Now, I think this is Solomon Circle, if you go back down here and turn on [unclear]. That first street down there, after you pass the gym.
AJ: Now, right after this light here, I'm going to have the stop sign, I make a left there?
AAY: Yeah, you make a left there.
AJ: And then go down and make a right?
AAY: Make a right. And then you keep right on [unclear]. And then you keep right on across to the next street and you make a right there. And then you'll see the little subdivision. I think that's Solomon Circle.
AJ: Alright. Thank you so much, this has been fun.
AAY: Yeah, it certainly has been. Nice guy, nice guy.
AJ: Alrighty. Well you know, I haven't got it organized fine with the kids and all and I said, hey we got to go, we need you to clean up. But, I...

[tape ends.]