

FEJ: Well, let's just start off then, with...we'll start off when I was a little boy, and I guess I was probably about 8 or 10 years old. Grandmother Laura passed away and we moved from the log house that Papa Olin and Mother Linda built with their own hands for \$212 dollars around to the big house that Zeb and Laura had built, probably about '36 or '37.



(Image: "The big house," photo courtesy of Timothy O. Jarrett, 2007)



(Image: Jarrett family. Zeb and Laura Jarrett, back row, far left. Photo courtesy of Forrest E. Jarrett)

I remember Grandpa Jarrett would sit by the fireplace and tell me about when he was growing up and the Buncombe Turnpike...he didn't say Buncombe Turnpike but that's what it was. And they drove the cattle – horses and hogs, and turkeys, mules – from Tennessee and Kentucky up the Buncombe Turnpike up the French Broad into Asheville and then on down into Saluda. From there to Charleston.

Local people, they would dig pits along the major part of the trail. They would put river canes over the pits, and a little light sprinkling of dirt.

EMJ: What are river canes?

FEJ: Bull rushes, a type of plant that grew along the river. And then the main herd, or drove, or flock, or whatever, would come along and they'd wander...some of them would wander off and they'd fall down in the pits. The herd would go on, and then the local people would come get them a hog, or a sheep, or a steer, or whatever they were driving.

Then they had drovers' houses. They had 'bout every ten miles because they...say, a herd of hogs, about ten miles was as far as they could go. And even they had flocks...they drove flocks of turkeys. So you had a drover's house that had big pens, put the livestock in. And some of them had ladies of the night, and some of them had fine brandy. And the drovers, they would...they tried to get to the good houses where they had good food and good brandy and all that.

But there was a place at Redmond, North Carolina, on the Buncombe Turnpike, owned by the Chunnns. The Chunn House. It still stands; Alene and I went down there. The chimney still stands. When we retired we went down there and I thought about getting some rock in the chimney and putting it in the old log house, the guest house. But we decided to just go around and get rock from where all the relatives' log cabins had been.

But the story was that the drovers, it was at night, they had good food and plenty of brandy and female entertainment and they'd go to Charleston and sell their herds and horses and mules and whatever and then try to make it all the way back to the Chunn House to stay overnight. But then a lot of times, there would be a black man that would hold them up and rob them, the next morning after they'd spent the night they'd go on to Tennessee and Kentucky.

So the word got out, and this one drover, he thought he was ready. He said he'd loaded his pistol and had a fast horse, and he wasn't going to get his money. And one of the guys who worked there, he had – I think they'd cut his pay or something.

And he said, "You just *think* you're ready," he said. "You better look at your pistol when you leave here in the morning. 'cause there won't be any bullets in it." And he said, "You'd better look at your horse's hocks, because they'll have silk thread tied around them, and your horse can't run."

And sure enough, that's exactly what happened. So he reloaded his pistol, and he cut the silks, silk thread, from the hocks of the horse, his horse, and left.

And in just a little while, the Chunn children came back. "Oooooohh, ooooohh, they've killed Daddy, they've shot Daddy."

"Oh, no, they didn't know it was your Daddy, it was a *black* man."

And Mr. Chunn had blackened his face and dressed up like a black man and done the robberies, and the man had killed him. So that is the story of the Chunn House.

And then there was Obadiah, the great-grandfather. He lived over on the Blowhole Road and the Civil War had come along and he had already married Polly O'Dell and they didn't have any slaves. Their hearts were not in the War. And the Confederates had already come along and took all their stock – left 'em one old mare that didn't have any teeth. And they had to grind the

corn to make a crop with. He had a big family of children. Obadiah would desert in the spring of every year and come home to put in a crop.

EMJ: Obadiah and Polly already had a lot of kids?

FEJ: Yeah, they'd already...and the Confederates had already come through and confiscated...and took part of the crops and the livestock...they had one ol' mare with no teeth. That's all they had left.

And Polly would set at the end of the field and act like she was knitting or crocheting, and she would watch while Obadiah plowed the corn and cut the wheat and all. She would wave whatever she was crocheting or sewing on if she saw the Confederates coming to capture him. He'd run for the brush. There was caves in the brush, one big cave still...the reason the road was named Blowhole Road, they called it the Blowhole Cave. I've been there many a time. Put milk in it in the summertime, the cool air comes out and we'd be down there fishing.



(Image: Sign for Blowhole Road. Photo courtesy of Timothy Jarrett, 2007.)

But anyway, he would run for the caves, and get away! But the third time, they knew his tricks, and so they surrounded the field. He took off for the bluff, and there was a Confederate soldier, he had his rifle laying up on the rail fence. He spotted him along and were fixing to kill him. So Obadiah, great-grandpa Obadiah, he threw up his hands and surrendered. They was a whole bunch of western North Carolina boys...the Redmons, and the Paynes, and the Jarretts,

and whoever else...the Buckners...and they had all deserted and they had all been captured and they were all in the penitentiary waiting to be shot off their caskets in Raleigh.

And Gov. Zebulon B. Vance was the Governor of North Carolina at that time. He was from Western NC.



(Image: Gov. Zebulon Baird Vance circa 1867. ncmuseumofhistory.org.)

He went down to see the Western NC boys who were in the penitentiary for desertion.

And he said, "What can I do for you boys?"

And they said, "Give us a 90-day stay, and let us live for 90 more days."

And the Redmon boys, and maybe some more of them, said, "Aahhh, they're gonna kill us anyway, just go ahead and shoot us."

And they set the Redmon boys up on their caskets and shot 'em off their caskets for desertion.

Well, before the 90 days was up, the Civil War looks as it's going...drawing to a close in the south, and the Confederacy, they see that they are defeated. They put out instructions not to kill anybody else. So, lo and behold, Obadiah is released some little time after that, and in about 12, 13 months, Zebulon B. Vance Jarrett is born. Our grandfather.



(Image: Zebulon B. Vance Jarrett, photo courtesy of Forrest E. Jarrett.)

If it hadn't been for Zebulon B. Vance, Zeb Jarrett would not have been born, and if he hadn't a-been born, Papa Olin would not a-been born, and if Papa Olin hadn't been born, Forrest E. DeLeon, and Gus T. Blonde and Jewelly Jane would not have been born.

EMJ: What does the phrase mean, "To shoot them off their caskets"? How did they do that?

FEJ: Set them up on (coughs)...tied their hands behind their backs and blindfolded them, and actually set them up on the coffin that they was going to bury them in. Sure, and shoot them off.

EMJ: And then they would just fall back into the coffin...?

FEJ: Yeah! Fall back into their caskets.

EMJ: Oh! My goodness.

FEJ: Yeah, yeah, they had a deterrent. They didn't want to desert too much after that.

EMJ: Um, can I go back to the first story you were talking about...the Chunn...is that right?

FEJ: Chunn House.

EMJ: The Chunn House?

FEJ: Down below Redmon down where Bear Creek...where Bear Creek runs into the little Pine Creek Road at Redmon, it's down the railroad, just below, it's about a mile, mile and half below the Redmon dam. And you'd walk...the only way you can get down there is to walk down the Norfolk Southern railroad track. And there's two big chimneys...the kitchen chimney is still standing, and the great room chimney is still standing, and it's had a fireplace on either side. So it must have been in the center. And they're still there.

EMJ: And that's the story that Grandpa Zeb used to tell you?

FEJ: Yeah, Grandpa Zeb told that story. And it has been in various papers since then. About four or five years ago it was in the "Asheville Citizen."

EMJ: OK. Alright.

FEJ: And then there was, uh, right on up from Chunn House, on Bear Creek, Betty Cove, that's where Mother Linda was born, and Dave and Sally lived there.



(Image: The home in Betty Cove. Photo by Esta Jarrett, 2003)

Long about the same time as Civil War times, Uncle Rob Freeman, who was Grandpa Dave's brother, he did not want to fight. And Uncle Rob went to the caves on Little Pine...between Little Pine and Bear Creek and stayed in the caves, and they had a big oxen, and they would ride the big oxen to the cave, and take him something to eat.

EMJ: I heard that story before, yeah.

FEJ: And Mama Linda said that he stayed in the caves so long that it destroyed Uncle Rob's mind. And we do have a picture of him somewhere. After the war was over, he come up in Betty Cove where Grandpa Dave lived and he said that about all of that whole valley there had been lost from his knowledge. And one of the old family by-words, "Lost from my knowledge," and that comes from Uncle Rob.

EMJ: I never knew that.

FEJ: Yes. And there's a big rock...there's a big rock right below Grandpa Dave's and Sally's house, still there,

EMJ: I know that rock!

FEJ: And that's where Rob come to and said, and all looked around and said, "All this is lost from my knowledge."

And then Dave's...Dave and Sally...Dave, Grandpa Dave...

EMJ: He didn't fight in the Civil War, did he?



(Image: Dave Freeman, photo courtesy of Forrest E. Jarrett.)

FEJ: No, he was too young. But Grandpa Dave went caddin' around a little bit. And he had a little black mule, and he had gone over to see Aunt Lottie. I'm not sure where she lived, but he was coming home from one of his little visits, and he come by the Dry Pond graveyard. And Jimmy, Uncle Jimmy had been died and buried there a day or so before. And Grandpa Dave, he wasn't too brave anyhow. And something...they always thought it was a panther probably. There was a fence around the graveyard there in the road there at Dry Pond Road and the panther got up on top of the fence as Grandpa Dave rode his little mule by on the way back home to Betty Cove.

And it sounded like the panther said, "Ohhhhhh, Jimmy! Is that you? Ohhhh, Jimmy!"

And that really scared Grandpa Dave. And he liked to run the little mule to death a-gettin' up to Betty Cove. And he run the mule up in the barn, and he jumped off and run in the house, and Sally had to go take the saddle off the little mule, and the bridle, 'cause Grandpa Dave, he wadn't...and he never did go caddin' around no more after that.

EMJ: Was Jimmy his brother?

FEJ: Jimmy...I'm not sure who Jimmy was. He was some relative.

EMJ: And you said...Aunt Lottie? Was she..?

FEJ: Aunt Lottie, yeah. She was some a-kin...she might have been married to George Roberts and they lived around there in the Rector Corner after that. But Aunt Lottie might have been separated from George at that time. I'm not sure exactly, but that's who Grandpa Dave went out to see.

And then, Great-Grandpa Seth Freeman lived up there at the Freeman Gap. And he was a little rooster. And he had a big legal corn-liquor still. And this was not long after the Civil War, 'cause he fought in the Civil War and nothing didn't happen to him.

EMJ: Did he fight for the South?

FEJ: Fought for the South. Seth did. And Mama Linda was one of his favorites. And he had a big long white beard, and Mama Linda would go set in his lap, and comb his beard. And sometimes, she'd braid it. He wanted her to braid it. And he had this big still over there, and he paid the tax on it, and he had plenty of money.

And he'd tell Mama Linda, said, "You comb my beard, and I'll buy you some material, some cloth, to make you a dress."

And he bought her some red velvet. And he would tell...the children, they loved Grandpa Seth. And they could just do anything but Grandpa Seth...and they got too wild, and rarin' up.

And Grandpa Seth would say, "You better behave, 'cause Dent, because Dent..." and that was, Cynthia was his wife's name, Great-Grandma Cynthia...said, "Dent will get hold of y'all."



(Image: Seth Freeman, photo courtesy of Forrest E. Jarrett.)

And Great-Grandpa Seth had several woods colts around, over the community. But Mama Linda, she wouldn't want to talk about it. She wouldn't talk about that. And Jewell would try to get her to talk and she'd change the subject.

And when Seth died, he had a little dog. They buried him there at the Freeman graveyard. And the little dog went and dug down about 3 feet in his grave.

EMJ: Oh, no!

FEJ: Yeah. And we've got a picture in the little log guest house of Grandpa Seth and the little dog.

EMJ: Oh, I never noticed the dog in the picture!

FEJ: Yes, it's on the door. It's over there on the door.

EMJ: I'll have to take a look at that.



(Image: Seth and Cynthia "Dent" Lunsford Freeman, and the dog. Photo courtesy of Forrest E. Jarrett.)

FEJ: Yeah. And when we moved that house, the O'Dells and the Jarretts come in from Jarrett cove, on Wall, to Rector Corner about the 1830's, best we can tell. And the O'Dells built that house on what's the north side of the old family farm. And that's where Polly was born. And

then along, I guess in the, well, Polly and Obadiah got married, they must have got married in the '50's, 1850's, because war come along in '61, and they already had considerable family. And so then Grandpa Jarrett, Zeb, he moved the log house from the north side of the farm to the south side. And it was still 2 stories, and he made a cow barn out of it.

And when I was growing up, when I was a youngun', milked 6 or 8 cows, and we sold grade-C milk to the Biltmore Dairy. And Papa Olin and Mama Linda and Jewell all got the mumps at the same time. And I had to do all the milking, and I put up with that for about a week, and then I started turning the calves in and letting them milk the cows. And then of course, there wasn't much milk went in the milk cans.

EMJ: How old were you?

FEJ: Uh...I was about...I was probably 13 or 14, somewhere along there. So when the milk check come, it come every two weeks, Mama Linda, she could not figure out how come those cows give such a little amount of milk. And the milk check was so low.



(Image: Linda Freeman Jarrett and Olin Jarrett, seated on the side porch of the big house, circa 1970. Family photo.)

EMJ: Did you ever tell her?

FEJ: (laughs) No. I never did tell her. And, let's see, uh...

EMJ: Did we ever figure out how many different children Seth had?

FEJ: No. I don't know. I have no idea. I know he had Jim Henry. I know Jim Henry, Jim Henry, he was kindly retarded. And I guess he had, well, Dave would have been his child, Dave Freeman.

And Chapel...let me tell you about Chapel. Chapel was Grandpa Dave's brother, and he lived on, down on Bear Creek. Could not read and write, but he was intelligent. He...I don't know how come he got the chemicals and what-have-you, but he could take a skin cancer...he could take a skin cancer off and he could do other doctoring. And people would come and get Dr. Freeman from as far down as Tennessee. He would go and stay. One of his patients was a female, and he burnt...she had skin cancer and he put the chemicals on her, and it burned her up so bad she had to go jump in the river, the French Broad River, down around Paint Rock somewhere.

But he was off down at the edge of Tennessee, and was just sitting out on the front porch, and looking at the paper, but he didn't know that he had it turned upside down.

And they said, "Dr. Freeman, you have the paper turned upside down."

He said, "Oh, of course." Said, "I know it." Said, "It just makes it more challenging to read."

EMJ: Was he the one that...he got Grandma to write down prescriptions for him sometimes?

FEJ: Sometimes, yeah.

EMJ: Weren't there stories about...on the other side of the family, Uncle Landon?

FEJ: Uncle Landon was brilliant, brilliant. And when he was about 12 years old, him and Robert, his brother, guess Landon was older than Robert. And they were playing in an apple tree

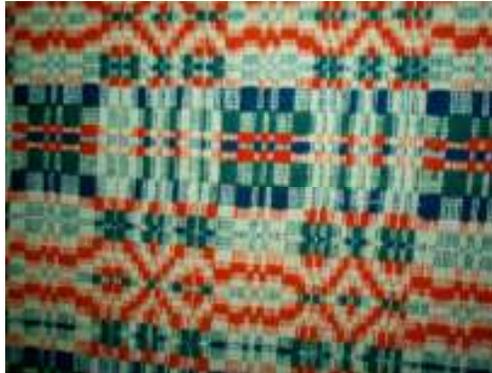
there below the house. And they had some kind of block, or rock, or something. A pretty good sized object. And they dropped it, and hit Uncle Landon in the head. And it didn't seem like it affected him any...it didn't seem like it affected him at that time. And I guess he must have been, I'm just guessing, I'd say, 10 or 12 years old. Maybe a little older.

But he was very brilliant and he had already developed a tube-like affair that was operated by air pressure. And you placed a shell or projectile inside the large air pressure tube and you could regulate the air and run objects through it. And the British government had already offered to buy the patent to set up a mail system in London, or I guess, maybe over the whole British Isles. And Uncle Landon said no, there was a few things that he needed to perfect. But he did get a patent on it, and I was in...I had physics class, and I took the patent to school, and Miss Jessie May Ramsey, our teacher, she looked at it and read it, and said...and I got an A. I got an A on my physics report card.

EMJ: Oh my goodness.

FEJ: And I think Jewell is still...I think that old patent was with the deeds and all, and I think Jewell probably still has it. She got some of the patterns that Grandmother Laura...she had a big loom, and in the summertime she would put it up on the front porch, and she's weave linsey blankets. And then she would put it in the wintertime in the front room, and she maybe would have 8 or 10 different bobbins with different colored thread. And then she would have a pattern that it just looked to me like a piece of a parchment paper with holes punched in it. But she could take that and weave some beautiful bedspreads. And they are still...I think Gus has got some, and Jewell has got some. I think Jewell cabbaged them, most of them. But I believe Alene and I, I believe we have 1 or 2. They are very, very valuable. And then we still have some of the

old linsey, linsey...back then, that was, that was what they wore. They wove their own. They wore the linsey, wove the linsey cloth.



(Image: Linsey cloth, woven by Laura Jarrett. Photo by Esta Jarrett.)

EMJ: Linsey...? Is that like a woolsey-linsey?

FEJ: It's wool, heavy...have you ever seen 'em linsey blankets?

EMJ: If it's like the one that Mom and Dad have....

FEJ: Yeah, that's what it is. Yeah. They made the clothes...men's clothes and women's clothes.

And Obadiah...Grandpa Jarrett donated part of the land where the Antioch Church is built, and part of the cemetery down there where Obadiah is buried, and Grandpa Zeb and Laura and Papa Olin and Mama Linda, and that's where I'll be buried. And in the deed, it states that if the church ceases to function, that the property comes back to the Jarrett estate.

EMJ: Oh, I didn't know that.

FEJ: Yes, it does.

EMJ: I'm glad.

FEJ: It's a church...and Jewelly Jane, she's got that deed, 'cause she, 'cause Papa Olin said she was the girl, and she would get the home place, 'cause it had a house, and her being the

girl in the family, she might need a place to stay. But Zeb and Laura said that was two portions. So Jewelly Jane got two portions of the estate 'cause she was the girl.

And the way that we have this farm here, Great-Grandpa Bob Ponder married and lived, and I don't know how he had this, he married, and I think his wife was a Teague. And they lived here, and he went all the way through the Civil War and never got a scratch. And the story was, that he started out fighting for the South, and saw that they was gonna lose, and they was up in Kentucky, and he deserted and went to the North. And that must be true, because he come back, and took, at 36 years old, year after the war was over, and took double pneumonia and died. And Laura, no Annie was his wife, and I believe Annie was a Teague.

EMJ: I think that's right.

FEJ: And they had Zeb...they had Zadie Ponder, and Laura Ponder. And Laura later married Zeb Jarrett, and she was our Grandmother.



(Image: Laura Ponder Jarrett. photo courtesy of Forrest E. Jarrett)

And she inherited half of the farm here where Gus and I live now. And Grandpa Jarrett had some property that joined the old Ponder home place, across the road from the Antioch Church. I think he had about a 20-acre field there. And so he traded that to Zadie, the Ponders,

for the other half of this farm, and that, and the Ponders thought that the Jarretts cheated on the trade.

EMJ: I remember hearing that, yeah.

FEJ: And they probably did a little bit. And ever after that, it was the Ponders and the Jarretts was like the Hatfields and the McCoys. And it went on down, they had two or three lawsuits. And Laura, she would still slip off and go to see her brother Zade.

And our aunt, Aunt Pearl, who, she was slightly retarded, and she'd watch when grandmother, great-granny, yeah it was our Grandmother Laura, when she would start to Zane's, she say, "There she goes! There she goes. Slipping off again."

And Pearl, Pearl, she always carried some books and all. And sometimes she'd come by and just out of the blue she'd bop you right good.

Said, "I'm *tired* of that foolishness!"

Bop! She's bop you right good.

And let's see, we was talking about Landon, and Landon, later on, he started having these violent attacks. And he didn't know what...and when they come on, he didn't know what he was doing. And he took the eye off of the cook stove, and threw it through the door of the kitchen. The kitchen door. At his mother.

And he later said, when he come to, he said, "You're going to have to help me. You're going to have to put me somewheres, 'cause I might hurt y'all or might hurt myself."

And such a brilliant mind, I'm sure that with the medical knowledge that we have today, that they could have, you know, straightened him out. And he went to...he was in charge of all the farm equipment at the Broughton Hospital in Morganton. And we would go down to see him,

I remember, we was driving an A-model car. That's a long trip, to Morganton in an A-model. A lot of the road wasn't even paved at that time.

I can remember, they had one suit. We went to see him, he'd always have that suit on. He would remember you. He would remember you. Then he slipped away.

And let's see...

EMJ: Who lived down in Quail Hollow?

FEJ: That was Great-Grandfather Bob Ponder. And he died at 36 years old. And he...they brought him up out of there in the wagon, horses and mules, in a pine box, and buried him at Turkey Creek Baptist Church. And after Alene and I retired, Mama Linda said, "Pappy don't have a rock. Y'all go find his grave, and we are going to get him a rock."

So here it's in August, and here Alene and I go to Turkey Creek cemetery, 'cause we are looking (end of side 1)

EMJ: So after you retired, you went looking for...

FEJ: We went to Turkey Creek Baptist Church cemetery, right here on Bear Creek Road, looking for Pappy Freeman, 'cause that's who we thought it was. And we could not find Pappy Freeman. So we come back and told Mama Linda, "We can't find Pappy. Pappy Freeman." "Ohhh, it's Pappy Ponder! Ohh, it's Pappy Ponder."

So we went back and we found Pappy Ponder and his crumbling rock, what the old folks called the tombstone, they called it a rock. So then we all put in \$125 apiece – me and Alene and Mama Linda and Jewell and Love...no, I don't know, not Love...E.Y. Ponder, maybe another one or two. And they put all about when he was born and died and all that. And then Jewell made them put on the back, "The Father of Laura Ponder Jarrett." (Laughs) So it's on Pappy's rock there, you can see it.

EMJ: Sounds like the Hatfields and the McCoys, huh?

FEJ: Yeah. And it turned on down, and when I got out of service, Zeno, by that time, Zeno was the head of the Democrat Party, and he was party chairman. And E.Y., his brother, was the sheriff, and Mr. – I can't even remember the name of the Speaker – Liston Ramsey was the Speaker of the House. And they were all in cahoots together. So the feud was still going on. So they sent word by my first cousin, Marvin Ball, that they would see me down in hell before I would get a job in Madison County.

So, long about that time, Papa Olin, who was good friends with Jesse James Bailey, Jesse James over the mountain in North Carolina was every sheriff in two counties...two different counties. He was a railroad police, and got a leave of absence and ran for sheriff in Madison, and got elected. Served a term, went back to the railroad, and worked for a little while longer, and got another leave of absence and ran for sheriff in Buncombe County. Then he went back to the railroad.

By this time, I'm out of the Korean conflict and looking for a job. And he told Papa Olin, said, "Tell that boy to come up h'year and see me; we'd like to hire some of them old mountain boys."

So I went up to see Jesse James Bailey, and 37 years and 2 weeks later, I come back home. And so we built our little retirement home here at 15 Jarrett Farm Road.



(Image: Forrest E. Jarrett at Jarrett Farm Road. photo courtesy of Forrest E. Jarrett)

And Zeno, Cousin Zeno, could not stand it. Here he comes, uninvited, to see what we have did. And we're walking around, and I'm out on the front porch. We're looking over downtown Asheville. And I looked him in his right eye...and you always look a person in the right eye. Don't look 'em in both eyes. Just look 'em in the right eye. Ninety-nine times out of a hundred, you can stare 'em down.

So I stared him down. He had to drop his head, drop his head. And I said, "Zeno, you done me the biggest favor that ever anybody done me in my life, running me out of Madison County to go work on the railroad." Cousin Zeno didn't change expression, he didn't drop a... miss a lick, kept right on talking. Didn't...his tone didn't change, he kept right on looking out over the mountain towards Asheville. Never acknowledged that he heard a word I said. But I know he heard it, and it sure did make me feel a lot better.

(break in tape)

When Zeno died, Uncle Reeves said that he wanted me to get Southern Concrete's number so that he could call and have their biggest truck bring a load of concrete and pour it under...over Zeno's grave so Zeno couldn't come up out of there. (laughs)



(Image: Jewell Jarrett Church and Forrest Jarrett, circa 2005. Photo: Esta Jarrett)

And Julie Jane, she wasn't happy about me moving the log house out here to make a guest house.

EMJ: Right.

FEJ: And I don't know why she wasn't. So she pouted for a little while, but then, but then she got glad, But then, when Mama Linda died, she found Polly O'Dell Jarrett's picture in the junk room. And I said, I said, "Polly wants to come home and be in the log house."

"Polly is not coming home."

So, "Okay."

So, when the driveway down at the house needs rock, needs gravel, and I can buy rock for \$3 a ton; it costs Julie Jane \$14 a ton. But I'll get 4 or 5 loads of rock and spread 'em on her driveway down at Mama Linda's house. Take an old tractor and a blade down there and smooth it down.

"What do I owe you for the rock?"

“Polly wants to come home!”



(Image: Mary (Polly) O'Dell Jarrett. Photo courtesy of Forrest E. Jarrett and Jewell Jarrett Church.)

“Ohhhhh, so I...go ahead and take her, go ahead and take her. I was gonna give it to you anyway.”

I said, “Well, I’ll have you some copies of Polly.” So I had her a copy made, and Gus a copy made. And Polly is now hanging in the log house, and she’s happy.

EMJ: She is happy.

FEJ: She come home.

EMJ: Speaking of the house that...Grandma’s house...is that the big house that Zeb and Laura built?

FEJ: Yeah, it’s about 3 sections. I think the first section was before 1900; late, maybe 1880’s or 1890’s. And they built the...

EMJ: The part with the kitchen.

FEJ: Yeah, they built the kitchen, and where the living room...and they built...the kitchen was just one story. And then where the living room and the back bedroom and the two upstairs rooms, that was what they built. And then later on, the in ‘20’s, before Mother Linda and

Papa Olin got married, they added on what they called the “new room” on the north side of the house, and the front porch.

And then, after...after Grandma Jarrett, after Laura died, in '36 or '37, we moved around and Papa Olin added on the back porch and the bathroom. And we were the first ones...we were either the first or second...I think we were probably the second family on that side of the river to have a bathroom, and folks would come to see you. They wouldn't stop to say hello, how you doing or whatever, they would just go straight into the bathroom to see where you could go to the bathroom inside the house without having to go...

And Dave Wilson, he said...he lived right across the hill between our house and Ball Hill over there, he said, “Why, you wouldn't even have to get out of the house all winter!” Said, “You could just go to the bathroom inside the house and not even have to go out of the house!”

We didn't have electric power till after WWII was over, and Daddy told me he was going to put in a big dairy out there. And they built the line out to the house, to Papa Olin and Mama Linda's house, and they dead-ended it right there, and it was three or four more years before they built it on through Rector Corner, and they had electricity.

And we got, I 'member, I guess we was in grammar school and we got a battery-powered radio, and Papa Olin and Mama Linda, they bought a new dining room...living room suite, and it was a standard joke in the family, “Don't turn the radio on, and don't sit on the davenport, and this is a transcription.” They'd say, “Don't turn the radio on, don't sit on the davenport. This is a transcription,” 'cause we didn't...

And we weren't hardly as bad as little Jimmy Dickens. Little Jimmy Dickens, I was on a fishing trip with him down in Orlando; a shoot out on the Okeechobee. Little Jimmy says they was born in West Virginia, and his daddy bought a battery radio, and said he'd make them sit on

the floor right in front of the radio, and wouldn't turn it up loud 'cause it'd run the battery down.
(laughs) We didn't turn it...when we turned it on, we turned it up. They was some good times.

I always...and one time, before they had weather reports and all, come a big snow, there'd come about a two and a half feet snow storm, big drifts up as high as your head...

EMJ: Good heavens.

FEJ: And so they, the school bus come by our house, going up Sandy Mush. And got just above the little log house, just nearly up on the nine-acre field gap when they hit a big snow drift, couldn't get any further. And the DOT sent two state trucks out there with camper canvas covers on the back and they were going to take the children back to the school. And they run off in the...on the Laurel Fork Road down there, they run off, they slipped off in the ditch, and they couldn't...so it was thirty, I believe it was thirty-three children stayed all night in the little log house. And Mama Linda...we kept a fire all night long. But she put them down on pallets. And I 'member opening them big fruit jars, and canned sausage, and making biscuits and gravy and eggs and she fed 'em all. And way up in the day the next day, horses and mules and wagons and buggies...didn't have no Jeeps back then. They come and the families come and got their children.

EMJ: Oh my goodness.

FEJ: And even now, some...I'll run into...occasionally we'll run into some of the kids who are senior citizen now that stayed all night in the little log house.

EMJ: Did Grandma ever have any help?

FEJ: No, she didn't have any help then. No. Or Papa Olin.

EMJ: I think I remember...either you told me, or Grandma told me that when Grandpa was growing up, that Laura had had some help. That there was a woman...a black woman who was around and who helped take care of them.

FEJ: Might have been. Might have been. There was one black, and they called him "Nigger George." And that was the only black that I can remember. And he'd always bring us a stick of candy. And he lived up above the old Mattie Miller place. And there had been an old school up there. And I believe Mama Linda and Papa Olin might have taught at the school, and then there was a school out there on the Bruce Snelson property, Pleasant View, and I can remember that old school building still being there. It hadn't been...it hadn't been dismantled more than ten or fifteen years ago. I believe it was still standing when we retired in '94. (leave the old home place, head toward Buncombe county, pass the church, go down the valley, up on top of the next hill, and then continue down on a long ridge. The ridge will come to a place where you have to take a really sharp turn to the right. The schoolhouse site was just across the road, at that intersection. There's a trailer there now. It burned down considerably before '94 – maybe sometime as early as the '60's or '70's.)

And Grandmother Jarrett's sister Emma taught at that school.

EMJ: Emma?

FEJ: Emma. She had tuberculosis and died...I don't believe...she might have been 30 years old. I remember seeing her picture but I don't...she was a pretty, pretty girl.

EMJ: I'm trying to think of what else I want to...I mean, we can sit and ramble all night, or we can come back and do this again some other time.

FEJ: You just ask me, you just remind me of anything...you just ask me of anything you want and I'll tell you what I know about it.

I was awful bashful when I was kid. They'd send me up to the mailbox, after we moved around, and I would hide till the mailman run. I'd hide behind the barn and then I'd go get the mail.



(Image: Jarrett barn. Photo courtesy of Olin Jarrett, Jr.)

EMJ: *You* would?

FEJ: Sometime, long enough, I figured out that wadn't gonna work. And then I wasn't bashful anymore.

EMJ: I remember what I was going to ask you. You were talking the other night about the Indian graves.

FEJ: Yeah! They was...Grandpa Jarrett told me that. On that graveyard ridge down there, and I remember when we was kids, we'd have it in corn, and you'd be plowing corn, hoeing corn, and you'd find a bunch of arrowheads on that ridge, and Grandpa Jarrett said that was a hunting ground, I don't know if Obadiah had told him, or who had told him. They said that was a hunting ground, and a camp ground, and there was Indian graves there.

And then Charles Hendricks lived over there in the holler where Jewell was born, and they had one or two children that was born, I believe the children were born dead. And they added them to the...where the Indian graves were at. And at one time, there was stone, there was four stone markers on the corners of the graves. And the plowing, and putting hay, and putting

pasture, and all you see now is just a mound...and after putting alfalfa, the rocks were all taken out, when it was mowed and raked and all that. And now, all you see is...Gus says he knows where it's at. But I know where it's at, but if you didn't know where to look, you wouldn't see it.

EMJ: Is it on our property?

FEJ: Yes, it's over at graveyard ridge. Right...it's where Carol and...you know where the old barn is falling down? It's just across the fence and down that ridge about two hundred yards before that old barn falling down...it's on the east side of the road, east side of Rector Corner Road.

EMJ: Well, next time I'm down, I'll have to get y'all and we'll go out and take a look. I'd like to know where that is too.

Well, let's call it a night for tonight. (end of tape)



(Image: (left to right) N. Owen Jarrett, Reeves Church, Jewell Jarrett Church, Alene Ray Jarrett, Linda Freeman Jarrett, Forrest E. Jarrett, Timothy O. Jarrett, Esta M. Jarrett, Olin Jarrett Jr., Evelyn Brackbill Jarrett, circa 1985, on the Jarrett farm. Family photo.)