

**CHARLOTTE YOUNG**

Interviewed by:

Louis D. Silveri

June 26, 1975

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS RESEARCH CENTER  
The University of North Carolina at Asheville

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Interview with Charlotte Young

June 26, 1975

Interviewed by Dr. Louis Silveri

[TAPE I, SIDE I]

Dr. Silveri: I want to start with when you were born and where?

Charlotte Young: I was born in a very aristocratic community, Hominy Valley, that is older than Asheville. In the 1791's when George Washington, our first president, and the Congress decided to have what they called a Federal City, they bought the manors there. Part of the events I'm telling you came from my great-great aunt, Stacy Webb, a very intelligent lady, who lived to be up in ninety years of age. These stories were handed down in our family.

"Aunt" Lizzie Gudger, the wife of Colonel Samuel Gudger,

who was a well-known figure in Asheville and Buncombe and through this region, remembered these family history and legends. I said, "I don't depend on legends; I've got to know whether they are true or not." So

I didn't quote my Great-great Aunt Stacy until I went to Washington and checked the city library and I found some of the things she said verified there. At that point I accepted all that Aunt Stacy Webb handed down. I came down the youngest of the youngest, and you know just a few generations reach back.

Silveri : Yes, I know.

Young:: I was born at what is now Candler (once Hominy Valley).

My great-great grandfather sold out his part in the biggest manor that was sold to the government, Duddington Manor.

Young: (Cont'd) John Young was born in 1711. His first child, John Stuart Young, was born in 1734. The youngest of thirteen children was my great grandfather, William Young: I, 1763. William Young: II was my grandfather. Pinkney Raybun Young, my father, and I were born in Hominy Valley. Later it was named Candler. It is six miles from West Asheville. I lived there until I was one year old. Then we moved to Haywood County, then to Tennessee, in 1892, where we lived until 1902; since then Asheville has been our home.

Silveri: When were you born?

Young: In 1878, the 11th of June.

Silveri: You can document that, right? You have evidence of that?

Young: Oh, yes. In the Bible. But I remember Grover Cleveland's election in 1884.

Silveri: Eighteen seventy eight!

Young: I was ninety-seven the 11th of June, this year, 1975.

I had a nice, quiet birthday, happy as a lark.

Silveri: Your father was born in Hominy Valley? And his father?

Young: Yes, and his father, William Young II, my grandfather. The ten children of John Young and Lady Martha Stuart Young, all moved South, came pioneering down, hunting for a new place to live, with That pioneering spirit, William I, the youngest of John Young's children, found a place in Hominy Valley. He brought his family and (they never called them slaves)—he brought his servants, possibly his load of furniture brought from England.

Young: (Cont'd) Wagons brought them down through, the Appalachian Mountains. He found this place rich in fertile "bottom" fields. The Rices, the Gudgers, the Jarvises, the Samses, the Whitsons, the Gashes, the Alexanders and others married the daughters and granddaughters of John Young, many of whose descendents still live in Western North Carolina.

Silveri: I know one of the Davidsons, Hardy Davidson, out in Swannanoa. The Davidsons were one of the first families to settle in the Swannanoa Valley.

Young:: My great grandmother was Rebecca Davidson, who married William Young I.

Silveri: How about the Alexanders? And relationship with the Alexanders?

Young:: I sort of lost track of the Alexanders, but all of the Alexanders around here are some kind of cousins of mine. And this man, Sondley, who was a historian and gatherer of pamphlets, and what have you - he had a marvelous library and he gave it to Asheville with the stipulation that it be kept separate. So in their little cramped quarters now, the Sondley library is in boxes, mostly. He was about a sixth cousin to my father.

Silveri: When you were born, you were born into a family that did farming in Hominy Valley. Is that right?

Young:: Yes- but my father was a soldier of the Confederate States of America, a nation that lived a little while. He was a teacher and Baptist minister.

Silveri: Did your father enlist or was he conscripted?

Young:: He enlisted when he was twenty. His older brother, Watson G. Young, was killed at Malvern Hill, July..2, 1861, and is buried in Hominy Valley Baptist Church graveyard. Two of my great-grandparents, two couples, are buried in a graveyard that was filled up long ago. My great-grandfather, William Young I, and Rebecca Young, are buried there. They were charter members of the Hominy Valley Baptist Church. And another great-grandfather, who was mentioned in Hall's History of Western North Carolina as one of the leading men of Western North Carolina--which used to be Buncombe County, taking in nearly all of Western North Carolina. The eastern counties were cut up into little counties; they had a lot of votes and they fought against any new county coming into Western North Carolina.

My great-grandfather, Hodge Rabun moved in the early days from Virginia. He had a son, James Rabon, who was Governor of Georgia, 1817-1819.

Great-Grandfather Hodge Rabun was an outstanding member of the State Legislature for twenty years, sometimes in the Senate, the House of Representatives.

Silveri: Did your grandfather own slaves?

Young:: Yes, but not many. After his death in 1857, Grandmother made "Uncle Luke," a slave, manager of the farm. He was almost like one of the family. He stayed and helped run the farm after "The Surrender." The military officers during Reconstruction times broke up such plans.

Great-grandfather Hodge Raybun had many servants—they never called them slaves- the Southern owners. I talked to a good old servant , “Uncle Gilbert Bairdy”, who was

Young: (Cont'd) a member of the Confederate Veteran's organization and drew a Confederate pension,

because he took care of his master, was loyal to him. I said to him, "Were your

masters good to you? How were masters in those days?" He said, "Well, I'll tell you how it was, Miss

Young: If a man was good to his chilluns, he's good to his servants. If he was mean to his chilluns, he's mean to his "niggers;". They used the word "nigger" affectionately sometimes.

Silveri: So they did have- -well, you say they didn't call them "slaves," they called them "servants," but they were black, right?

Young: Oh yes, they were black.

Silveri: Were there very many of them that your grandfather owned?

Young: One great- grandfather, Hodge Rabun, owned so many, he didn't know his own servants. But he was good to them. He didn't believe in slavery.

I suppose he wanted to free them, but there'd been an uprising stirred up by over-zealous (they called them "blue mouth") Yankees, against the white people. They stirred up the Negroes in North Carolina and put the whole state into panic. A law was passed that no Negro should be freed in North Carolina.

My great-grandfather, Hodge Raybun, who was a great fellow, (I can tell you more about him later) couldn't free them. I think

he wanted to, for he thought it was wrong, so he sold them.

I'm sure he must have picked out the best master he could find, and sold them. I call him a statesman,

Young: (Cont'd) but, of course, in his day he was a politician. Spent most of his patrimony and his living getting elected to state assemblies and getting defeated for Congress. So he died a poor man, as he called it; he had a good plantation out at Pole Creek. I thought that must be just a little backwoods "hollar" or cove, as they called it, but it was a very prosperous place, and still is.

Silveri: Did he die just before the Civil War?

Young:: Yes. He died about 1849.

Silveri: And he didn't see the war?

Young: No.

Silveri: The books say that the residents of the mountains usually had very few slaves, or none at all.

Young:: Most of them had none at all. It was only well-to-do people who'd inherited them. My grandmother (my grandfather died when Papa was fourteen years of age in 1859). Grandmother was left a widow and they didn't have many slaves. They had been rich, but somehow or other estates had slipped through their fingers, They had only one slave that I have heard about and that was "Uncle Luke" as they called him. Papa called him "Uncle Luke." He managed the farm, made the two boys behave themselves; would spank them if they needed correction. They would joke with him, tease him, and he would join in the fun. Most of the people through Western North Carolina have inherited this love of fun.



Young: (Cont'd) My people were Presbyterian or Baptist, and my father tried to find the Lord in our revival meetings, as he grew up. He must have been an unusual boy. He was eighteen before he could see his way clear to say, "I'm a Christian." When Papa stood and testified, Uncle Luke took him in his arms and wept for joy. Do you know anything about the old revival meetings?

Silveri: Yes

Young: : Where they have a "mourner's bench?" I've even seen them in my childhood, when we lived back in places where my father was teaching. In earlier days the slaves went with their masters to church, and the white people never dumped them out. They left the churches under the influence of overzealous people from the North who meant well and didn't understand the situation, and the Negroes started their own churches. For instance, the first church in Charlotte was full. It had a big majority of black people as members; they left and organized their own church.

Silveri: But I've read where they were supposed to sit in the back of the church, or upstairs, but never with the whites who came to church. They always sat separately. Is that true?

Young: : It probably was, in most churches. Usually they had a balcony, and they had rather be together. They didn't mind. But they knew- -and when Papa got up in church and said, "I'm all right. I confess the Lord Jesus," Luke came forward and took him in his arms.

Young: (Cont'd) Papa returned the caress. Now that was the way they lived and associated, in this region.

Silveri: How old was your father when he volunteered in the Civil War?

Young:: He was twenty years of age. It was on or near 11-17-1868.

Silveri: What had he done before that time, remained on the farm?

Young:: From eighteen to twenty he was employed by the Confederate States of America in their postal system. He drove a buggy. He boarded over in Asheville, about eleven miles from his home

in Candler, (Hominy Valley, I still like to call it)

He drove a buggy from Asheville to Murphy, and spent the night in Murphy; or on the route and back to Asheville, and spent a night in Asheville.

He said all along the way people would stop him: "Have you got a letter for me from my son or my brother, my husband, in the War?" They'd get in line to wait to hear from them. Very interesting to hear him tell it.

Silveri: What's the distance from Murphy to Asheville and back?

Young: : Why, it must be- -from Asheville to Franklin, the shortest way is about sixty miles — it must be about a hundred miles or more.

Silveri: He wouldn't do that in one day in a buggy, would he?

Young: : Probably two days or more each way.

Silveri: That's very interesting. Now you mentioned your father taught. He taught school for a while?

Young: Oh, yes.

Silveri: But this was after the war?

Young:: After the war.

Silveri: Let's go back to the war itself. What experience did your father have in the war?

Young:: Oh, most interesting. He was in the siege of Petersburg, and when the "blow up" came - You heard of the "blow up?"

Silveri: The tunnel underneath.

Young:: It backfired and killed more of the Yankee soldiers that caused it than it did the Confederates.. It was a great big opening, and the people just fell into it. Terrible! Oh, it was a crime against civilization, bad as we're doing now. It was as shocking for the people of that day, particularly to the Southern people, as Hiroshima is to us.

Silveri: Your father then, when did he get into the, war? Not at the very beginning?

Young:: He volunteered in 1863 and stayed until the surrender, April 9, 1865. He was sick in the hospital. He was wounded twice in the siege at Petersburg.

I went back there three or four years ago with some friends

who are interested in history as I am. We visited that place, and I saw

Hairs Hill where he was wounded. He had told me of that skirmish and he gave me the details of that, and he gave me the details of the Battle of Hairs

Hill. Part of that big battle of Fort Steadman that

Young: (Cont'd) This big battle that went all over Petersburg.

When I went to Petersburg I was surprised to see so much of the territory covered with graves. Then I looked for the Battle of Fort Steadman, that battle that went almost all over the city. I didn't realize it was so big. My father made a little map of it and showed me the whole thing.

Silveri: That's very interesting. Did your father ever tell you why he went to fight?

Young: Because he believed in state's rights.

Silveri: And your father was fighting for state's rights?

Young: Yes, and he said, "Sometime history will tell the truth about it. It'll come out sometime." Of course, there isn't such a thing as "impersonal history." It just can't be. But, some of us will write it from our point of view. Well, the South was left "dragging" in the sands", financially and every other way.

Silveri: Did your father ever make any comments about Abe Lincoln?

Young: Yes. Well, Southerners looked on him then just as we looked on the Kaiser in World War I, and as we looked on Hitler in World War II. I've heard jokes about it. One soldier who was

Young: (Cont'd) engaged to a girl wrote home, wrote in a letter

*"When I come home^ I'm going to bring Abe Lincoln's skull for scrap gourd for you."*

Well, that was their attitude. He was, well, there is this about it: of course, he's ideal. Even Southern people have read--all the histories we have are written sympathetic with the Northern side, and you'd be surprised how little is published about what actually happened. I could spend hours telling you the "right" of some things that are written up with just half of the truth that made it look horrible to us.

Silveri: Let's talk about the slave system: Do you think that was portrayed accurately?

Young: Oh, no. They were not portrayed accurately in the histories we read. They took the worst side of it. Now the side of slavery that I told you—this old ex-slave told me--he stuck to his masters. He managed to buy little farm over near Weaverville. I went over to visit him and his old wife. We went up to the graveyard. I took his picture at the grave of his "Massa" who was killed in the war and he brought his body home. He was killed in Tennessee and this slave got hold of a one-horse wagon, put the body in it, brought it up and buried him with his ancestors.

During the war I believe this, there is no record that any slave ever mistreated the women who were left without their men folk. I'll tell you why

I got this straight in a letter by Lincoln written to some of his 'generals,

Young: (Cont'd) and that letter is in the Morgan Library. It said "*If we could get*" - he told how many battalions

of black men in the South- - "*the war would be over in three months*". How could black men get it over in three months? Attacking the women,, and the men would desert and come back home, and the war would be over.

That is a spot on his golden escutcheon. Also, never before in history had any nation used starvation for non-combatants, which they did. Lincoln closed all the ports so no support could come in, and starved them to death. He allowed that inarch to the sea; that was inhuman. Then some of the generals boasted that a crow would starve in a sixty-mile wide swath cut from Atlanta to the sea.

Silveri: Did any battles take place around Asheville?

Young: : Yes. The Battle of Asheville was the largest one fought here, You can find that information in the North Carolina Room at Pack Memorial Library. – an account of; by the editor of The Citizen, George McCory, who is now deceased.

Silveri: No Union troops came through Hominy Valley though?

Young:: No. Our family is full of funny stories. During the war, often no matter how tragic, there'd be funny stories. My mother was a young woman; she was born in 1848. She was along about fourteen or fifteen, and her younger sister about eleven or twelve. Somebody just wanted to scare them and said, "Do you know the Yankees are coming, and they're right over there at Franklin?"

Young: (Cont'd) "Oh, my. Lordy! Mama's younger sister started running home, jumped over the fence  
And fell down.

So when Mama would tell that, we would laugh, she would laugh..

When her brothers went to the war, they gathered with their friends and told them goodbye. The Arnolds  
had plenty of – the women were always busy making feather beds and feather pillows. They  
had their geese and their ducks. Every room, they had several rooms,  
had plenty of feather beds. Mama was about thirteen or fourteen. Her brother, Washington, , who was  
eighteen years of age, was leaving. She said, "Couldn't you take some feather beds with you?"

Silveri: I wanted to ask you whether any of the men in Hominy  
Valley went to fight for the Union cause?

Young:: No!

Silveri: Was anything ever said about that?

Young:: Not except there were some people back in the hills, who were "for the union".

After the war they were disgraced with the valley dwellers who were for the South. Some of the poor,  
uneducated people way back in (we called them the coves and hollars) snuggled back there. They came late  
and couldn't get rich bottom land; they'd take what was left, They made their living, even up to my memory,  
by making baskets and selling liquor. That was the only way they had. I've never thought it was so bad. How  
is it so wicked for a man to make money off of liquor when the State makes it, or the Federal Government?  
They're just as bad as the bootleggers. Of course, bootleggers

Young: (Cont'd) are nobodies, usually, and sometimes they're dangerous – sometimes. but so is our government dangerous.

Silveri: Was your father married before he went off to war?

Young:: No,

Silveri:: So he came back in '65?

Young:: Yes, the spring of '65. He had been wounded twice, and when the blow-up occurred that we talked about a while ago he was in the Winder Hospital,. and he was there when Lee surrendered. He said that he vowed he'd never smile again while he lived, when he heard of Lee's surrender. So in the South, even yet among some of the older people, a marker of time is the surrender. Certain things happened before the surrender; certain things "after the surrender." And the Negroes (they want to call themselves "black" now) the black people will say, "before freedom come," and "after freedom come."

Silveri::: What did your father do when he came back home?

Young:: He went to school. I think the Peabody Schools began about that time. The college at Mars Hill was closed during the war and was turned into a hospital, first for the Yankees, then for the Confederate wounded and sick.

When the college closed, John Ammons, a very fine, well-educated man, was president. He was out of a job, so he became head of Sand Hill Academy in Asheville. My father attended this school and so did his sisters under John Ammons instruction.



Young: (Cont'd) Papa showed me some of the books he studied. He had a big leather-covered Geometry, both plane and

solid. He said he worked all the problems in it. He studied logic. Oh, he loved his logic. He studied his Way and Moral Philosophy. I used to read those books when

I was a little girl. I got so intrigued with philosophy and things of that kind that , children's stories bored me to tears.

Silveri: Before your father went to the war, did he have a chance to go to school?

Young: Yes. Year after year. He decided that he was called to be a Baptist preacher. Then he married Sarah Arnold. He went to visit his cousins, the Kinzeys, his mother's half-sister not far from where the Arnolds lived in Macon County, about seven miles south of Franklin.

Then, there was , you've heard of "singing" schools? They were great social, intellectual and artistic meetings. A very great music teacher, Hagaman, taught at "singing school" at Holly Springs near the Arnold home. That's where Papa and Mama met. She was eighteen. That was in 1866. Papa was twenty-three. They courted for seven years, married in 1873, November 3.

Silveri: Seven year courtship!

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Young:: Pictures of both of them, taken then are most interesting.

And the pictures of her parents, I've compared her father's picture with the picture of Sir Matthew Arnold and others. He looks very much like those Arnolds.

Silveri: Is it a coincidence that you live on "Arnold" Road here?

Young: No. We named it after my mother. There was a little store at the foot of the hill when we first moved here, in 1990. The people began to call our road Johnson Road, Johnson Drive and Johnson this, that, and the other. We didn't like it to be named after the Johnsons anyway, thought we liked them. The County officers were planning to pave it and finish it. My sister, Leona, went to the County Board. She said "There's no reason –it's confusing to have another Johnson Road. Let's re-name it." [They said] "Well, Miss Young, what will you suggest?" They listened to her. She said, "Now there was General Arnold. He hasn't been honored here, and there's no other Arnold Road in Buncombe. Let's call it Arnold Road." They said, "All right". We didn't let the neighbors know it for fear they might object.

Silveri: Let's get back to your father. You were talking about him going to the academy. He graduated from the academy?

Young:: Yes, and he was a well-educated man and a leader in the Baptist denomination. For a while he was County Missionary of Haywood County. You perhaps have heard of a great skiing place, Hurricane. He went there to a little mission station and preached. Then while he was out preaching, he found a pretty farm in Haywood County. It sounds like it was way in the backwoods, but it wasn't. It was prosperous, people of good standing were living there, and he bought a beautiful little farm of about seventy-five acres on Upper Crabtree Creek. We lived there a long time, from 1883 until 1891. Then we moved to Tennessee to a town named Rankin near Newport, where Papa was teaching.

18,

Young: (Cont'd) Soon after my mother was married, 1873, she got a Howe's sewing machine. Her mother was really a tailor, and my mother was, too. I remember she made Papa the most beautiful tailored suit out of brown homespun, with a black -velvet collar.

I thought it was the prettiest coat I ever saw. I know now it was an artistic production. So that was our life; we lived rather happily, especially when Papa taught school and preached and rented the farm.

Silveri: Was all this Western North Carolina?

Young: Oh, yes, Haywood County and Buncombe County. He taught in his own home community a while, before we moved to Haywood County.

Silveri: So he "was both a teacher and a preacher?"

Young: Yes. He was an ex-Confederate soldier, a teacher, and a preacher. Oh, he was a great person. He was "Mr. Young"; "Professor Young"; "Brother Young".

Silveri: Did he carry on revivals?

Young: Oh, yes. Yes. Late in life he gave up both preaching and teaching when he struck eighty, but he went on. He was a good orchardist, and he took up orchard business in the last yeas of his life. He'd oversee the planting of the orchards. He just knew all about orchard trees.

Silveri: When you were born the family was still in Hominy Valley?

Young: Yes .

Silveri: In 1878?

Young: Yes.

Silveri: Was he preaching and teaching at that time, when you were born?

Young: Yes, in a school near our house. He would come home each noon while expecting me.

Silveri.: How many children? How many brothers and sisters do you have?

Young: I had one brother, Oscar Arnold Young, the youngest, and two sisters, Alma and Leona, older than I. I was next to the youngest.

Silveri: What are your earliest memories of living in Hominy Valley?

Young:. No memories at all. I left there at less than a year of age.

Silveri: And went to Haywood County?

Young: Yes, to Fines Creek, but I went back and visited my Grandmother there as a little girl, She was not like my Grandmother Arnold. I had my sixth birthday in June, the eleventh of June and I remember how gentle and sweet Grandma Arnold and my aunts were. My Grandmother

Arnold used every chance she had for a good education. She wrote a beautiful hand and was very intelligent, and very well educated, considering school facilities.

My Grandmother Young somehow didn't pick up an education. Her sisters were well educated, but grandmother was just a homebody. Papa said, "I don't know why my mother wasn't educated like her

brothers. She had a half brother who was a judge, and one, Thomas Rabun, Governor of Georgia, 1817-1819 and and her sisters were well educated. I imagine grandmother just loved

todo housework and didn't want to go to school. She wasn't well- educated, but she was from a good family, daughter of Judge Rabun.

Silveri: When you moved to Haywood County, you moved to this seventy-five acre farm.

Young: We didn't move to that farm for several years. We lived at Fines Creek.

Silveri: I know something of Hominy Valley. I've been up to the Pisgah View Ranch, run by the Cogburns. Does that family go back a long time in Hominy Valley?

Young : Yes, I think so. I haven't heard much about them,

Silveri: You mentioned Fines Creek.

Young: Papa taught at Martin's Creek, an off-shoot of Fines Creek and preached to small churches. In 1881, we moved to a community called Iron Duff. It was named after a man named I-r-o-n, I suppose, or Aaron MacDuff, and they called the place Iron Duff or the Bend of Pigeon. There was a big bend in Pigeon River there. We lived there a while in a great-big, two-story house, two or three years. In the meantime, Papa was preaching over in lower Crabtree. The creek at old Bald Mountain, gushes down through the valley, and waters the rich bottom land. There was a pretty two-story, white house with a spring and a springhouse close by, and a branch flowing near the house.

Papa bought that farm and went in debt for it. He was interested in everything but finances.. He said, "I'm not a financier." I thought "Papa, you told me the whole truth that time." But, we got along. Years later in the 1920's, Leona and I built these two houses.

Silveri: Did you begin your own schooling in Haywood County?

Young: Yes. The first school, I think I was five years old. The school was taught in little log house up the hill away from our house. I went sometimes.

Young: (Cont'd) I think Papa thought he'd, see if he could teach me. I learned my ABC's; had a blue-backed speller. Then I learned that G-O spells *GO*, and U-P spells *UP*. And he taught me, day by day. There was only one teacher, but we learned. He'd go from one to another, put them at their own tasks, then go see what help they needed. So I learned to read the first page: "I go up", "up I go". , and a few other statements, and then I'd turn the leaf for another page.

Any time I turned a leaf in the book I went streaking home that evening, bragging, "Mama, I turned a leaf." Mama and Papa had decided they were too strict on Alma and Leona and pushed them too hard. Oh, they were infant prodigies; they were both remarkably brilliant. . I was slow. I've always been a late bloomer. I told a friend of mine not too long ago "I've always been a late bloomer." She said, "You're still blooming".

But my parents let me do most of my choosing. I became aware of my ignorance and love to learn.

Silveri: How long was a school year then, when you first started out?

Young:: It was three months at public, for "free" school, as they called it, and then there was the subscription school, as long as they wanted to extend it. Sometimes they'd stop it ^for very cold weather, and start it up again when corn was laid by, in late summer. Then school stopped to "pull fodder". Have you ever heard of "pulling fodder"?

Silveri: Yes. Is that pulling the leaves off the corn?

Young:: Yes. Pull the leaves off the stalks, before frost, put them in bundles, put them in the loft of the stables or barns where the horses and cows feed.

Silveri: I suppose you raised just about all of your own food?

Young:: Yes, we had a garden, anyway, and sometimes Papa would rent out our farm. We did .a Lot better on that pretty faint. We were there when I was five years of age and we stayed until I was thirteen. That place was my "Shangri-La". I loved it. We had ducks. Mama plucked the ducks, and I still have some pillows from her sweet hands. I have heard it doesn't hurt a duck if its feathers are ready to pull, but she'd hold the duck so daintily. Whatever she did, she did so lovingly. She'd hold the duck so gently, and pluck the feathers carefully.

[TAPE I, SIDE |I] (June 26, 1975)

Young:: Then we would go out under the apple trees, peel and slice the apples and dry them on plank scaffolds. Mama had "dried" fruit for home use and for sell. She sold feathers after supply beds as needed. Sometimes peddlers would come around with packs on their backs.

Later, they drove one-horse wagons, pick up chickens, feathers, dried fruit, eggs and other things.

The peddlers paid money or goods, sold in exchange for table linen, napkins, handkerchiefs or table silver.

Silveri: Did you have a cow?

Young: Oh, yes. We always had two or three cows. I've milked many a one and churned cream clabber for butter. , I didn't realize how special those handmade things were 'til I had to use canned foods.

Silveri : I suppose you also chopped a lot of weeds in the cornfields?

Young: I was a rather frail child; my mother took special care of me.



Silveri: No?

Young: My sister Leona helped work the garden. We girls were busy with housework, making quilts, knitting and crocheting.

Silveri: Those were independent years back then. You really didn't depend on other people for very much, did you?

Young:: We couldn't; you had to do it yourself or it wasn't done,

Silveri: Right. Yes.

Young:: Get it yourself or it wasn't got. But when we were small children, Mama always had a hired girl.

Silveri: How about hogs? Did you butcher hogs in the fall?

Young : Yes, and sometimes they'd run wild on the "mast", as they called it. Of course, the mast was wild nuts and things that they ate. Sometimes we had hogs and would bring them in when Cold weather arrived, get a man from "way up the creek" to butcher hogs; a good-natured man that I think made his living selling liquor.

I know once when I had the measles – "you've just got to break out",  
You know it takes liquor to break it out.

Well, we didn't have any,. but we knew that Mr. Keith, K-e-i-t-h, Sam Keith, always had it, and Papa the four and got some for me.

Silveri: There weren't any doctors close by in those years, either.

Young:: Yes, there were doctors but no nearer than four miles from us.

Silveri:: What kind of doctors?

Young: Pretty good. Back then I guess they didn't know technically, but they would come to the homes, day or night and would comfort the patient.

They would "read" medicine with another doctor.

Young: So, Doctor Roberts was present when my little brother was born, at Iron Duff, when I was three years old. He stayed several days.

Silveri You left Haywood County when you were thirteen years old?

Young: Yes. We moved to Tennessee. My father got a job there teaching.

Silveri: Where?

Young: : At a place called Rankin, R-a-n-k-i-n, down west of Newport, about seven miles. He taught there one year, but it was a mess; it was a bad community to teach in. After we moved to Rankin, there he decided to sell out his place in Haywood County, because there was a debt on it drawing compound interest, which is a bad situation and soon would have been beyond payment.

He sold it and had enough left to buy another smaller farm. So he made the same mistake:

about seven miles north of Newport is a town called Parottsville; a mile from town, a a great big farm with a great big, two-story house, lovely, blue painted-overhead porches all around, six fireplaces, two or three tenant houses, and two big barns.

It was in the "limestone country," and the limestone causes places to sink ten to twenty feel wide. I don't know how deep it goes; I've never looked down, always looked

Young: (Cont'd) dangerous to me; trash thrown in there;

growing up out of its sides were weeds. Farmers plow around and around sides of the sink-hole and plant corn. Papa went in debt for that farm and lived there six years, 1892-1898, and the debt that he made kept growing and growing.

That sounds painful, but we survived

Silveri: You went to school in Parrottsville?

Young:: A little while. My older sister was not well, and my mother died when I was fourteen, soon after we went to Tennessee, 1893. We had just moved to that big place in November, and she died January 3, following a cold, snowy time.

Silveri: How old was she when she died?

Young:: Forty-four; a young beautiful woman. There's her picture. You might be interested.

Silveri: What was the cause of her death?

Young:: What we called "grippe." She had a severe case. We all had "grippe" at the same time. It just swept the country like the Spanish flu in 1918, only worse. My mother took the flu and the doctors gave her this and that. I know now what they gave her was almost deadly. She couldn't take it. It was too heavy a stuff. She didn't prosper under the doctor's treatment.

Finally we moved to Parrottsville. There was a doctor

there that came in his buggy, drawn by a black horse,

He wore a silk hat and long, black coat, and "blah-blah-blah--" he'd use some terms

and have a little soda, and make a dose of something.

Silveri: How young: was the youngest child in the family then?

Young: He was ten. I was fourteen.

Silveri: And you had two older sisters?

Young: Yes. Leona sixteen and a half, and Alma eighteen; three girls in our teens, from fourteen to eighteen, and little brother, ten.

Silveri: So that meant that you had to stay home then?

Young: Yes. I didn't get to high school but six weeks, but I tried to teach myself at home. I found afterward that I had a very poor teacher and a very poor student when I tried to teach myself. And then Papa sold the farm to pay the mortgage and we had \$100.00 left.

In the meantime Leona had taught herself typing and shorthand. She was a brilliant person; ambitious. She just wouldn't put up with poverty and she didn't think it was necessary.

Silveri: This is your older sister?

Young: Almost two years older. Alma was three and a half years older than me. She had an office established in Newport. She boarded in Newport and came back and forth on weekends. Our older sister had died at the age of twenty-one, Leona was twenty. A member of the Carson-Newman College faculty was Dr. Shelby Elliot Jones, a great, big handsome, athletic-looking man. He looked like a football player, but he was one of the gentlest, kindest persons I ever knew. He was pastor of Newport Baptist Church. He said, to Leona "We need a teacher to start a Department of Business at Carson Newman College. I will recommend you for the place." So, she was given the place, never been to college. For the only time in her life, I saw her break down and cry. She said, "Charlotte, I'm going down to Carson-Newman College, but I don't know what I'm getting into", and she broke down and cried.

Young: (Cont'd) "Oh, you must report on the girls. You must be loyal to the College." By the end of the year, she had built it up to such a degree that they had a big enough department to get a man at the head of it. (I've had that experience as a high school principal: "Oh, you build it up now, and you've made it strong with the State people. We can get more money for this school. Most certainly, we can get a man." I'd go to another place and build it up.)

Leona came home when the session closed. Our farm had been sold, but we were temporarily living in a tenement house. She says, "I'll tell you what, Charlotte (she knew that we had sold out the place and were going to move soon, somewhere, we didn't know where) I'll tell you what we'll do: we'll go to Carson-Newman. (Mossy Creek then; now Jefferson City.)

"We'll go there and keep boarders.", Leona said. That young girl lost her hob. A man was chosen because she had built it up up and made such a success of it. "Well" the president said, "The students don't like you.." Of course, they didn't. She was carrying out his idea of being "loyal to the institution" and reporting things that were wrong. The students found it out. He had no business asking that of a young inexperienced teacher.

Silveri : Do you mean the whole family went down, or just you and your sister?

Young: Yes. Papa, Leona and I went; Oscar, age 16, stayed two or three weeks to sell the horse and look after details. He then joined us. Papa and Leona had gone to Mossy Creek (now, Jefferson City and made plans for us with the president and Board chairman. They rented the “Old Dormitory” for the purpose of helping student boarders. The president and chairman promised that no students would be allowed to boarding homes in Carsonville, a mile from the college. This promise was broken: students flocked to Carsonville. We had very few. I entered three weeks later. I had three of the best teachers. My German teacher, a little fellow with a straggly, short beard, and holes in the heels of his socks, but he knew his German, and I loved it and Dr. Jesse Burnett, the teacher. He was a saint, scholar, and kind friend to all students. I had to look after my sick sister; nobody else could do it. Leona got out to sort of look after things for us and to teach. She had been teaching public school, a young as she was. In the summer, she then had her office and took in typing. She would us her shorthand; people would dictate. She had been my mentor up until she passed away at the age of eighty-four, in 1960. She and I lived together here. I can tell her story; it reads like a novel. She stayed—we stayed there where she'd been one of the faculty, a beautiful young; lady with dates and many friends. There we were in that old building, that was soon to be torn down and the officials didn't do a thing to help us get borders.

Young: (Cont'd) broke every promise they made. It would have been cooperation enough that we could have had boarders. We got along well somehow. Oscar – we didn't even have money for Oscar to go to college that year, but he went the next year, and the next. I was given the chance to enter and pay the cost when I could teach. Papa and Oscar took whatever jobs they could find. Leona did most of the work in the dormitory and continued study in Speech and Drama under William Powell Hale, which she had done the year before. Her goal was teaching Dramatics or music. I took trigonometry there under this marvelous Shelby Elliot Jones, who had recommended Leona as Business Teacher . I wasn't ready for it; I didn't have enough Algebra. I had tried to teach myself, and I didn't know how, but I struggled, and he saw I was struggling. He said, "I 'm passing you largely on your efforts." But I finally learned it. Afterwards when I took a slate examination in geometry and ten other subjects to get my high school principal ship here in North Carolina, I made a hundred in geometry

I took Latin, and I didn't know "bonus bona", I learned it as I went; spent five hours on my Latin every day. I'd had a little German in those six weeks of high school at Parrottsville. I had studied at home. I could get my German lesson in thirty minutes, but spent t hours daily on my Latin. I didn't graduate there, but I had almost two years, and began teaching in the two- teacher school about fifteen miles from Jefferson City, in Oak Grove.

Silveri: Do you remember the locale?

Young:: Oak Grove?

Silveri Oak Grove? Remember the County?

Young:: Our home had been in Cocke County; this was Jefferson County. We read that book about Uncle Tom's Cabin . We decided we were like Liza when the dogs were after her. She was jumping from one floating piece of ice to another. We said, "We have jumped from one floating piece of ice to the other financially and education ally, but here we are across the river.

Silveri: You must, of course, have read Jesse Stuart's books on teaching?

Young:: Oh, I love everything from his pen. He and I have had some pleasant correspondence.

Silveri : You must have had many of the same experiences that he has had in teaching school.

Young:: Yes, very similar. I can identify with him.

Silveri : He's an amazing fellow. So this was a two-teacher school you taught in?

Young:: Yes.

Silveri : Your first teaching job?

Young:: Yes, my first teaching job. I taught in two- teacher schools several years.

I studied, '98 and '99 at Carson-Newman. In '99 and 1900 I went to Oak Grove and taught, and then, I think I stayed there, after the free school was out, for a subscription school. Then the next fall I went there and taught 'til Christmas, the same place.



Young: (Cont'd) Went back to Carson-Newman, picked up where I left off, then stayed there the following summer and continued my German under that marvelous German teacher. My Latin teacher was just as good; he was a brother to the President, John Henderson. They called him Professor Bob Henderson (Professor Bob). Very formal: "Mr. Patterson, Miss Young, Mr. So and So." Oh, what a whale of a teacher he was.

Silveri: What ages did you teach those first two years?

Young: They were mostly first, second, third, fourth and fifth grades, or maybe combined two of them together. The principal took seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth, or whatever they had.

Silveri: You might have had somebody who was twenty years old in the fourth grade, right?

Young: No, they were pretty well educated according to their years, and I've taught in six states, mostly in North Carolina.

Besides North Carolina, I have taught in Tennessee, South Carolina, Ohio,

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Maryland, and New York State. I find people pretty much the same, and I'm friendly and a friend to all of them.

I can identify with the Yankees. You'd laugh. You know I'm always telling jokes connected with the war. My little aunt was about thirteen or fourteen when her eighteen-year-old brother was killed in Petersburg. Of course, they grieved about it, so I often visited grandfather's old place after grandfather and grand-mother had died, to see Aunt Louena Arnold and Uncle Walter Arnold, They stayed there until they passed out of this world.

Young: (Cont'd) I spoke about some good friends of mine from the North. "Oh?" she said, "Yankees? Friends of yours?" I said, "Why, yes, they're nice people." She said, "Huh, all I know about the Yankees is they killed my brother. I've got no use for them." Yet she was one of the gentlest and sweetest of souls.

Silveri: What did you make as a salary the first year of teaching?

Young: Eighteen dollars a month.

Silveri: Eighteen dollars a month, and was your board and room thrown into that?

Young: No. Out of that came eight dollars for my board. I had ten dollars left.

Silveri: You boarded with some local people there?

Young: Yes. Lovely ladies; I thought they were very old. They were forty-eight and fifty years of age; sweet, lovely, gentle ladies of a good family: Miss Ellen and Miss Samantha, we called them. I taught with a man named Dan White, who came from back in the coves and hollars and never got over it. He was rough, and I didn't like him. We both boarded there. We went to church one night and had to go across the meadow, and we had to step across--What is it you call it? Something held the water for a gristmill. We stepped across, that,

Silveri: Flume?

Young: Yes. As they crossed, Miss Samantha fell as we went back home and got wet. He laughed about it. It made me so angry. Oh, I was just hopping mad, I told Miss Samantha I was mad at him, that he had no better sense of breeding or care than to laugh when she fell,

Young: (Cont'd) I made his picture with red ink and a big piece of paper and showed it to her. I said, "I'm-going to put it up for him to look at." She said, "Don't you do it."

Silveri: Who hired you for that teaching job?

Young: The committeemen. I was recommended by the principal, this Dan White, that I didn't like. He was a preacher; but pity those who had to listen to him. He made a pretty good principal. He was ambitious. He graduated at Carson-Newman the next year, or maybe he'd already graduated,

Silveri: Jesse Stuart, in his book, writes about the politics involved in certain counties in Appalachia.

Young: Yes, all around here.

Silveri: You stayed two years at this school?

Young: Yes.

Silveri: And then what happened?

Young: The next year another man took it over, who had graduated at Maryville College. Fie didn't stand very well socially because they took in "niggers" at that college, and white people who went to it were rather below our social acceptance. But he was smart. But I didn't like him. I taught with him that year. Of course, he was sort of a tyrant. Then I applied to the committeemen for another year and they said they'd see. They had certain amount of money for the school, and if one person wanted to take over the whole school, that would be more salary for him. One person shouldn't have taken it over, but he decided he could take

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Young: (Cont'd) the whole thing, and that did away with my job. Then they gave me a little place down between Oak Grove and Dandridge (which was named after Martha Washington's maiden name, Dandridge) That was just a little group cut off from two other schools.

Some said the committeemen did it to accommodate themselves and their own children. They fought so hard they broke it up after a month or two of teaching there. Oscar, my brother, had had two years of college work, and our uncle in Macon County found that they needed a teacher at a certain place in that county, and Oscar went.

Then I wrote him that I was out of a job.

Silveri: Macon County is in North Carolina, right?

Young: : Yes. Then Oscar talked to the County Superintendent and found another school without a teacher in a very aristocratic community, close to Franklin, waiting to get a good teacher.

That was in November, I believe. So they accepted my application at Carlogaychey. I took the county examination, as we had to do in those days. It is seven miles from Franklin. The post Office was N-o-n-a.

Nona, which is the Indian word for "bear." We had mail once a week. If it snowed, we had to wait several weeks to get out mail.

Silveri: What did you receive in salary for that job? Do you remember?

Young: I think it was thirty-five dollars, and I paid twelve, for my board. But at a very nice, aristocratic, old place. The man had graduated from the University

Young: (Cont'd) North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and was a nephew of Governor Swain. When this man was in college, his uncle was president of the college

Silveri: Macon County is, -- The County seat is Franklin?

Young:: Yes .

Silveri : So you were about seven miles from Franklin?

Young:: Yes.

Silveri. : What .was the name of the locale?

Young: : Cartoogechaye .

Silveri: Horace Kephart wasn't down there around that time, was he?

Yoimjr: A little later. I taught when Kephart was in Swain County. I taught in Bryson City High School with one of the best principals I ever met, Charles Carroll.

Later he was State Superintendent; one of the best friends I ever had, and one of the best men I ever taught with. He was then principal of the school, but he went on up to be State Superintendent. He's now retired, but he was marvelous person.

Silveri: How long were you in Macon County, teaching?

Young:: I taught there in 1901 and 1902 and 1903, I believe, including to Highlands and Short Off, close to a mountain, two or three miles from Highlands called Shortoff Mountain. They had some very fine, well-educated people in Highlands, some native people; upstanding, and some from New England. I taught at Short Off two years, I believe. Then there was a vacancy for the principal at Highlands, the highest incorporated town, east of the Rockies, inhabited by all kinds of

Young: (Cont'd) people from everywhere, as well as a few native-born Carolinians. I taught there two or three years.

Silveri: Up until that time were you teaching a number of subjects?

Young:: Yes. I taught the seven grades. I would manage to put the third and fourth together; the fifth and sixth for certain subjects; we had to have short sessions, but it was mostly "do it yourself, and then I'll help you when you get in a jam." Good results came from such--they are trying to adopt it now. I don't know whether it will ever be adopted, but they have been trying mental schools where each goes at his pace. They went at their own pace with me, but I had to classify them and organize them the best I could.

Silveri: Did you ever have any disciplinary problems in those early years?

Young:: A little. I think one of the most distressing situation; arose when men were sent from State University and from the University at Chapel Hill with big ideas of modern teaching. "Oh, it must be democratic." A school can't be democratic. If the students disagree with the teacher (class of forty); forty outvote the teacher's one with one. Good Heavens! Oh, but it must be organized. You must just look to democracy. I thought that was a good idea.

One boy had done some thing wrong. His mother was a very sweet and lovely, well-educated, New England lady. This boy was about fourteen. He got into something he shouldn't have. I thought I'd carry out some very modern ideas, foolish that I was. I had a panel. We tried him as you would before judges and a jury. "What

Young: (Cont'd) do you think about it?" They decided he should be punished by missing a week of school. I undertook to carry it out. His mother came, to where I was boarding, and told me where I'd missed, and I saw it. I burst into tears. I should have said, "Come on in," but I turned around and went to my room. I just couldn't talk about it any further. I saw what a mess I had made of it.

From that day forward I was cured of trying to make a school a democratic affair. It doesn't ever work.

Silveri : What do you have to say about the students in those early schools that you taught? Were they anxious to learn?

Young: Most of them were.

Silveri : Did they have a lot of difficulties getting to school, traveling long distances?

Young : Sometimes they did. Sometimes they'd come on horseback and sometimes they'd come in a buggy, but most of them stayed in Highlands. Then three miles away was another school in Short: Off, where I taught: before I went to Highlands.

Silveri : You weren't in Highlands too long, then, were you?

Young : I was there two years, I believe. Then I got a better job in. Transylvania County, sort of a mixture of a Baptist academy and a free school.

Silveri: What was it called: What was the name of it?

Young: It was Enon High School: two teachers.

Silveri: How do you spell that?

Young:: E-n-o-n, Enon High School, close to Enon Church. I boarded with a dear, old Baptist preacher. Our school was supposed to be partly Baptist; higher education, push on up. The young fellows would want to go to school, maybe become preachers. Old Brother Beck had a farm, a two-story house, plenty of room. He would board some of those boys, and I boarded with him. I've often thought of him. He said, "I don't charge, I preach over at Cane Creek." He was one of the most interesting North Carolinians you ever met. He was of "good stock" but rather "hedged" for his lack of riches.

As a young man he was employed by a Charleston man, who had a beautiful manor at Flat Rock. He said, "Mr. Beck, you take care of my place and I'll pay you. You can cook your food here. All of it'll be furnished you. Here's my library. You won't have much to do. If you want to read, there's my library."

Mr. Beck said, "I read most of the books in that library."

I was there seven years, except during the summer months, and had very little to do, just take care of the house and grounds. He spoke the vernacular of the uneducated and preached in the little Churches made up of uneducated people back in the coves and "hollars." He talked their language, but he was very intelligent and very well read, and knew the Bible.

He said, "I ain't chargin' 'em nothin'. I've got my ol' gristmill here to make my livin' and my farm; rent it out." And he went on crutches. His back was stiff with arthritis, I suppose.

He said, "At that big fair at



Young: (Cont'd) St. Louis in 1903, I got a queer letter. They asked me to come out there and preach. I wrote; back to them and said, 'I don't feel called to go,' and I didn't go." .

Silveri: Talking about preaching: Could you describe the churches in the mountains in those early years?

Young: In my experience –I never heard any of the "backwoods preaching", but one time.

A man came and made an announcement

“Adam Bright will preach tonight at early candlelight” He announced "that in school. He was one of those who would heave and set and grunt, and finish every sentence with a grunt.

A few of them are still extant, using radio. If they do any good I don't know it. Like one old man said, "If I've done any harm, I don't know it. If I've done any good, I'm sorry for it," I don't know whether they do any good, but I wasn't exposed to them.

Our pastor was Richard Sentelle. They called him Dick Sentelle,

He was one of the best and smartest men I ever knew. He managed to go to Judson College in Hendersonville, which used to be a very good Baptist college. He graduated there. He was too young to go in the war of Succession. He preached and taught. He knew Latin, and he was head of an academy in Haywood County, and later county superintendent.

Two or three of my great-grandfathers helped found academies all through W.N.C.

Young: (Cont'd) Richard Sentelle was a good, sensible man. He was pastor of Rock Spring Church at Crabtree. When I was a little girl; and when I joined the church at the age of twelve.

I remember his sermons on the Parables. They were new to me.

He baptized me. I loved

him all his life for his pure goodness. He never made a fuss over children.

He just let children alone, and they'd stand off and love him at a distance.

Silveri: This was the Baptist Church you joined?

Young:: Yes. My father was a Baptist preacher. One line on my mother's side was Presbyterian, and it would take two or three hours to tell you my ancestry on the Arnold side.

Baptist churches, you probably know, are the only true democracies in existence, because they're little churches, and everything is put before the church to vote on. Right or wrong, the majority wins. They may be wrong, but how do we know? We're supposed to pray over it for guidance. If we're in a minority and think they're making a mistake, OK., we'll do the best we can.

Silveri: You mentioned academies before. I understand a lot of them were begun by church missionary boards.

Young:: Very few. Most churches and academies were built by residences.

Silveri: I understand , also, a lot of the Northern missionary boards sent money down.

Young:: Only a few. They were unpopular.

Young: (Cont'd) There is much misunderstanding about the mountain people.

Even the other day, someone from Illinois, or somewhere North or Northwest, met me^ 'Were you born, brought up here?'

I said, "Yes." She said, "Well, surely not. You don't say 'cheer' for chair, and 'over yander.'" I said, "Certainly I don't. I don't belong in a group that talk that way." She was surprised that there were educated people in Western North Carolina.

Silveri: You began teaching, I guess, in the years that would begin a transition--

Young:: Yes, of high schools. That is an important thing. I just gave you a little outline of that. Up until 1907 we spoke of free schools and high schools. Free schools went through the seventh grade; high schools went eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh. There were four years of high school, beginning with the eighth, and, believe me, by the time they got to the eighth grade they were even above the present ninth grade.

My brother was a student: at Chapel Hill, 1905 and 1906. He had a year at Carson-Newman. Two or three years after that, my sister was teaching at Presbyterian College in East Tennessee, Tusculum. Oscar had a year there at that Presbyterian College. From there he went to Chapel Hill. Then he dropped out to teach; he had to help keep his pot boiling. There was a man, a good friend of his, on the faculty there, Dr. Nathan Walker, who spotted Oscar as good material for high school principal. Dr. Walker was looking around; he had been appointed high school director, because they were about to

Young: (Cont'd) Pass this law that the high schools should be financed by the State. Dr. Walker was forward-looking. He picked Oscar as one of his principals, and gave him a job as principal of the Rosewood Academy, while working to persuade the N.C. legislature to finance the high school – which they did in 1907.

I think there were only two teachers then, two or three at the Rosewood Academy at Goldsboro, down on the coast where it's hag-ridden with mosquitoes and malaria.

Oscar and I, all of us Western North Carolinians can't take that. He took malaria that year, 1907, and never recovered; he was sick for three years. He was late in his education because

he would drop out and teach one year and then go to college the next year, as Leona and I did.

Leona and I took care of him here. He had some property that our aunt had willed him, and he had a little saved from his

teaching, but that soon went with his illness. During his illness

he said, "Charlotte, that's place for you, these new high schools.

You could manage a high school." I had been principal then of little two- teacher or three-teacher schools. He said, "You could do it." I said, "Could I?" He said, "Yes, you could. You go ahead; you can get your certificate by examination by the State. You go ahead with your teaching, and you can land this. Don't you be afraid. Do what's right, and don't; be afraid." I never got over these words.

He had worked for the Chicago Crayon Company several summers, or during his terms in college and university, and he

had twelve men under his supervision. So he had his picture taken; he had it enlarged and laughed about it. He said, "I don't like those enlarged pictures.

But I still have it; the picture taken when he was twenty-three years of age, about 1905

Young: (Cont'd) He died June 10, 1910, in Asheville, and was buried out in the old Hominy Baptist Graveyard where Young grandparents are buried, with two filled-up graveyards close by where my great grandparents, the Young and Rabuns were buried.

TAPE II, SIDE I - June 26, 1975

Young: Oscar's picture was there. I wanted it wherever I went. I was going to carry it around with me and I went there to get it. As I went on the train (we went by train in those days before the days of buses), sat down by a girl from Denver, North Carolina. She said, "They're looking for a principal for Denver; they're starting one of those new high schools. You might get that job." This was about a month after Oscar had been laid away in his last resting place. It just looked like a part of a plan. I applied for and got it--as high school principal.

Silveri: You had to take an exam for it?

Young: :Yes. They granted me, as they were doing in those days, a temporary certificate so I could take the examination a year later. I taught that year on a temporary certificate. The next summer, I took the examination and passed it, with a real certificate, Taught there another year; built it up. Dr. Walker liked me, and liked my work. We had to build it up; so I built that school up in numbers and community interest,

Young: (Cont'd.) : I had

students coming in and boarding ; two or three teachers besides me. I have forgotten how many. We made a big success with it.

The big ruler of the town, Dr. Abernathy, was used to everybody bowing to him, but he noticed that I had a head of my own.

But, he wanted to tell me how to teach.

just listened to it and went on my way. One of the other teachers didn't like him, and she said, "I notice you don't do just what Dr. Abernathy tells you." I said, "I'm running this school."

He said, "Miss Young:, you must go over to Statesville

and talk to Dr. Walker, Tell him how well

you're getting along and get more money for the school. That's what I had planned to do. I went one rainy day, I happen to remember it was the 12<sup>th</sup> of February, 1912.

I closed the school for a day or more

so I could go to that big meeting where Dr. Walker would come, and he was very nice to me in every way. I told him how I was getting along.

I taught there two years, building it up and up, and up.

The committee said, "Got enough money now to get a man." They employed a man. They didn't have one yet, but that summer—I didn't know what they were going to do, but I was sure they were going to drop me, for they saw they had enough for a man. I went to Chapel Hill Summer school again. A teacher who lived in Denver knew me.

Her whole family was under obligation to this doctor. He got as many people obligated to him as he could he'd lend them money .Dr. Abernathiy sent word by this teacher to Dr. Nathan Walker to fined

Young: (Cont'd.) : a principal. I didn't know it, but she came to me and said, "I went to Dr. Walker. Dr. Abemathy asked me to. I didn't think about how it would look. I went and told him that we wanted him to help us find a man for principal. Dr. Walker said,

'What's the matter with Miss Young:?' I told him, 'Why, nothing.'

"Then He said, "what's the matter with Denver? And she said, "I want to apologize to you for what I did."

Silveri: Let's go back to that first year at Denver. What was your salary as principal?

Young: : I think it was fifty dollars a month, which was big money then.

Silveri : How long was the school year?

Young: : Eight months.

Silveri : Eight months. Was there a compulsory attendance law at that time?

Young:: It was coming in. Yes.

Silveri : You had about three teachers under you?

Young:: I believe I had only two: the primary and the intermediate. Then I handled the high school by combining some classes.

Silveri: Was it a new building that you came into?

Young: : Yes, and I was delayed going down there 'til November, waiting for the new building- -after they employed me. I was in Asheville, and I had tried to get a place in the city schools so I could be with Leona and Oscar during his illness so I could help keep the pot boiling and be near him. But no, they put me off, and put me off. The city superintendent, when spring came, still

Young: (Cont ' d. ) : hadn't given me a job. Oscar was worse, and he died that summer, June 14, 1910.

After he passed away, the city superintendent

was still gone abroad. He came back about the same time school started.

I had been employed in the city as a substitute through September and October – a very

hard place, the

hardest to keep order in the city.

The principal, mr. Carr, asked me to take the position as a regular teacher. I said, “No, I

promised to go to Denver as

as principal of a high school. I think I see an opening for my career." He said, "Oh, well, you won't like it

there. You ought to take this. I said, "No."

The superintendent himself came and visited my room; 1 he saw something I was demonstrating about, just a little interesting about getting them interested in, chemistry; a little thing called Falen's Test for acid or alkali.

He looked at that; asked about it.

He said, "Why don't you stay up here?" I said, "I've already

promised."

Silveri: Can you give me some observations of what Asheville looked

like in 1910? What kind of a city was it?

Young.: Streets were not paved as well as they are now. They were mostly brick.

Put one brick one way and an another the opposite position design.

It was going pretty well by 1910. They had good stores.

Silveri: Where were you living when Oscar died?



Young: We had rented a house in Asheville. It was home for us.

Silveri: Where?

Young: On Haywood Street. A little two-story cottage

with three or four rooms on the first and second floors. It was back of a larger house that the man owned, and he rented us that cottage. Oscar had his room. Leona and I had one next to him. We were there during most of his illness. I had to teach away from home, but returned often. I regretted that we couldn't put him in a good sanitarium, but I don't regret it anymore when I see what home life meant to him.

He had it better than if he had been put in any institution for sick people. We took care of him, I, through the first year, and Leona mostly the other two years.

During Oscar's illness, Leona had gone on with her education. She was studying music as well as public speaking and drama, and she taught for years in colleges. Then, she saw that public speaking and drama, and particularly training for recitations and declamations and orations was going out, that movies were killing them off; so she picked up her music and went on with that, and became a great singer. It was a national meeting (not the PTA, but the TRA, the travelers association) drummers all over the United States came here for a big national meeting. She was on the program to recite and sing. Oh, they went wild over Miss Young, that bit crowd from everywhere. They were surprised to find a native of Asheville like that. They didn't know we had it. Those were Northern people. Oscar was so proud of her.

Young: (Cont' d.) Sister had a millionaire friend who was with her in college when she took drama and public speaking at King's School of Oratory and Music in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She had graduated there, and Daisy Kistler was one of her graduating class. Daisy married a governor of Georgia,, a rich man, a millionaire, and. she invited Leona to come visit her. She gave Leona some of her dresses made in Paris. She said to Leona, 'Would you be insulted if I gave you these dresses?" So she had beautiful, expensive dresses from Paris. So she wore one of them when sang at big National meetings at the Batter Park Hotel, which was the acme of society for big meetings, national and what have you. So, she came home and told Oscar about it and Oscar was so proud of her and so happy for her.

Silveri: How soon after the Vanderbilt mansion was built did you see it? Did you ever--

Young:: I knew about it being built in the late 1880's and through the '90's. I heard about it, read about it, saw the pictures, but I never saw it for ten or fifteen years afterward. I knew about it; saw the pictures and kept the clippings. I've been to see it twice.

Silveri: It is a fascinating place. Tunnel Road, of course, wasn't built until the '20s, I guess?

Young:: Until then, the only approach to Asheville from the east was what's now Biltmore Avenue.

Silveri : Do you remember any flooding of the French Broad River?

Young: : I certainly do. Several people lost their lives. I was out at my grandfather's old place, in Macon County, spending the summer with my aunt

Young: (Cont'd.): and uncle in 1916. I had been doing some washing. My aunt had a zinc washtub out near the branch. We used the old-fashioned way and made a fire under her iron pot to wash my things and I used her tub; left it sitting out there beside the branch where I found it. . Next morning it was gone. The flood of 1916 had overrun. I saw my aunt was distressed. She said, "My late brother, Ross, bought that tub for me. He went into Franklin on horseback and brought it back with him." I knew I had broken her heart by leaving the tub where the flood took it, but I thought I'd left it where it had been. I was sorry I didn't move it back and put it on the back porch.

Silveri: It must have ended up somewhere in Tennessee.

Young: No telling where it went.

Silveri: The summer after your first year at Denver, you were at Chapel Hill?

Young: Yes.

Silveri: You were doing more studying?

Young: Yes, and taking State examinations, down there..

Silveri: Right, but the people at Denver found a man to replace you?

Young: Oh, yes. The big man who ran the town, did it.

I just made some decisions of what I knew was right and stood by it. The daughter of one of the committeemen Abernathy's henchman, had to be punished a little For something; I knew she had to be reprimanded when she was wrong, and that was fat in the fire. He

Young: (Cont'd.): told me he knew I had made a big mistake; I knew I hadn't. I haven't always been a good Christian, but I know one thing, in my teaching I have carried out my brother Oscar's words: "Do what you know is right, and don't you be afraid." I never have been afraid. When I lost: a job, I got something better.

Silveri: That summer you got certified as a high school principal?

Young: Yes, through examinations; eleven subjects I was drilled through.

Silveri: What happened then in the fall? What was your next job?

Young: I went to what is now Western Carolina University. It was then Cullowhee Industrial and Normal School, and had high school and junior college work. I told you about how I loved my German. They needed a German teacher. I got that job to teach it. I had studied art

all my life,- every chance I had, I worked at it.. They wanted someone to teach future teachers art work for the grades. I knew all kinds of handicrafts; they called it art work.

I taught art and German for two years. Same old story. The word was finance in those days, so a definite amount was given to the faculty. The greater number on the faculty, -the the less each one got, which was too big a temptation to money-loving men. It happened that the president was a money-lover,.

He saw his way clear for higher income for himself and other men teachers. He dismissed me and the sewing teacher.

I was there for two years. There was very lovely lady teaching sewing there. "Oh, ' the Superintendent must have Home Ec; you must have sewing and cooking." With; no equipment at all except what was in the kitchen, which was sort

Young: (Cont<sup>d.</sup>): of an awkward thing , I taught some cooking, as well as German and art.

I knew how to cook, and I'd gone to State College and taken some good work in Home Ec. I had a correspondence course in what they called

a major course in "Chemistry of Foods" , from Chicago University, so I could teach.

After two years they decided by doing away with the

sewing teacher and me they'd get more salary,

and they fired us and got bigger salaries for themselves . It is

funny and pitiful if I tell you how as a woman I have suffered injustices, and how my sister suffered injustices.

Silveri: You were there two years.

Young: Then from there, they fired me for economy's sake and this was the economy that would go down to their pocketbooks. Yes, then

J. got a good job as principal of Webster High School, a five-teacher school; about three hundred students, and high school of about forty, in Webster.

Silveri Where was Webster?

Young: Sixty miles west of Asheville. It's about eight miles from Cullowhee, between Cullowhee and Sylva. It was an aristocratic place.. The head of the school, or chairman of the committee, was Judge Walter Moore, one of the finest men I ever worked with. He

listened to Mrs. Moore, who was very intelligent. She said, "Let's have a woman principal. We've had men principals and the school's running down." I stayed there four years, and could have stayed

Young: (Cont' d): if it hadn't been for a lazy boy who wouldn't study his Latin and flunked it.

He happened to be the son of one of the committeemen, and he had the vote where there were here committeemen. The county had gone Republican. The Republican committeeman voted against me because I was a Democrat. The other two Democrats voted for me, so I learned later. They re-elected me one night at Judge Moore's home.

The next morning I saw that man whose son failed Latin dragging along toward the Moore home. I said to myself, "Ah hah, I wonder what's up?" I hadn't heard what they'd decided. :

hadn't heard what they'd decided. He dragged up there and told Judge Moore he wanted to change his vote for Miss Young:. He said, "My wife kept me awake all last night worrying me to go and change my vote, if Miss Young hadn't been notified, because she flunked our boy."

After four years,

I loved those children and I had done my best. The main ones were Judge Moore and his wife, fine people, and "Aunt Hattie" Allison

who was of a

fine family of Asheville, educated, good people. She

had been a teacher until she was about age .sixty, and had married

"Uncle Andy" Allison. She was the matriarch of the town. She

said, "You children back up Miss Young; she's a good teacher." I didn't have a problem of discipline the four years I was there.

Young: (Cont'd.): It was my Shangri-La school, just as upper Crabtree, that beautiful little farm of ours, was my Shangri-La of homes.

Silveri: As principal of Webster, did you hire the teachers? Was that your responsibility?

Young: They were already hired when I got there.

Silveri: There wasn't any need to replace any in those four years?

Young: Yes, there was one teacher that we replaced.

Silveri: You know, you were mentioning some politics there, and you said you were a Democrat, Did you do much in politics at all?

Young: Not a thing.

Silveri: No. You just went and voted. You usually voted Democratic?

Young: They just knew I was a Democrat, that's all, and that was the "unpardonable sin," if the Republicans happened to be in, and the other way around if the Democrats happened to be in. I taught at Franklin after that. A good friend of mine was County Superintendent, M.D. Billings, who had been County Superintendent for thirty years. He knew my uncles. He knew the Arnolds there. He knew they were good people, and he knew me, and he sent for me one year, January 1938; to fill a vacancy in the fifth grade in Highlands.

Silveri: What year was this?

Young: Let me see. When was that? Just after the depression, or during the depression. It was 1938, during the depression. There was a vacancy in January I had been out of a job of teaching since 1933. .

Silveri: Wait a minute. This is a long period of time you've

Silveri:(Cont'd.): been skipping over here. During the time you were at Webster, the first World War began. Did that have any effect on your school? Did the students volunteer to go fight?

Young:: None of my students were of an age to volunteer. None of the students, but I heard about it. It didn't close 'til the fall 1918, did it?

Silveri: Right

Young: Well, 1918, after they fired me from Shangri-La, (Webster) I went over to Swain County high school, Almore, west of the county seat, was principal. The war was still on in the fall when I went there in 1918. They didn't close, I believe, until the 11<sup>th</sup> of November, 1918. There was a young man there, twenty- two years of age, but still in high school. I thought he was finely skilled, a fine fellow. He and I were friends as teacher and student. He knew he was going to be drafted, so he went and volunteered, and went on overseas early in the fall of 1918. I talked with him at a party where the teachers and many young people were. I said, "You're a fine young fellow. Some people who go to war break down, but you won't". He replied, "No, ma'am. I ain't going to" He came back I believe, the next spring. He said, "I did what I told you I'd do. I'm just the same person I was when I went in." He later married the daughter of my first cousin

Silveri : You know, as a teacher of German, as you were, What happened during the first World War when the Americans hated the Germans?



Young: (Cont'd.): The authorities dropped it out of the schools. They didn't teach it anymore.

A funny thing happened: I went back during those days to Asheville. Leona was at one place and I at another, but we agreed to have a little vacation at a boarding house. Asheville was full of boarding houses in those early days. While I was at the boarding house (there was a very sweet lady in charge), I took the flu and I called on the doctor that waited on my brother. He came to see me. While I was sick, I had always loved—I found my recreation reading German literature, particularly German poetry. In fact I got an honor from my teacher. He told the students of another German class

that Miss Young, of his first German class, had been translating German songs into English lyrics very well. My recreation has always been a pleasure to read German literature. I had a feeling for literature.

At the time when I was getting better of the flu, or at least when I could prop up and read, I was reading in my little German book, Gluck Auf, with literature, poems and stories.

The book was sticking out from under my pillow when the doctor came. He said, "What's that under your pillow?" He looked at it (teasing me) "No wonder you're sick." I said, "I can't see why we have to fight a nation that could produce men who write things like this, and that, and that."

Silveri: Great.

Young: I still have that attitude. The people were not the ones who did it; the Kaiser and our leaders ought to have shot it out together, dueled, and settled it. Those two who wanted it, let them do the fighting. That's my cure for war.

Silveri: You were in Swain County in a teaching job?

Young:: Yes, I went there in the fall of 1918, and taught '18-'19, '19-'20. Yes. I think they decided they-wanted a man.

Some of the committeemen had young daughters; it would be more interesting to get some young college graduate who was single.

They just decided to get another person as quietly as they could without any uproar.

Silveri: What were you teaching at Swain County?

Young:: High school I taught Latin, English, Home Ec, and history.

Then there was a man helping with the high school who taught the other subjects – math, history, and science.

Silveri: By that time, were salaries getting any better?

Young:: Oh, yes. I think I got seventy-five dollars a month, which was big money then. In fact, it was about like seven hundred a month now, nearly ten times—some things that we buy today, some groceries, are three hundred percent up.

Silveri: Right.

Young:: So I got along; paid my debts.

Silveri: You spent two years there at Swain?

Young:: Yes.

Silveri: That brought you up to 1920, approximately?

Young:: I went back to Mills River, and that's a long story. You may want to read Mrs. Patton's story of Mills River, including The Story of Mills River that, I was teaching in one or two teacher schools. While I was there, I had stuck my neck out and got the school property into the hands of the County School Board with the help of a man who wasn't afraid of nothing, who carried a petition to free that school from a church group, who were holding

Young: (Cont' d . ) : it unjustly. I think, and put it in the hands of the County Board of Education.

Silveri: Mills River is what county?

Young: That's in Henderson County. It's an old school. When my father was a young man, he and his sisters used to attend commencements --that was previously at Mills River Academy, a hundred and fifty years ago. 'Way back.

[TAPE II, SIDE II] (June 26, 1975)

Young: (Cont'd.): Mills River is a beautiful valley. I taught there, I believe, one year, 1920. Then I got a job -- I think they wanted a man there. Anyway, I had done my thing, and I knew I'd better as m father used to say, (he used his war experience to make his illustrations), "Fire and fall back." I fired there, and I knew I'd better fall back,

because in spite of all except one family in signing it, some of them didn't want it anyhow and I knew it was a good time to leave. So, I left. Well, I went back to Mills River in 1920, and then I was offered a place Oxford Orphanage. It is financed by the Masons. I stayed

there three years and fought Superintendent Brown all the time I was there and then he "raised Cain" when I resigned. I thought I had been there long enough. The story of how I fought for decency in that place would be a surprise. It's supposed to be a marvelous place, but oh, the way the man ran it -- and the lady principal, Miss Nettie Bemis.

Silveri: That was for three years?

Young: I stayed there three years. I guess he thought I was better inside looking out than on the outside looking in. I found a better place, and I resigned.

Silveri Did you ever have any contact with Cecil Sharpe, who came through the area to collect folk ballads from the mountain people?

Young:: I knew of him. I collected them a while; I had my own little collection. His collections are highly valuable.

Silveri. You did?

Young:: I'm very much interested. I wrote a piece to some magazine and gave my experience; most interesting gathering ballads

Silveri: Was this in North Carolina or Tennessee?

Young: Right around here. Right across the back fence, over there. Uncle Kirk Mathis, a man over beyond the VA Hospital here sang old-time ballads. I went over to see him

He was out chopping stove wood when I went to see him; kept up with old-timey things. That was only ten or fifteen years ago.

He-passed away, but I know some of his songs. I didn't have a recorder, but I remembered some things he sang. I could write a book on that. I was asked to write for the Folk Lore Magazine . I did write one piece of Indian folk lore for my own recreation. What little recreation I have, I've been studying Indian folk lore and folk lore of this whole region. I break into it and use it sometimes in my ' conversation. They have such "salty" expressions.

You may be interested in this: When I went to high school and college and studied Shakespeare, I didn't have any trouble with his quaint

expressions. I knew them. Not that we used them in our family, but people that came down to my father's place , to use his grindersones, to

Young: [ Cent'd . ) to grind their ax would give any excuse to come down to talk with "Brother Young" and look at my beautiful mother and see her kind ways. They flocked down from the hills and hollers and coves to grind their axes, or for some reason, and I heard them talk.

I was just used to those Shakespearean expressions, and in my naivete, I thought, ."Well, surely they've never read Shakespeare. How did they get those words? I found they got them where Shakespeare got them: From their ancestors. So they talked Shakespeare, a lot of them.

Silveri: You have been up in Madison County, haven't you? Did you ever teach up in Madison County?

Young:: No, I never did.

Silveri: There are supposed to be a lot of people up there who are like that.

Young: Oh, yes. They come to Swannanoa and other towns to work at the mills, and sometimes they rent my extra cottage here. They talk that Old English.

Silveri: Very interesting. You know, perhaps, we've had enough. I've kept you talking so long. Perhaps we should stop here and I could make another appointment some time in the future to continue.

[END OF TAPE II, SIDE II] (June 26, 1975)