

## **Hilda Burrell Earl Sands**

### **Side 1:**

[1/5] Hilda's father came from Asheville. Her mother's family from Madison County. In 1902 her grandfather died and her grandmother, hearing there was work in the cotton mills, packed her children in a wagon, tied the cow to the back, came to Asheville and rented a house. Her mother, the oldest of the children, went to work for 12 hours a day, 6 days a week. She was the only child old enough to work at the time - later they all worked there. She brought home a pay check for \$2.50 which purchased food for the family in the company store with 2 cents left for candy. She and her sister, who soon was working at the mill, would walk to town on Sundays. Patton Ave. was unpaved - mud came up to the hubs of the wagon wheels. [Hester Rice]

[1/55] Hilda's parents met at the mill. They continued to work at the mill for 3 years after marriage. [James Milford Earl]

[1/58] Vanderbilt needed workers - any one could go for the day and take their tools along. On Sunday her parents went to Biltmore to watch changes. They couldn't believe anyone would build on valuable bottom land. [George Vanderbilt]

[1/93] Hilda describes the company store as told by her mother. The dry goods store still stands (it was expensive) by Smith's Bridge (off Craven near West Haywood Street - now a cabinet shop painted cream with a little blue). [Gay Green]

[1/104] Enka was a big employer. Her mother worked there with her aunt while living in Jupiter.

[1/109] The old Pest House [contagious disease hospital for smallpox patients] is described (see enclosure).

[1/142] Her mother was docked pay for mis-weave.

[1/146] Times were so hard that Hilda's parents, with the help of an uncle moved back to Madison and only came back to visit. Her grandmother still had young children to raise so stayed in Asheville, earning a living by cooking the noon meal for workers who were served off her back porch. [Wilson Rice]

[1/238] Hilda was born in Jupiter in 1926 (two miles from where she lives today). Her father rented a house, share cropped one farm as well as his own. There was only one boy in the family so the girls also worked the fields. Her mother was short, talkative, and always made work pleasant. The family sang hymns while working and she always pointed out different things to the children. The spring was half a mile from the house.

[1/286] The Depression was hard for everyone. Her mother never let anyone leave her house hungry. She would always ask, "Have you been to dinner?" One time she made room for a woman and her 3 children and packed food for them the next day.

[1/305] For 12 years she lived in Red Oak, North Buncombe. Her parents had very little education. She felt lucky to get a high school education.

[1/334] Her grandmother's family owned large farms in Upper Flat Creek and her grandfather started farms there. [Myra Cole (grandmother), Jess and Martha Cole]

[1/388] When she was 8 her mother brought her to Asheville. Her older sister lived in Mill Village. She describes the tall buildings, street cars, movies and the dime store.

[1/439] There were 25-30 children in her class at school. She walked to the bus stop. Students had to buy their own books or borrow them. Her father would take the horse and wagon to buy books in Marshall - he always saw that each child (9 in family) had books.

[1/502] In July and August the children picked berries for 10 cents a gallon which they sold in town. Their mother bought material from the Sears Roebuck catalogue and made their dresses. Each spring the girls would get a dress and a pair of white shoes. There would be winter shoes in December after the tobacco was sold. She was taught to take care of what she has and has tried to instill this in her son.

[1/528] The Depression was very hard. Two hogs were butchered at Thanksgiving, smoked and salted. There was no refrigeration so beef and chickens were used immediately or sold. The girls set rabbit traps - they shared traps and checked them before school - a rabbit brought 10 cents each if sold and tablets for school were bought. Churned butter and eggs could be sold to buy sugar and coffee. Wheat was ground in Petersburg Mill. Her father took corn and wheat in a wagon.

## **Side 2:**

[2/1] Hilda describes the wagon used to go to Petersburg Mill, which is still standing and the water wheel. A little store nearby sold candy. [Silvers]

[2/18] She worked in the fields all summer, hoeing tobacco, picking peas, which were hung up to dry, drying apples, churning, hauling water and keeping chickens out of the oat field. In the winter her father cut wood, but in the summer the girls took care of it.

[2/41] Cows grazed in the fields nearby, but when they were dry the girls took them to fields where grass was green.

[2/50] Pumpkins were grown in the cornfield and harvested with a sled on wooden runners. Everyone and every animal ate pumpkins.

[2/58] The first family reunion was held in Jupiter in 1939 and was repeated until her mother died in 1982 - she was almost 100 years old. Her brother died age 59. Sadie died in 1972. The reunions started as a celebration of her father's birthday. At one time 75 attended. Her mother had 9 children and 100 descendants. Her sister died in 1991. [Claude Earl, Sadie Catoe]

[2/105] Her mother had 2 brothers in WWI. They were, she thinks, prisoners of war. [Tony Sandrick, William and Walter Rice]

[2/113] A sister, working in Asheville, sent money so her parents and two sisters could take the bus and attend the Rhododendron Parade. There was a black baby parade, a white baby parade and a show and Ferris wheel behind the Battery Park hotel. This was in 1939 or 40. The show was discontinued during the war.

[2/146] A sister who worked at Enka and roomed in Asheville sent money so she could visit. She describes the S&W Cafeteria, Whites Homburg Shop, Goode's Drug Store [1951 Asheville City Directory: Goode's Drug Stores, Inc., 21 Haywood St.] and the theatres - Imperial [32 Patton Ave.], Plaza [2 Biltmore Ave.], Paramount [116 College], and State [17 Patton Ave.].

[2/166] There was some electricity in her neighborhood but not into her house. There was a rural co-op for electricity. She is now on the French Broad Electric out of Madison County. She wired into this in the mid 40's.

[2/176] She discusses lights, refrigeration, wringer washing machines and ironing. All clothes were cotton and were starched and ironed. In the summer, water in an iron pot, placed next to the spring was heated for clothes washing. In the winter the water was heated over the stove. Rain water was used for baths and washing floors. She wouldn't have wanted to live in the city. Before they had electricity her mother listened to "Ma Perkins" and "Helen Trent" on a battery set. She would work on tobacco but stopped for the radio.

[2/225] In the 30's and 40's hooked rugs were made for "The Treasure Chest" of Efirds, a department store, a branch of Belk's. These were contracted for. She made one.

[2/242] Corduroy was ordered from Sears and her mother, without a pattern, made her a coat. She felt very dressed up.

[2/252] Dresses were bought for the Jr. and Sr. proms and her cap and gown for graduation were rented.

[2/274] Everyone attended church funerals and she walked to the Juniper Baptist Church for Sunday school. There was Bible School in the summer, revivals in the spring and fall. The visiting minister was entertained for at least one meal. The white church she attended burned and a brick one was built.

[2/304] Right after she graduated she went to work at Enka. She continued to live at home and in 1944 earned 45 cents an hour which helped buy groceries. She stayed there 2 ½ years.

[2/333] She married but it didn't last. [John Wesley]

[2/342] She worked for the phone switchboard just as it was ready to change to dial. Her training for the job took 11 days (see enclosure). For a brief time she was at the Grove Park Inn but didn't like having to live in.

[2/378] She worked at the Weaverville Drug Store for 11 years and then as a sales person at Bon Marché, and became assistant to ready-to-wear buyer at the Westgate branch. This department carries the store. The big ad for Sunday was done by Mary Parker (see tape). [Morris Lipinsky, Frances Ficker, Mary Parker]

[2/448] Her next employment was - and is (she works part time now) with Mills Manufacturing Co. which makes parachutes, bags, harnesses, and shoots for the government. There are two buildings on Weaverville Highway. She is an inspector and observed that the young people are not as reliable as the older people. Some people have been called back from retirement. Many plan to work there 35 years. It is a good place to work. The hours are 8 a day - not 11 hours a day like her parents. [Ernest Mills (died), Larry Mills, Ernest Mills' daughter (owner)]