

joined with others] to build a new church on Oakwood Avenue, not far from the Royal Funeral Home.”

When asked if people dressed up to go to church, James said many people did not have clothes to “dress up.” However, they didn’t look like they did when they came out of the field. James said, “They always had their clothes washed and were clean.”

Baptism. James said:

People were baptized in any good little clear spot they could find on the creek or river. The woods were thick back then. People would have their “uniforms” [robes?] on and then one crew would carry them down to be baptized and another would escort them back after they were baptized. They could either step back in the woods to change to something dry or wait. For the baptizing, the minister would put a hand over the face and one behind the back, and the person would be dipped down in the water.

Blacksmith. James said his father usually took the horses to town to be “shoed”(shod), but he knew of one man who had a blacksmith shop over in the Center Grove Church area. His name was Lawrence Goldsmith. He had one on his farm. (This name was not on the Army Real Estate Map at the time of land sale.) It was run by a Black man who worked for him whose name was Lacy Davis. Lacy was “real light skinned. He looked almost like a White person.” James said in later years he and Lacy worked together on the arsenal. He said he thought there might have been another blacksmith in Pond Beat on the same road as Horton School. (Alva Jacobs, who grew up along that road, did not remember one.) When asked if he meant Sam Harris, James said no. The fact that Harris had a blacksmith shop does not mean he did work for others. Frank Jacobs had a blacksmith shop on his farm, but here again, this does not mean he did work for others. James may have been thinking of the blacksmith at the intersection of the Farley-Triana Road and Whitesburg Pike, which was near Pond Beat.

Social Interaction. James said that everyone helped each other. “They all got along pretty good.” In regard to interaction between Blacks and Whites, James said most of the people in their community were Black. His daughter pointed out that most of the people her father’s age did not comment about it much, because their generation was “not far down from slavery.” However, she pointed out that they “felt” things. For example, how do you suppose her grandfather, Moses Love, a landowner who was respected in Mullins Flat, felt when he went to Huntsville and had to step off the sidewalk to let any White man walk by. Edna’s comments serve as an excellent example of oral history passed down. After she spoke, her father took up what she’d said. James Love said:

My daddy had property and was respected as much as a Black man could be. He’d go to town, and any White man, when he got to be a certain age, even an old scroungie White man, that walked by, my daddy would have to step off [the sidewalk] in the street for him. My daddy had to call him “Mr.,” but he’d call my daddy Moses.