

coloreds”] “got along mighty well. Wasn’t no integration, but they all understood each other.”

Zera Jacobs recalled when she was young there were no schools or hospitals for Black people. The community paid someone to teach its children and schooling would sometimes last a month. [Churches were usually the place for the schooling.]

She recalled that the first mail was delivered by horseback. She said when she was very young (that would have been the late 1800’s and early 1900s), “riders would come from Talucah in Morgan County by ferry boat and deliver their mail here before ferrying back home.” Then, “As time changed we got mail riders in Madison County who began to deliver by car and such like.”

Zera said her family [undoubtedly referring to the parcels in her own name at the time the land was sold] owned 58 ¼ acres of land that was sold to the Army. Zera stated:

The government decided they wanted to put the Arsenal there and we didn’t have any choice but to sell. They set the price—what they wanted to pay for it. We had to accept the price.

She said when the government decided to buy property, “they brought papers for you to sign, then didn’t give you a chance to move out—that’s when they started digging ditches and so forth.” Apparently having questioned whether Zera was angry with the government, Vaughn wrote:

No, we didn’t get angry, she [Zera] said of having to leave the “good” farming [rich] government land. “We just took it as something that had to be done. The whole community went. The whites went and the colored went so all had to go.”

Zera said the army didn’t help them find a new home, but it did “furnish a truck to move furniture out here [location off the arsenal]—That’s all the help we got from them.”

According to Zera, Blacks felt the Army chose here because the land was Black-owned. She said, “Everybody cried when we found out we had to separate. It was sad.” [The extensive ownership of property by Black people in the Pond Beat and Mullins Flat area has been documented in the current 2005 research.]

Relocation: Zera and Dock moved with their children to the Moore’s Mill area, where Jacobs family members continue to reside today.

Dock Jacobs continued to farm but also worked for the government during the non-farming months from 1941 to 1942. Dock said, “Me and several others worked in a place making smoke pots.” He also helped mix concrete floors. Then the Army drafted him.