

CLEOPHUS LACY

Telephone interview April 13, 2005

The Family

Cleophus Lacy lives out of the state now. He was born in 1932. His parents were Connie Burton and Collis Lacy. His paternal grandparents were Lucy and Robert Lacy. He said, "They were all dead when I grew up." He noted that his father's sister was Buster Joiner's wife. ["Buster" was Percy Joiner.] His brothers and sisters were William, Ervin, Mary Lue, Bertha, James, Marvin, and Connie.

Where They Lived and Their House

Connie Burton Lacy and Collis Lacy lived in Pond Beat. When the researcher asked where the family lived in relation to Horton School, Cleophus said:

We lived south of the school near the Tennessee River. The house was like a shack. Two rooms and a kitchen in the back. It was on stilts and surrounded by pine trees. It was in a little valley below a hill. We had to walk about a mile to get to the mail on the main road [the current McAlpine Road]. Mother's sister [Elnora Clay Lanier's mother] lived in this area, too. About 95 percent of this area was Black families. There were two or three poor white families—fishermen or hunters.

The mailbox was out there near the big house on the hill. The big white house had pillars in front. No sharecropper houses were right by the big house. They were two or three miles away. Some of the sharecropper houses were built out of log. Some logs were rotted. They were square logs.

Edith Woodward described tenant houses about a quarter mile from the Woodward House, south toward the river. She said most of them were log houses with two or three rooms. However, Edith never mentioned the Woodward house having columns. The house Cleophus described was probably the one on Schiffman & Company, Inc. property that was inhabited by the Schiffman land manager, Robert Long, and his family. James Long described that house as being of a colonial style and having white columns.

When asked if he could recall any other neighbors, Cleophus said:

There was a white family that lived across the way and up by the mountain. Frank Durham. The family had four or five kids. I don't think they went to school. They were very poor. More poor than we were. When they came to borrow something, my mother fed them. They fished all the time and would sell fish in the neighborhood.