

ODIS H. GOLDEN

Interviewed August 4, 2005

Odis Golden was born in May 27, 1923. In 1938, when the Merrimac mill closed for Christmas (and didn't open for a year), Melia Golden was out of work and out of housing. She moved her children from Mill Village to Hickory Grove. Odis said his uncle, Jim Golden, moved with them. Odis was fifteen years old.

The Location of Hickory Grove

Odis said that before the Army bought the land, Hickory Grove was a little community around where Neal Road dead-ends into Jordan Lane (Patton Road). Patton Road used to be called Jordan Lane. The pronunciation is more like "Jurden." The county road map from 1938 shows "Neal" Road crossed Jordan and ran a short distance before ending. The short piece of the road extending east of Jordan (Patton) ran a short distance on Parcel C-13 and then dipped down on C-14, where it ended. It must have run beside the store that was located there.

Their Home and Daily Life

Description of the House. The Goldens rented a house and a garden spot on the J.F. Geiger farm, which had 70 acres (C-108). Odis said, "It wasn't much of a house." Geiger himself did not live on the property. The "run down" house rented for \$8 to \$10 a month. Odis commented:

It stood on rock pillars and was four feet off the ground in the back. It was an old poplar house; it had cracks in it everywhere. The winters were real cold, and the wind whistled Dixie through the house. We like to froze our back ends off.

The house had a hall down the middle. There was one door in the front, one on the side, and one in the back. The roof was tin. The front door opened into a hall. One room was to the right and one was to the left. Uncle Jim had the room on the left. It had a small fireplace in it, which was probably meant for burning coal. The bedroom on the right had a bigger fireplace, which opened only to that room. Two beds were in the room. Odis explained that in those days, people didn't necessarily have a living room.

Behind the bedroom on the right side was the kitchen. The only inside door for the kitchen was through that bedroom. From the outside, the kitchen could be entered from a door in the back or the one on the east side that was accessed from the high porch that ran along that side of the house.

The Well. The Goldens got water from a pipe well.