

and I mean no disrespect in saying it, knock-kneed.” “However,” Odis commented wryly, “Uncle Jim liked a shot of whiskey and would walk a hundred miles for it.” Uncle Jim did most of the plowing.

How They Survived. Odis said he worked in the fields alongside his mother, hoeing and picking cotton and corn. They got paid 75 cents a day for twelve hours work. They worked in their garden plot. “My mother canned everything,” Odis said. “That’s how we made it. They call them the good old days, but I wouldn’t want any more of them.”

Going to Town

Since the Goldens didn’t have a mule or horse of their own, if Odis wanted to go to town (the mill village), he’d have to walk a couple of miles, and he commented with feeling that he “got mighty tired of walking everywhere.”

The Neighbors

The house the Goldens rented was “down the slope from the mountain.” Odis said it had been close to 70 years ago, and he couldn’t remember the name of the mountain for sure, but he thought it was Madkin. A corn patch and maybe another field was between their house and the mountain. Geiger planted the corn, or rather, the people who worked for him did. They didn’t fertilize it, so it didn’t grow well. There were a lot of rocks in the field on the slope. Odis was trying to pull some out once and nearly broke his ribs.

Odis said:

A lot of colored people lived in little houses—shacks—up around the mountain. Most of them were farm hands. They let their hogs run loose to eat off other people’s places and root up things. Some people got as mad as blazes about that. My little old dog would run them back.

An old colored lady, they called her Aunt Mattie, lived on the mountain. She was a good old lady. She went to Mill Village to wash clothes for people.

I remember Buster. He lived on the mountain. He had blue tick hounds. Somebody killed one of them once. I can’t remember if they shot it or poisoned it. Buster made a big stink about it. I didn’t blame him. I would have, too. Me and a colored boy, Shay, took them [the blue tick hounds] rabbit hunting. They were good rabbit hunters.

The researcher asked who Shay was, and Odis replied,