

We were buddies. I was about 15. He lived down the hill from us on Geiger's property. There was two girls and two boys and an old man— Bud, Shay, Dolly and Helen. The old man was Lawrence Childers. He didn't have a wife. He worked on WPA [Work Projects Administration], and the kids worked for the old man [for Geiger]. The boy worked all one spring and the old man gave him an old .22 rifle. But they used the old man's mules to go to the bottoms and cut their wood. They got their house. It was a shack, and I mean, *a shack*.

Other neighbors lived about a mile away. The Brewers were just east of the school on the same side. He had cattle there. They may have belonged to Jones (that parcel is shown as C-12, J.E. Humphrey).

The Community and Daily Life

The School. The teacher let the kids from the nearby Hickory Grove School (Parcel C-110) come and get water from the well. Odis said he guessed they were allowed to come there and fill their buckets because it was a pipe well and safe. One of his sisters went to stay at Merrimack with her aunt, but his baby sister, Dorothy, who was only nine or ten years old, went to Hickory Grove School. Odis never went to the school because he was 13 and it didn't go beyond the sixth grade. His brother went away to the CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) camp.

Odis, who in later years worked on Redstone Arsenal as a draftsman at Facilities Engineering, said that after the Army bought the land, the school building was used for Army purposes. Until about 1975, it was used as the post transportation office. Then it was torn down. It stood on a knoll a little northwest of where Patriot Road meets Neal Road.

The Gin. Odis Golden stated:

There was a cotton gin on the south side of Neal Road just after you got on it [if you turned off Jordan (Patton) on Neal]. I didn't go around it too many times [the mill]. Several of the Colored men who lived up on the mountain worked at the gin. It just ran in the fall. I think a man named Jones owned it. I don't ever remember seeing him.

The Store. A store was located where Neal Road ran into Jordan (Patton Road):

It was right there on the east side of Jordan. It was a one-room store. There may have been a room behind that one for storing things, but I never looked back there. We didn't do much business there. We didn't have enough money. Harrod [spelled as pronounced] General ran it. He came out of Huntsville and then he went back to Huntsville to a store there. [Odis started to say something about the man, and then thought better of it.]