

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this ethnographic research was to learn about the people who lived on the land that is now Redstone Arsenal. The subjects who were interviewed were from the farmsteads in the area around the Union Hill Cumberland Presbyterian Church, the Chaney plantation and the farmsteads south of Elko, Hickory Grove, Mullins Flat, and Pond Beat. The fact that the focus of the interviewing changed after the first several interviews were conducted and the different time periods in which interviewing was conducted have been explained in detail in the Introduction.

The goal of the research was to provide data that would serve a basis for further research. That goal has been met. While new information is generally not presented in the conclusion, it is done so here. Two incidents, both involving shootings [one fatal and one not] have been described in this section. They were not included in the interviews of those who told about them, as the association did not need to be made with family members still living today. However, the incidents were relevant to some of the observations being made below.

A number of observations that can be drawn from the data are presented. Extensive details and supporting evidence are not given here, as that can be found by reading the interviews. The following observations may provide insight for future researchers.

- This study identified three communities by name: Pond Beat, Mullins Flat, and Hickory Grove. The people from Mullins Flat (including Silverhill) and Pond Beat have a strong sense of community. Two men interviewed identified the area where they lived as Hickory Grove.
- In order to establish a frame of reference, two areas were identified: the area in the vicinity of Union Hill Cumberland Presbyterian Church and the area south of the town of Elko. The church was beside a lodge and a store, and the church served as a place for social events; while the church and lodge were focal places for activities, Black former residents did not identify the area with a community name. A White woman who lived in the area said there was no community name—it was just a rural area where people lived.
- A railroad depot was in Elko, thus, a switch of that railroad that was located nearby on the Chaney plantation was called Elko switch. People who lived in the northwest corner of the arsenal identified their location and gave directions by plantation owner name. However, in order to establish a reference for the area, it has been referred to in this report as the farmsteads in the vicinity of Elko or the Elko farmstead community.
- The people, both Black and White, from Mullins Flat and Pond Beat had a very strong sense of community. The residents of these communities were