

February 1989

Recording begins after Mr. Randolph's introduction by a speaker who is not identified.

From time to time Mr. Randolph refers to photographic images projected on a screen during his presentation.

KENT RANDOLPH: Don't let her [presumably the person who introduced Mr. Randolph] talents be known to the IRS, to the FBI, to investigative agencies, etc., because she's good. In two short telephone conversations, that lady learned more about me and recorded more about me than the IRS has on me. *[Audience laughter]* She knows more about me than my wife does now. *[Audience laughter]*

When our good friend over here, who is an attorney—and you know how persuasive these attorneys are—[inaudible], of course, asked me to speak here, my first inclination was to say, “I know three people at least who can do a far better job with this than I can.” But these attorneys, as I said, are very persuasive, and that's the reason I'm here. I'd like to cite just a few of the recollections that I have from my early days in Tucker. And I might point out that I've got a void till about 1940—well, until the late 1940s until 1968, because at that time I went through the process of being in service from '43 to '46, being in college away from home, of course, from about '46 to '50, teaching school and coaching for a year in South Carolina, then coming back to Tucker for a couple of years, then over to Marietta for Southern Bell for about three years, back home for a couple of years, found a wife, located over in Cascade Heights in southwest Atlanta, and from Cascade—spent about five years over in that section of town—and from there to New York, New York, for about three years, and back to Tucker in 1968. So you'll see my tenure in Tucker was not totally consistent; there were a few sporadic breaks in there, to say the least.

My family came to Tucker in 1930. You recall 1930: 1930, the Crash of 1929 had taken place. People had jumped out of the high-story—high buildings in New York. We had lost a home in [name of town inaudible—sounds like “Birmingham”?], North Carolina. The banks had closed. My dad and mom decided that, OK, this is the time we'll locate out of the hills of North Carolina down into the flatlands down near Atlanta, Georgia. So we loaded—not we, because I was only five years old at the time—but my dad and my older brothers loaded up the family and what possessions we had in a Chevrolet truck and came to Tucker, Georgia. At that time we located on a Burns farm. The Burns farm that I'm referring to was located at the corner of Mountain Industrial Boulevard and Hugh Howell Road. These farms were somewhat rundown because of the fact that the people in that area had been depending too much on the growth of cotton. Cotton had depleted the soil, the farmers had not yet gotten into the swing of crop rotation or contour planting, things of this type. But we located there, and that began the trek in Tucker.

From that farmhouse at the corner of Mountain Industrial and Hugh Howell Road, I'd like to take you to above Hugh Howell Road toward Tucker and go through a few reminiscences at that time. As you left the farmhouse and headed north on Hugh Howell Road, you would pass the Will Arnold dairy. The Will Arnold dairy was located on the right, where now the Heritage Plaza is located. His dairy was operated for the purpose of serving an Atlanta market with milk. An interesting point is at that location, Will Arnold's dairy, my brothers, along with Ross Arnold, his son, and some other boys in the neighborhood built a tennis court in back of the house and put up fences with poles to support the wire, things of that type. And that just showed you the climate that was pervading at that time in Tucker. People did things on their own. Proceeding past Mr. Arnold's dairy we came to Westbrook farm, which is located now where Ace Hardware in the Tucker Plaza is located. The DuPont plant—the DuPont plant which is now closed—was directly across the street from that.

Past the Westbrook farm we came on up to the Lawrenceville Highway. Would you believe at that time that the Lawrenceville Highway was the only paved road in Tucker, Georgia? The only paved road. It's hard for us to tell our kids now and for them to even comprehend what [rest of comment inaudible]. We would cross the Lawrenceville Highway where the water tank is now, located on the hillside. There was a little dirt road that went down beside the railroad tracks. Follow that little dirt road down to the bottom of the hill, and at the bottom of the hill Mr. Parks Norris's house was located. That house belonged to the railroad, and Parks was the maintenance [inaudible—sounds like “boy”?] for this area in the Tucker area. There was an old maintenance shack down beside the railroad track, and Parks would work with that—with the maintenance car, which was kept in the maintenance shack, along with a crew of laborers maintaining the track for the Tucker area.

Turning right at that corner, you would cross the railroad, the Seaboard Railroad. The Seaboard Railroad came through Tucker in 1892. If you crossed the railroad tracks and came to Railroad Avenue, the first thing that you would see would be this right here. [*Refers to a projected image.*] This right here is a picture taken about 1910; it was a picture of the chimney house. The building was a false front; it was actually the post office, and I think they had some general store-type goods inside this house. That was the first post office in the Tucker area. It was [inaudible] the running of the railroad [inaudible], because the mail was transported by means of the railroad.

Going on up the street we would come to the Cottingham [spelling?] house. Next to the Cottingham house would be the blacksmith shop owned by Mr. Cottingham. Sam Still has knowledge of this, because his brother-in-law is the son of the Cottingham that I am referring to. And the blacksmith shop was the old, typical blacksmith shop, where Mr. Cottingham repaired tools, he sharpened file points, he shod mules and horses, repaired [inaudible] that even the [inaudible—sounds like “Rettenhall”?] family would take over to him to repair. He had two sons, Malcolm and

Courtney. Mr. Cottingham played the cornet; and, in fact, he played that cornet in services for the Tucker First Baptist Church.

Going past the blacksmith shop we come next to the gin and the sawmill. Cotton was still king in Tucker at that time. Farmers would bring their cotton to be ginned at the sawmill [sic]. They would get—they would bring it—on a Monday morning, for example, when the cotton—during cotton-picking season, you'd see wagons, mules such as this right here [*referring to projected images*], cluttered around the gin, each of the farmers waiting to have his cotton run through the gin and separate the seed, come out with cotton stapled, baled, where they could take it back home and then take it to market [rest inaudible]. Also located here was the sawmill. This complex was owned by Charlie Britt, and it had been started actually by Hiram [last name inaudible—possibly “Frank”?]. It's located now—it was located where the Corn Upholstery is now located in Tucker. Remember that? The daughter of the owner of this plant—of this complex--Charlie Britt was the owner, as I said—the daughter of Charlie Britt was Frances Langford, who's still living in Tucker and who's still a member of First Baptist Church in Tucker.

Proceeding up that road, up Railroad Avenue, the next place that you'd come to would be Dr. Andrews's drugstore. This picture was taken about 1910. There was a lodge upstairs. [*Pauses to address technical issues.*] Would it help if I reduced that light just a tad? Let me try that. That's—if you think we need more reduction of light, we can pull a couple of shades down. What do you think? [Name inaudible], you're a gentleman and a scholar. [*Audience laughter and conversation as adjustments are made.*]

UNIDENTIFIED AUDIENCE MEMBER: You ought to take up a collection after the [rest inaudible]. [*Presentation resumes.*]

KR: In this picture, if you'll look in front of the drugstore, with a hat and a brown coat on—it looks to be brown--that is Mr. George England, who operated the general store a few hundred feet up Main Street going north.

Looking at this next picture, which also shows a picture of Andrews's drugstore and a store next to it, look in the middle of the street, and you'll see two gentlemen with black hats on with overalls on—bib overalls. And the owner [inaudible phrase] are two gentlemen who are two of the three Pickens brothers. Yes, that's right, uh-huh. Two of the three Pickens brothers. As Jack well remembers, they were an institution there in Tucker, those three brothers. It was reputed--reported that they had the best mules in Tucker of all time [inaudible]. There was another brother, whose name was Zeb, I believe; and you'll see him in just a couple of moments. This was about 1910 when this picture was made; and, as you see, at that time the mode of travel was almost in toto either on foot or by mule and wagon. That was about it.

The next picture that you see is a picture of inside Andrews's drugstore. It was taken about 1930. To the left is Dr. Andrews. On the right you see, standing foremost [inaudible] Gil Hudson, related to Jack Hudson over here; and Jack, you might tell us how. Gil later operated a bowling alley there in Tucker. In the rear of the building here, in the rear of the store, you see Mr. Hugh Horton, who operated a service station on the corner of Brockett Road and Lawrenceville Highway.

I have a recollection from about 1931, when my dad brought me to Dr. Andrews. Dr. Andrews took me behind that lattice screenwork to the rear of the store. I had a toe that had become infected, and it was in bad shape. Dr. Andrews took me behind that latticework, set me down in a chair, without the benefit of any anesthesia whatsoever, lanced my toe. [*Collective groan from audience.*] That hurt. I won't forget that for quite some time. This location, by the way, was the location of the post office when it was first moved out of Cofer's general store, across the street into this building, on a temporary basis.

Next we have Aussie Andrews, who is standing in front of the service station—or filling station [inaudible]. Aussie was the son of Dr. Andrews, who operated the service station for years and years. I don't have any idea who the party is walking in the street. Next door to Aussie's service station is Tucker Feed and Grocery Company. Let me see if I can clear this up just a tad. I apologize for these slides, but they're the best we could get with what we have to work with. [Inaudible comment]

A moment ago I told you that I'd show you the other Pickens brother. There he is on the left, white cap, bib overalls. Next to him is Foster Thomas. The Pickens brothers had an interesting cycle of life. They would get up early in the morning, do all their work, and by about ten or ten-thirty, they would be down in Tucker on the loafers' benches [*audience laughter*]. They knew everything that had ever taken place in Tucker. If we had one of those three gentlemen here, they could tell you far more about the early days of Tucker than I could. On the other side is Mr. Foster Thomas. He was a painter and also occupied and spent some time on the loafers' benches there in Tucker.

Across the railroad—I think parked across the street but on the same side of the railroad there—is the depot. This picture was taken about 1930. This depot—you'll notice the signal tower in front of the depot. You can't see it, but on that signal tower was a mail hook. This mail hook was the place where Mr. Johnny Morris would take the mail, which had been bagged, place it on a mail hook for pickup by a train at specific times during the day. Johnny Morris was an old-timer who had been in Tucker for a long time. He had some kind of special contract with postal department for doing this. Trains, as they would come by, [inaudible phrase] throw off the bags of mail destined for Tucker and would pick up the mail from the special hook on that tower there with their equipment on the train. Mr. Johnny Morris had polio as a kid. He had—because of his polio he had to wear a special leg brace at all times, and he loved to play checkers. There was a railway express agency there and a depot

agency who operated from this depot and was [inaudible] of all good things that [inaudible] railroad at that time.

The next picture that you see is that of Cofer Brothers general store. This picture was taken about 1930, and it was located directly across the street from Dr. Andrews's drugstore. It was a building which had been there from about the mid-'20s. It was a building—but you can't tell it from this view right here, but there was no pavement in front of that building. The sidewalk just outside the building was paved, and the location where you see those posts, that was paved. But everything else was good, old, red, Georgia hard-packed clay. This store was operated by Reid and Kelly Cofer, who were the sons of Dr. William P. Cofer. Those two sons had raised produce on a farm of Dr. Cofer's, and they had, by means of a mule and wagon, loaded produce on the wagon and had taken that produce into this area of town along Ponce de Leon Avenue for selling that produce to some of the rich folks in town, some of the city slickers.

The first store that the Cofer brothers had was opened in 1919, and it was open [rest of comment inaudible]. I don't know who they bought it from. The Cofers opened their store in the England's store location, which had been in business back in 1910 era. I'll show you a picture of the England's store in just a few minutes. The Cofer brothers married sisters, Belle and Louise Cannon. They had good success with their store. They opened it in 1919, across the street from this location right here. And coincident with that, with their success, they opened locations in Chamblee, Lithonia, Clarkston, Stone Mountain, and Covington. About the mid-twenties, they built homes, side by side, on Lawrenceville Highway, two nice, two-story brick homes.

In the meat market, in this particular store right here, in this particular location, was a party by the name of George Thomas. George Thomas was an excellent meat cutter, and people from as far away as Decatur would come and get their meat from George Thomas. George Thomas even tutored the person that you hear speaking right now in cutting porkchops and a few things of that type, and later on I'll mention that. In the grocery, we had Earnest Atkinson, who was a nephew of the Cofers, and T. J. Cofer, who was related to [inaudible]. So here, in addition to groceries, dry goods items, farm equipment, horse collars, [inaudible], building supplies, lumber, nails, you name it. The post office was located in this building at the time, and the postmaster was Kelly Cofer. Kelly Cofer had become postmaster in 1919, at the time that they opened the store over in the England's store [inaudible]. Kelly had a very good helper, whose name was Meredith Finley [spelling?], who did most of the work in the post office. But Kelly was officially postmaster. The office—the person who supervised most of the office work was Miss—notice I refer to her as “Miss”—Louise Cofer. Her name, of course, was Mrs. Louise Cofer. She was the wife of Kelly Cofer. As I said a moment ago, they

needed to employ a clerk sometime in the early '40s to work on Saturdays and during the summer, and I got some experience in doing lots of things in the general store.

Across the street from this store was the location that was referred to as the Cofer's feed and grain store. At that point they dispensed all the feeds, all the grains, and some of the supplies such as concrete, things of that type. In this picture right here, [inaudible] enumerate--Ellen and Jack, I'm sure you remember these people, Eddie Flowers in the apron; my dad, Pop Randolph, who is standing in front [inaudible]; [inaudible] I can't recall his first name, and then Earnest Hopkins, on the right side. This was located at the corner of Railroad Avenue and Main Street, and on the other side of the store was the railroad track itself, made for easy loading and unloading of items from this warehouse and on the shelves.

Next you see a scene of Tucker—of Cofer's dry good department. And look if you will please at the folks [inaudible] in the foreground [inaudible] behind [rest of sentence inaudible]. Women would come in, purchase their [inaudible] materials from these folks, take them home, and prepare dresses out of them—dresses, blouse, etc., etc. Notice the old-fashioned lights, of course, hanging in there. You did have electricity in the 1930s, but it was only in certain locations that they had electricity. Again, I'd like to insert a little personal reference there. I had the pleasure of sweeping out that store every once in a while, [inaudible] and the pay that I received at that time was twenty-five cents for sweeping out that entire dry goods department. Fun and games. The names of the ladies—I don't know who those ladies are. Jack and Kelly, you may know some of them; I do not. So here were ready-to-wear items, men's suits and shirts, overalls—which was the biggest seller for kids my age at that time--shoes, hats, etc., etc.

This store—the [inaudible] store, [inaudible] General Store, which was the meat market, the grocery department, and the dry goods department—burned to the ground in 1948. In that fire was fireman by the name of Stephens [Stevens?], who died in his work as a fireman. As I recall, his death was caused by a heart attack; but that was precipitated by the exertion that he had made in coming to this fire. There was some \$250,000 in damages done to the store at that time. The Cofer brothers contemplated at that time not to rebuild it; but they were petitioned—some five pages of petition of people who asked them to rebuild the store. When they learned of this, then they changed their mind and rebuilt the store in the same location with about the same configuration that it was at that time.

Then in 1951 Kelly Cofer, the younger of the two Cofer brothers, died suddenly. Kelly Cofer was a fun-loving, [inaudible] man. And there was an expression about them that always stuck in my mind, and that was that Kelly watches the change, but Reid takes care of the dollars [*audience laughter*]. I don't know how much truth there was to that, but that really stuck in my mind.

Gene Cofer, the son of Reid Cofer, is head of the firm since the death of Reid Cofer some two years ago, and he's adapted to the changes that have taken place in the Tucker area. He now has a multi-million-dollar annual business in the building business today. He has ceased operating a dry-goods, grocery, general department store, and has gone in toto to the building-supply business. This building, which has been renovated, is occupied by numerous shops now in this complex.

Across the street was the store that I referred to a moment ago. This is the store in a picture taken about 1910, which was occupied by England's General Store. This was the store building where the Cofers first opened their general store in 1919. The next slide shows a similar picture of the England's store taken about the same time. The next slide is a picture of the inside of the England's store, taken about 1910. You'll notice the light hanging back there. That appears to be an old kerosene lantern of some type. An old clock appears to be standing on top of the equipment there in the middle of the room also. That store, by the way, was located on the east side of Main Street, about where Fountain's Drug Store is located now. That's an approximation.

This slide that you see right here was taken about 1910 and was a picture of a 1910 Reo automobile, which was owned by Junius [spelling?] England, I believe his name was. And it was the first automobile in the Tucker area.

Up the street a short distance from there is the Bank of Tucker. This picture was taken somewhere around 1920. This bank was founded in 1919 by P. K. and Ellis Burns. P. K. had just started his law practice in Decatur in 1919, at the time this bank was opened. He was a good businessman; and, in fact, they were both good businessmen. And they were born on the farm that was located where the DuPont plant—which is not active at the moment—is presently located. These gentlemen were generous: they gave land to various—for various uses in the community, church property, things of this type. Now, Ellis Burns was a great collector of records, Edison-Victor-type records. P. K. Burns was a great booster of Tucker.

And in his work with you city slickers here in Decatur he had the opportunity in 1957 to make a speech. At that time he said that Tucker had great—was under some very lucky numbers. Those numbers were three, seven, and eleven. For example, he said that Tucker was [inaudible—could be “six to seven” or “sixty-seven”] feet higher than Atlanta. He said that there were eleven paved roads in and out of Tucker at that time. Notice that changed from one paved road [rest inaudible]. He said that Tucker was seven miles from Decatur, seven miles from Chamblee, seven miles from Doraville, seven miles from Doraville, seven miles from [inaudible], seven from Lilburn, and within seven miles of Stone Mountain. He said that Tucker was seven or eleven miles from Emory, Georgia Tech, Agnes Scott, Oglethorpe, and Georgia State, which at that time was the Georgia School of Business Administration, I believe. He said that Tucker had seven churches: Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Sanctified,

Catholic, Christian, and Primitive Baptist. He said that Tucker had seven accredited high schools and seven [inaudible]. Notice those sevens. You gamblers would have a ball with that. He said that Tucker was laid out in 1907. There are some sources that differ with that. Some sources say it was laid out in 1910. I don't know which is accurate. He said that there were twenty-seven springs which rise and flow from the Tucker area and that they flow in different directions. Those springs which are located north of LaVista Road and west of Chamblee-Tucker Road flowed toward the Gulf of Mexico. Those springs which rise and flow east of Chamblee-Tucker Road and south of LaVista Road flow to the Atlantic Ocean. I never thought of that until I read this not too long ago; and when you stop to think about it, I think he was right.

The Bank of Tucker was sold to the Cofer brothers in 1944. Mrs. Selma Peyton [spelling?] was an institution at that time at that bank, and all of us who lived at that had dealings--if you dealt with the bank, you dealt with Mrs. Peyton [spelling?]. Kelly Cofer crossing the street with two paper bags—two or more paper bags under his arm, a cigar in his mouth, was a vision that sticks in my mind. What was he carrying in those paper bags? Money. Carrying money from the general store across to the bank to place in the bank. To the best of my knowledge there was never any problems with Kelly taking his money—the money across the street in paper bags. The Cofer brothers later sold this bank to C&S Bank. C&S Bank itself, this building no longer exists. The C&S Bank has relocated facing First Avenue in a totally different type complex.

Here's a scene which you might have interest in: Behind the A Model Ford is Tucker Barber and Beauty Shop, and behind the bus on the left is the blacksmith shop. The bus is being loaded with young men who are going to Fort MacPherson in order to enter the armed services at that time. That picture was probably taken from the front of Doc Newsome's drugstore. In fact, it may have been taken by Doc Newsome himself; we're not sure. Newsome's drugstore was an institution which opened in 1939. Dr. Newsome at that time had secured from Dr. Andrews—Dr. Andrews and Dr. Andrews's drugstore that I referred to a while ago on the corner of Railroad Avenue and Main Street—he had secured from Dr. Andrews his fixtures and his stock and had opened a drugstore in a building next to Cofer's general store on the west side of Main Street. Dr. Newsome's wife was a dietician, Susan Cofer. Doc Newsome was known as being a hunter and a fisherman. Of course, any person who's known as being a fisherman, we're suspicious of him to begin with [*laughter*]. The stories that he might tell, you just second-guess those. He was also known as a historian. He was known as a connoisseur of fine food. He was known as being thrifty but generous--generous when the chips were down and somebody needed assistance, Doc would be there ready to help. He was known as being intellectual; he was known as being wise. He was a teacher of work ethics, of thrift, and principles. For example, the young men who worked for him as soda jerks in the drugstore were given the

opportunity that for each five dollars they would bank, Dr. Newsome would match that with one dollar, which was not a bad investment [rest of sentence inaudible]. He also had a means of teaching good morals. There two young men who plotted to steal a carton of cigarettes from him one day. They stole the carton of cigarettes; and as one young man was starting out the door with a carton of cigarettes, who was standing there to greet him but Doc Newsome? His question was, "Kent, where are you going with those cigarettes?" [Audience laughter] Who was Kent? It was me. Doc Newsome had the wisdom to say, "Kent, you wait for me right here." From there he went down to Cofer Brothers, where my dad was the foreman. He got my dad and brought him back to the drugstore. Needless to say, correction was taken [rest of sentence inaudible]. Doc Newsome was known as a great baseball hitter also. And, in fact, in a game between the businessmen of Tucker and the high school, he was purported to have had three hits at three times at bat. [Inaudible comment]. He retired two years ago, and the drugstore is still in operation. It's in operation as Carter's drugstore and is located up the street a short distance from [inaudible]. Doc Newsome was to be here today. I guess the inclement weather caught up with him.

Across the street from here—in fact, behind the bush [inaudible] is Arnold's service station. And there's some vagueness as to when this service station went into business, when the bowling alley went into business, so I'm not going to comment on that except to say that this building at one time or another, whether the late '30s or early '40s, served as a bowling alley, served as the location of Arnold's service station, served as the location of Tucker Shoe Shop, and there may have been other small businesses that I'm not familiar with that were involved at that time.

When we go on up the street north on Main Street, the next place that you would come to would be the house of Mr. Claude Carroll. Mr. Claude Carroll was a person who was very active in civic life in the area of Tucker. He was a member of the draft board, and his wife was great teacher of piano. His sister-in-law, Mrs. [Lewis? Louis?] had her home directly across—part of the wheat field across the street [rest of sentence inaudible], where the [inaudible] is now located in a complex called Tucker Common.

The next picture--the next thing that you see as you went up the street would have been the original school of Tucker. This school was built in 1915, and they ceased using it in 1929. The land on which this building is located is now occupied by a building which is owned by the Tucker First Baptist Church and is used for the young adults at this point, [inaudible] grocery store, and as an office for [inaudible] location. The lot was owned by Gene Cofer, who in turn has sold that complex to the Tucker First Baptist Church.

I don't have a picture of it, but the next thing you would have seen as you went up the street would have been the Tucker First Baptist Church. It was located at the corner of Main and LaVista

Road, and it sprang from a [inaudible--sounds like "Brush Arbor"?] revival of 1893, where Reverend A. J. Goss, who was an Atlanta streetcar operator, came out and preached a revival. There were some twenty-seven conversions at that time; and the church was formed in 1893, with fifty-seven charter members, twenty-seven of whom were those conversions that I referred to.

The first church house for Tucker First Baptist Church was built in 1895, and the new church--a new church, I should say--was built in 1928. In 1930, when we first went to the church, the thing that you saw when you came up there was first the various--just a sprinkling of automobiles--you saw mules, wagons, horses, and horses and buggies. Again, the mode of transportation at that time was [rest of sentence inaudible]. When you went inside the church, you saw pot-belly stoves; no furnaces at that time. You saw pews, which were homemade, painted black. They were made out of slats. They had cracks between the slats. And if you've ever had the opportunity to sit on pews of this type, you know what it is to be pinched [*laughter*]. It's a feeling that you don't really appreciate.

There was no baptistry in this church at that time. The baptisms that took place took place in pools [rest of sentence inaudible]. The pool that was being used in the early 1930s was the pool down on Mr. [inaudible--sounds like Causley?] Cook's property, down on Henderson Road. A baptistry was added about 1938 between the first and second [inaudible] of the Sunday school [inaudible] that time. A furnace was also added in 1938, and I even happen to remember the name of the janitor in 1938, who was making five dollars a month--again, a personal reference. His name was Kent Randolph [*laughter*]. He scrubbed floors, dusted, fired the furnace on Sunday mornings.

The next thing that you see moves us across the street to the school. This school building housed both the high school and the elementary school at that time. Envision if you would, in back of this building, the old baseball field. And envision if you would in the foreground, right before us here, a basketball court, made on a dirt surface. This basketball court was divided [inaudible]. Boys would actually play games for the high school on this dirt court. My brother, who played basketball at the time, said on a windy night you had to make real allowances for the wind when shooting a basket. And if you didn't, you wouldn't get [rest inaudible].

The principal of the school at the time we moved to Tucker was a party by the name of Clay Huntley [spelling?]. He sticks in my mind very [inaudible]. He was a stern disciplinarian, he was a good educator, and a fine man [inaudible]. Later Avery Griggs took over when Mr. Huntley left and served capably in that [inaudible].

The next thing that you see is a scene from 1931, first grade in Tucker, Georgia. If you would, I want to direct your attention to the person on the front row on the extreme left. The guy with all the hair, in that location there, has lost a little of this now, because that was me [*laughter*]. [*To audience member*] Jack, are you in this picture? I looked for you, and I couldn't find you.

AUDIENCE MEMBER NAMED JACK: I don't know. That was so long ago [laughter].

KR: Next to me is Homer [inaudible last name], who was one of the bus drivers. We had two buses operating then. One of the bus drivers. Next to him is Robert Booth Lindsey [Lindsay?], son of the rural mail carrier at that time. I don't know the guy next to him, but next to him is Dean Hopkins, the son of D. B. Hopkins, a builder there in Tucker. Next to him is [inaudible--sounds like "Emlyn Flowers"?], the son of a [inaudible] who lived on LaVista Road. Miss Kennington was the teacher. Miss Kennington ended up being the wife of [inaudible first name--sounds like "Hosie" or "Hosea"?] Andrews, son of Dr. W. W. Andrews, who we saw just a few minutes ago. In 19--in the late 1930s, about 1938--this building was renovated and became the high school building--a home ec., the shop, and a high school building. As I recall, WPA labor was used partly in building this building. I had to finish high school while that high school building was still in use in 19[rest of year inaudible].

The next figure that you see is that of Browning's Courthouse. Browning's Courthouse was located at the corner of Tucker-Chamblee and LaVista Roads, and it was across from Thomas's general store when we first moved to Tucker. Thomas's general store, prior to that, had been England's general store before they had moved down into downtown Tucker. And in the last few years the people who had occupied the building across the street from the courthouse was Clyde Henderson, who had his dental offices at that location.

The Tucker courthouse--this courthouse, I should say, not the Tucker courthouse--was the Justice of the Peace office [inaudible] Militia District No. 572. It was cited in the reports from the Federal Military Operations in July 1864 as Browning's Courthouse. It served as a meeting and dispersal point for Logan's 15th Army Corps, [inaudible] 2nd Brigade, Smith's 2nd Division, Major Holden's Contingent of Logan's Escort [several inaudible words; possibly end of one sentence and beginning of another] Georgia Railroad in Stone Mountain. It served as the polling place for elections in the Browning's District. It served as the place for Justice of the Peace's legal procedures during the 1930s and '40s. Howard Young, [inaudible] there [inaudible], a man there in Tucker, served as the Justice of the Peace in addition to being [rest of sentence inaudible]. It was restored and moved just last year to the Tucker Recreation Center, which is farther west on LaVista Road on [inaudible]. Gene Cofer and Mark [inaudible] were instrumental in getting [inaudible].

The next shot you see is that of the original Methodist church, which is located now on Bancroft Circle. As I recall, that was the same church building that was here when we first moved to Tucker. I attended this church for Easter egg hunts along in the early '30s. That church, by the way, was later moved to LaVista Road, directly across the street from the First Baptist church in Tucker.

The next shot which you see is that of Tucker Mattress Company. Tucker Mattress Company was started in 1917. [Beginning of sentence inaudible] was located at Tucker-Chamblee Road and

[inaudible word] Road. It was started by L. J. "Papa" Hewitt, who had moved here from Ohio. His son, Wayman [spelling?] Hewitt, his wife, Helen Hewitt, continued the operation of the store. In 1937 they moved the plant from its location on Chamblee-Tucker Road down to its present location on Lawrenceville Highway. It is now operated by James and his mother, Helen.

I can't find any record--any historical record of this, but there was reported to be a saloon and a racetrack in the Tucker area. And it was purported to be located at the corner of Fellowship Road and Lawrenceville Highway. This location is the present location of Tucker Square, I think is the name of that shopping center. It's purported that it was owned and operated by [rest inaudible] for whom the [inaudible--could be "Browning's"?] District was named. He was one of the earliest settlers of the 1821 land grant, land lottery system, which took place at that time. And it's said that this was a place for drinking, a place for talking politics, a place for racing and betting on horses, and a place for resting from the farm chores.

The next slide that I have is that of [inaudible phrase(s) and a skip in recording] Fellowship Road [skip in recording] Primitive Baptist church. It was located on Fellowship Road. It *is* located on Fellowship Road, just south of the Presbyterian church. It was the first church in Tucker, and this picture here is the second of four church buildings that have formed the history of this church. A party by the name of Jean--Jane Tucker sold the church one acre of land for twelve dollars [inaudible] location of this building. I don't know the date of that transaction.

During the 1930s [inaudible] reunions took place in this grove of trees that you see out behind me in front of this church. And at that time you had to attend the group meeting. That was one of the social functions of the year you had to be [inaudible]. That cemetery, by the way, which is to the right of that present church building, is the cemetery where my dad, my mama, and my brother are presently buried.

The last scene that you see is that of "Hello World." Mrs. Park reminded me of this location, and I scrounged a film of this hole-in-the-wall service station. My dad saw that in the early 1930s, and it [inaudible phrase], and he constantly talked about "Hello World," and it really caught his attention. It's purported that the name of that service station had been gained from a church--from a radio program. When the radio program was signing off, [inaudible] would say, "Hello, world." [*Inaudible phrase or sentence; inaudible conversation among audience members.*] It served in the 1920s, the 1930s, the 1940s, and it was a landmark, to say the least. I understand that Ed Chewing was the person who actually started this station, and he lived across the road from the station.

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: Where was that located?

KR: That was located at the corner of Montreal Road and Lawrenceville Highway.

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: That's what I thought, Montreal, yeah.

KR: [Inaudible response] That building, I believe, has now been taken down and is a place who sells motorcycles located at that physical location, but not in the same building.

Now, you've noticed that I haven't made any reference to lots of things about Tucker. For example, I haven't made any reference to the Tucker Woman's Club; civic organizations; Tucker Days; [inaudible]; the underpass on Fellowship Road; the Northlake Shopping Center; Tucker Health Center; to only just a couple of the churches--not all the churches; the newspapers, like *The Tucker Tattler* and *The Eagle*, [inaudible] Tucker Federal. Notice I haven't made any mention of Fitzgerald Field, the Tucker Youth Program, which is still in operation [rest inaudible]. Notice I haven't made any mention of Tucker's expansion of the residential area, which has taken place between the time that I've been talking about and today. Notice I haven't made any mention of the tremendous industrial expansion that's taken place, industrial building starting with businesses such as Tucco [Concrete], DuPont, and then branching out into the Tucker-Stone Mountain industrial area, Montreal industrial area, and the Royal Atlanta industrial area.

This boom is still continuing in the Tucker area; and, as far as I can see, it's going to continue. As Dewey Turner said in his book--I have a copy on the table over here--as he said in his 1986 book, "Tucker has made the transition from its cotton fields to high technology. Many people have lived this transition; a few of them have returned to Tucker, far more than they took out. Farmers learned early on that if they merely take out of the land their crops and don't put anything back, they're on a downhill slide. If they don't do things to protect the richness of the soil, continue to maintain that, then they're in trouble. Some of the people, though--I'd like to mention just a few; this is certainly not all of them--some of the people who have made solid contributions to plowing back into the community more than they took out of the community are people like P. A. Burns, the attorney, banker, and landowner; Ellis Burns, the banker; Reid, Belle, and Gene Cofer, merchants, bankers, landowners; Kelly and Louise Cofer, merchants, bankers, and landowners; W. W. Andrews, drugstore owner and operator and doctor; W. A. Newsome, drugstore owner and operator; Al Fountain, drugstore owner and operator; Mark Henderson, Tucco Concrete; Charlie [inaudible], Tucker Federal president and attorney; Roy Hudgins [Hudgens?], Tucker Federal public relations upon his retirement--public relations for Tucker Federal on his retirement; Dewey Tucker, newspaper writer and editor; Clyde Henderson, dentist and civic worker, a great [inaudible] for the Tucker area; Horace Richardson, a man who initiated and got off the ground Tucker Days; Charlie Fitzgerald, who was an electronic engineer by profession but was a developer of youth as an avocation, you might say [inaudible]; Emmett [last name inaudible--could be "Miles" or "Mize"?], along with this tall, skinny fellow sitting on my left over here, who worked also on this Tucker Youth program.

Where does Tucker go from here? With its rich heritage, I've got every confidence that Tucker is going to continue its growth and progress all into the future. But today I want to give one bit of information to you people who are here, and that one bit of information is, I suggest that you leave now, go home, and prepare for visitors. Those visitors who are going to be coming to see you very shortly are shown in this slide right here. *[Shows early 1900s slide of a buckboard, pulled by a horse or mule, loaded full of people; audience reacts with laughter.]* *[First few words inaudible]* visitors coming in from Tucker, Georgia. They're some of your country cousins. They'll be very hungry, they're going to need space sit down and rest.

I don't know all the history of Tucker, Georgia. Helen, Jack, and some of you other people here in this audience here today probably know far more than I. If there are any questions that you think we might answer, fire away.

MODERATOR: Well, thank you for an excellent program. We normally take a few minutes for questions, and then we have some light refreshments in the courtroom. So, if anyone has any questions? It was just a really, extremely good presentation.

AUDIENCE MEMBERS, *off-camera, respond favorably; most of their comments inaudible and sprinkled with laughter.*

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: Was there ever a name on the Browning Courthouse?

KR: Yes, I think there is *[rest inaudible]*. *[Inaudible comments among audience members.]*

KR clicks through several slides before displaying one.

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: I think "Browning" was what was on it, wasn't it?

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: I that was the name of it.

[Inaudible comments among audience members.]

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: It was on the old building before they moved it. I'm sure it was.

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: You mean this is in a different place *[rest inaudible]*?

KR, *referring to slide of court building*: That's "Courthouse." The first word, I can't tell whether that is "Browning's" or not. Y'all read that.

[Inaudible comments among audience members.]

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: I went by it *[inaudible]* other day, and there wasn't any kind of identification on it at all.

KR: Yeah, they've not finished all the restoration and--

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: *[First few words inaudible]* Military District courthouse *[rest inaudible]*.

KR: Yes, that's my understanding. [Audience member makes inaudible comment.] No, it was [inaudible].

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: [Inaudible] Military District [inaudible].

KR: Right, and it--[*Inaudible comment from audience member*] I think it was the Browning's District. That's my understanding.

AUDIENCE MEMBER; first name Jack, last name unknown, *off-camera*: In your research, did you get any reliability as far as the story goes as to where Tucker got its original name from the engineer of the--

KR: Got about two or three stories.

JACK [last name unknown], *off-camera*: I just wondered--

KR: No, I don't get any definitive conclusion on that, Jack, at all. Dewey Turner concluded that his best opinion was that it was named after a family of Tuckers who lived in the area. That was his conclusion. I don't know--there's no definitive information on it. Nothing that I can locate.

JACK [last name unknown], *off-camera*: Well, the one I had heard was that it was an engineer on the railroad that laid out the town.

KR: I have heard that story, too, Jack.

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: Are the copies of *The Tucker Tattler* extant? Have they been microfilmed? Do you know if there's a [trails off; rest inaudible]?

KR: There's copy of *The Eagle*, which was published by Tucker Federal, have been microfilmed. [Rest inaudible]

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: I was wondering about *The Tattler*.

KR: About *The Tattler*? I don't know. You may contact--I believe Dewey Turner's wife. Is she still living, Jack?

JACK [last name unknown]: Yeah, Ruthie--

KR: She would probably have knowledge of that. I don't know.

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: The Henderson family was very prominent--

KR: Oh, yes

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: --everything Henderson, I--

KR: Oh, yeah

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: There's still about four or five of his great-great-grandchildren living in the Tucker area. I've been trying to contact Tucco.

KR: That's Martin Henderson. The Henderson family was a very prominent family in that area, yes, very prominent. Let me point out that what I've talked about today is no attempt to cover all of the history of Tucker, and there's no way that you could cover all of the history of Tucker in this short time.

I just had to hit some of the highlights and some of the highlights on film, which I could locate. That's what I'm trying to do.

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: That was well done!

Audience applause

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: [Inaudible phrase] any of these people you named?

KR: Sir?

AUDIENCE MEMBER, *off-camera*: [Inaudible] famous on WSB, is she any of these people who you named?

KR: I'm aware of her, only through listening to local WSB. I not know her in person, though. I reached [*rest of sentence inaudible due to audience conversation in background*]. [*Audience member makes inaudible comment in response.*]

Rest of recording consists of inaudible conversations among audience.

END OF RECORDING

Transcribed by cgs