

Mississippi Oral History Program

Simpson County Historical and Genealogical
Oral History Project

An Oral History

with

Chrysteen Warren Flynt

Interviewer: Joe White

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An Oral History with Chrysteen Warren Flynt, Volume 1217, Part 5

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Biography

Effie Chrysteen Flynt was born in November 1910 in D'Lo, MS to John Anselum Warren Sr. and Effie Bowman Warren. Her parents owned the D'Lo Mercantile Company until it burned down. Shortly after, her father worked for the Finkbine Lumber Company, serving as a logging superintendent. Flynt is one of eight children. She attended D'Lo School, beginning at the age of six, and would go on to complete all twelve grades, graduating in 1929. After finishing school, Flynt went to Delta State Teachers College until her family lost money during the Great Depression. To help alleviate her parents' financial burden, Flynt dropped out of Delta State. She later returned to school, attending Southern Teachers College (now the University of Southern Mississippi). Flynt graduated from Southern Teachers College and began teaching at Union School in Simpson County. She married William Vardaman Flynt in Collins, MS, in October 1933. Her and her husband had three children together. Flynt taught at Mendenhall High School from 1953 to 1974 – the entirety of her teaching career would come to thirty-six years.

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AN ORAL HISTORY
with
CHRYSTEEN WARREN FLYNT

This is an interview for the Mississippi Oral History Program of The University of Southern Mississippi Simpson County Project. The interview is with Chrysteen Warren Flynt and is taking place on April 13, 2003. The interviewer is Joe White.

White: My name is Joe White, and this is a noisy piece of paper. Today is Sunday, April the thirteenth, 2003. This interview is conducted under a grant from the Mississippi Humanities Council as a part of the oral history project and is directed by The University of Southern Mississippi. Today we're interviewing Ms. Chrysteen Flynt in her home in D'Lo, Mississippi. Ms. Flynt, would you state your full name?

Flynt: Effie Chrysteen Flynt.

White: Effie Chrysteen Flynt. When were you born, Ms. Flynt?

Flynt: D'Lo.

White: What year?

Flynt: Nineteen ten.

White: And what month and day?

Flynt: The eleventh month, the twenty-sixth day, [November 26, 1910].

White: The eleventh month, the twenty-sixth day. You've been a resident of D'Lo your entire life, I presume.

Flynt: Yes, except just maybe a few years I'd be away, but right back to D'Lo I'd come.

White: Could you state your parents' names?

Flynt: My father was John Anselum Warren Sr., and my mother was Effie Bowman Warren.

White: And where were they born?

Flynt: My father was born in Rankin County, and I don't recall if it's Scott or Simpson or Scott or Smith. I don't remember which county my mother was born in.

White: They both resided in D'Lo when you were born. Is that right?

Flynt: Oh, yes. Oh, yes.

White: What did your father do?

Flynt: My father was first a farmer, and then he and my mother married, and so they came to D'Lo and bought out D'Lo Mercantile Company, which was a big store down where R.L. Mangrum's later was, across from the bank. And then after the store burned—they were away one weekend, and the store caught fire and burned. And he sold their house, land here and moved away. But then in three years he wanted a good school, so we found our way back to D'Lo.

White: Didn't he later also work with Finkbine Lumber Company?

Flynt: Oh, that's where he was when he came back to D'Lo the last time; he was the logging superintendent.

White: Do you remember what years he was logging superintendent?

Flynt: Well, it must have been in 1918. I guess it must have been 1918.

White: And he did that for about ten years or so?

Flynt: Yes. And during this time, too, that he was logging superintendent, the mill contracted for him to move the slabs, which were cut from the trees. And then as the slabs came off on a roller, then they were cut up and then went on the roller and dumped. And of course at that time the people in D'Lo used wood to burn in their stoves, kitchen stoves and also in their fireplaces or heaters or whatever they had. And so he had four trucks that would haul this lumber, any of the refuse that they were not going to use for lumber, you see, went on the belts, went out there, so they hauled it away. And oh, by the way, let me tell you this.

White: I'm always ready for (inaudible) story. (laughter)

Flynt: My dad had four trucks, and so we had one. When we got one new one, well, they were going out to my grandmother's at Galilee, out from Puckett.

White: And what was her name? I don't mean to stop you with the story, but what was your grandmother's name?

Flynt: My grandmother's name. Well, this was my grandfather, Dr. Warren, and his wife Mollie, well, Mary, but we called her Mollie. So we were on the way out there, and my mother and daddy were sitting up front, and you know back in those days, you didn't go but about twenty or thirty miles an hour. You were really speeding.

White: Maximum, I would imagine. (laughter)

Flynt: Yeah. And so the truck was new, (laughter) and back then they said, “Don’t drive a new car or truck very fast at first. Kind of break it in.” So we were just creeping along, I suppose, and (laughter) all three children, Jack and my sister Marguerite and me were in the back of the truck, playing around, and of course had on our Easter clothes, and Marguerite dropped her shoe outside. She jumped down from that truck and picked up her shoe and came back, and Jack and I pulled her back up on the truck, and we never did tell Mother and Daddy. (laughter)

White: You were moving slow, then.

Flynt: That’ll tell you how fast we were going.

White: Well, you mentioned your brother and sister there. What were their names, and when were they born?

Flynt: This was Jack A. Warren Jr., and he was born in 1907, and Marguerite Smith was born in 1913. So we follow along there together.

White: I didn’t mean to sidetrack you. Now, we were talking about the Finkbine Lumber Company. Do you remember that?

Flynt: Yes.

White: I know you don’t remember when it was started here, but—

Flynt: Yes, I do. (laughter)

White: You know probably, don’t you?

Flynt: Nineteen sixteen. (laughter)

White: You don’t remember that.

Flynt: Oh, yes, I do.

White: You do?

Flynt: I was six years old. That’s where I started to school out here.

White: When you were six years old. At D’Lo School?

Flynt: D’Lo School. We had a big school at that time, and seem like at the first we had 560 students and seventeen teachers.

White: For grades one through twelve?

Flynt: One through twelve, and they taught—oh, by the way, we had the best school anywhere around here.

White: Is that right?

Flynt: Yes, we did. Some of the students from Mendenhall came, Mary Thames(?) and her brother. Mary finished over here, and then we had some coming from Marriot(?). They rode horses and came up here because we had such a good school. See?

White: Did they have any school buses when the school first opened?

Flynt: Not when the school first started, but later on they had a little bus that went out to Bethany(?) and picked up those Bethany children and brought them in.

White: Not to sidetrack you on this, too, but D'Lo School was in existence for a long time, was it not?

Flynt: Was what?

White: The D'Lo School, when did it close?

Flynt: Oh, listen. This was a separate school district, and that is why we had ready money, and we could have things that other schools didn't have. And at that time we had a good science department and had, of course, all the mathematics and all that. And we had a music teacher, expression teacher, and a voice teacher. I took voice.

White: Did you go all twelve years through D'Lo School?

Flynt: Oh, yes, I did. I graduated out here.

White: Who was the first superintendent? Do you remember? I keep saying, "Do you remember?" Do you know? (laughter)

Flynt: I believe, I believe—I have them listed, but I believe it was Davis was the first one. Now, this house here belonged to Holton(?).

White: This house you're living in (inaudible)?

Flynt: This house I'm living in now. Holton was elected agricultural commissioner, commissioner of agriculture, and when he was living here and was the superintendent of that school. In fact we had a big school, and the mill was, of course, the one that built the school. (laughter)

White: Finkbine Lumber Company?

Flynt: Yeah, (laughter) Finkbine Lumber Company.

White: What were their operations like at the mill? I see the remnants these days of—I'm pointing in the wrong direction—of the old pond. I remember people talking about the pond that was left over. How big was their facility, and where was it, Finkbine Lumber Company?

Flynt: Well, let me start and tell you how.

White: Sure, sure.

Flynt: Now, Highway 49, the old 49, came out—

White: It's now [Highway] 149.

Flynt: It is now [Highway] 149.

White: I didn't realize that until recently.

Flynt: Yes, it is [Highway] 149 now. But do you know where just west of the ridge that is down there now?

White: Yes, ma'am.

Flynt: It was a one-way bridge, one lane over that bridge. Now, that was the highway then because I know I learned to drive when I was twelve years old.

White: And it was a gravel highway, I would imagine.

Flynt: Gravel highway with a little gravel on it. (laughter)

White: Very little, huh?

Flynt: Yeah. And then it came on up to just beyond the May(?) house, don't you know? Made a sharp turn and went down to the corner grocery; made another turn back and came on up through here—this was on the main highway then—and made a left turn just about two blocks up, and then another right turn farther on up. Now, all of that back in there, all those were Finkbine Lumber Company houses—

White: On the northwest side of D'Lo.

Flynt: —that they built. And they built some big, nice, two-story homes for the supervisors and all those. And Mr. Alexander, Joe Alexander was one of the—and Cassibry—

White: Are any of those homes there now?

Flynt: They are. They are. I wish I could take you over there and show you where they are. And then all of that was lumber, was trees back up in there, just (inaudible). Then the highway just circled on around with all those trees on either side. See, they hadn't been cut back then.

White: What size were most of those big trees?

Flynt: Oh, they were huge. Huge.

White: I've seen pictures of some old trees.

Flynt: Uh-huh. They were, see, this was virgin timber; had never been cut.

White: And how long was Finkbine Lumber Company here? Until the lumber ran out?

Flynt: Until the lumber ran out, and it must have been about [19]29, and for a couple of years, two or three years, they tried to bring redwood in from California, but that was too expensive, and so they couldn't continue to do that.

White: Oh, to continue to run the mill is the reason they were bringing the lumber in.

Flynt: Right.

White: When they brought those early, big trees in D'Lo, I presume the major transport was mule and wagon. Was it not? Or did they have big trucks in the teens in Simpson County, enough to haul those logs?

Flynt: Well, my daddy was a logging superintendent, and all these people that hauled the logs in had trucks.

White: They did have trucks?

Flynt: They had trucks then, yeah. (laughter) I'll never forget the first time I rode in a car.

White: When was that? (laughter)

Flynt: That was when we were trying to make our way back to D'Lo after my daddy had sold the property here, and we couldn't get a house right at first, and so (laughter) he bought a house out about three miles from here. And of course we didn't have a car, and it wasn't but one in D'Lo, and it belonged to Lonnie Burnham(?).

White: One car in D'Lo.

Flynt: One car in D'Lo. And so we wanted to go visit my brother in Louisiana, Clyde. And my daddy hired Mr. Burnham to take the family over. We all went over to see them, and that was my first ride in a car.

White: Do you remember what year that was, or about what year that was?

Flynt: That was about 1916. Yeah, it must have been about 1916.

White: So in just a few years the roads and the automobiles changed very swiftly.

Flynt: Uh-huh. They came right on in, yeah.

White: Old Highway 49, which is now [Highway] 149 was definitely not straight then, you're trying to tell us.

Flynt: Oh, no, no, no. But you didn't drive fast, and you never heard of a wreck because anybody didn't drive fast. And when we'd go to Mendenhall, my mother and daddy told me when I was driving, "Don't go to Mendenhall. Don't cross that river bridge."

White: Two miles.

Flynt: Because it was one lane, and so on Sunday afternoon I'd gather up my friends, and we'd ride around and around and around. And so we decided we was going to go to Mendenhall because we dated Mendenhall boys. Mendenhall boys dated D'Lo girls, (laughter) and so we wanted to go to Mendenhall. And so we eased up there. And you'd have to stop at the bridge to see there was nobody coming across, and then you'd go across.

White: How long was that bridge? It had to be pretty long to get across the river.

Flynt: Oh, it was long. It went across.

White: Was it a wooden bridge?

Flynt: Yes, it was a wooden bridge.

White: I remember a couple of the old, swinging bridges around here. That's the reason I asked.

Flynt: It was a wooden bridge, you know, with little runners for your wheels to go on.

White: Well, was that the only bridge that crossed the Strong River in Simpson County at that time?

Flynt: Yes, it was. It was.

White: I just wondered if there was another one anywhere up or downstream.

Flynt: I don't know. I don't know.

White: I know this is still the main highway; the new Highway 49 is still the main intersection going south. We've gotten a long way off of your early education. That's what we were talking (laughter) about.

Flynt: Yeah.

White: We probably should go ahead and get back to it.

Flynt: Oh, (laughter) well, let me tell you this. When we started to school, it was a big school, like I said before, and every May we would have a Mayday celebration. (phone rings; brief interruption)

White: Before the telephone rang, you were beginning to tell me a story. Now, you can continue, about the early school.

Flynt: Oh, yes. So this Mayday we were living just out from D'Lo, and my mother had fixed a big box of food. Everybody was supposed to bring food, and we were going to spread lunch together, you know. So she had baked cakes and fried chicken and pies and everything and fixed this big box of food. So my older brother John, was ten years older than I am, was the one to take the box, carefully bring the box to school. Well, when it came time to eat—we had a program, and when it came time to spread the lunch, John was nowhere to be found. So he had taken that box of lunch and his friends, and they'd gone to the rocks and had celebrated.

White: Down at the river.

Flynt: Down at the—and had celebrated while we didn't have any lunch. And Jack and I both ate with our friends that day. (laughter) You can imagine how Mama felt when we got home.

White: I can imagine.

Flynt: Yeah.

White: We also got so interested in talking that we didn't get up to your brothers and sisters. How many brothers and sisters did you have, and what were their names?

Flynt: Six brothers and one sister. The oldest brother was Hugh Warren, and he was in Millsaps when I was born, so that tells you the difference in our ages. And the next was Clyde Warren, then Wallace Warren who was a minister, and he is one of the ministers that went out from the Methodist Church out here. They had four ministers to go out from this D'Lo Methodist Church. He was one, and Will [Thomas] was one, and Fred Thompson was another and George Phillips(?) from the Methodist Church. So they were real proud of those three.

White: I can imagine that. And let's see; now, that's three brothers.

Flynt: Then the next brother was John, and then Jack, then I came along, then my sister Marguerite, and a younger brother James Wright(?). So my daddy said all he did during his life was educate children. (laughter) He firmly believed in a good education, and that's the reason it kept coming back to D'Lo. He couldn't find, when they left here, or really before they came the first time, he was married Ladosey Wallace(?), and she died and left him with four little boys. And so the oldest one, Hugh, finished their little school that they had out near them, so my father—

White: In Rankin County.

Flynt: That was in Rankin County, and so my father was looking for a good school to take him to to begin the eighth grade, I believe it was. So he kept asking in different areas, and somebody suggested that he take him to Cooperville, and so he asked them in that area where would be a good place for him to board Hugh. So they told him if he could get a place at Mr. Bowman's(?), that that would be the place for him to leave his son. So they did, and he went to school with my mother's brothers. And my mother at that time was about twenty years old, and so my grandfather had a store, and she was managing the store. And that's where my daddy met her—

White: Is that right?

Flynt: —was when he would come to see his son. So that tells you how much he liked education.

White: Where is or was Cooperville? Now, I'm not familiar with it.

Flynt: Well, it's out close to Polkville(?) and back in that area.

White: OK. I'm familiar with Polkville.

Flynt: Yeah. And then when we came on back down here, he said this was the best school anywhere around, and this is where he stopped. And I'd like to tell you; let me give you just a little bit of early history, history of the town.

White: Sure. Sure.

Flynt: Our records show the James family of Brandon near the old bridge that crossed Strong River, there was a waterwheel lumber mill that was operated there by this James family, and it was near this old bridge there on Old Highway 49. And that was in about 1837, and so the lumber from that mill was used. It was hauled to Jackson and used in the Capitol building in Jackson, and also it was hauled, a lot of it, to Brandon and put in those old antebellum homes.

White: I had heard that before. What booklet are you getting that information out of?

Flynt: From this.

White: Simpson Sesquicentennial Historical Booklet that was put out in 1974 honoring a hundred years of the county's information. I needed to cite that for the oral history record.

Flynt: I'm proud you did that, yes. And it's also known, now, that the Choctaw Tribe held its Indian council of war here, many years ago on the rocks. So to me that's very important. Let me tell you about Mr. May. Now, he's known as the father of D'Lo, and he is the one who first came—

White: Which Mr. May is that?

Flynt: That's W.R. May.

White: W.R. May, OK.

Flynt: Yes.

White: Please tell me about him. I'm fascinated by—

Flynt: I want you to know about him. When he was a little boy about twelve years of age, his father who lived over near Mendenhall had heard when this mill that the Jameses owned burned, then of course that left a lot of nails where the old mill burned. And so Mr. W.R. Mays' father told him to come with a group that he had over here to D'Lo, and they picked up all those nails that had been used in that mill.

White: Those square, metal, (inaudible) nails.

Flynt: Nails, right. And I don't know what they were used for, but I'm sure they put them to very good use.

White: Probably did.

Flynt: And so he learned then, Mr. May learned then that a willful waste makes a woeful want. A willful waste makes a woeful want. So he said that went with him all through life, and he grew up and married a girl from this area, Francis Johnston(?),

and that was in about [19]74. And so then's when they bought all of this land around here, and he gave the land for the school and for both churches, the cemetery, and—

White: I can understand why he was known as the father of D'Lo.

Flynt: Yes.

White: D'Lo grew by leaps and bounds during its early years, didn't it?

Flynt: It surely did. But now there was a terrible storm that came through a few years after he and his wife married, and his oldest child was killed in this storm. Oh, but, now, there's been a lot of tales told about how D'Lo got its name.

White: That was one of the things I was going to ask you.

Flynt: I have the true answer to that.

White: I've heard the true answer about four different ways. (laughter) Now, are you going to give me the really real, true one?

Flynt: Well, Ms. Gussie May Bogan(?) gave this answer.

White: All right.

Flynt: All right. "Actually," she says, "the history of the name as related by Ms. Gussie Bogan, who was a May, a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W.R. May, came about when a group of early settlers met in her father's home to discuss the possibility of a post office in Mill Haven(?)." And it had been called Mill Haven because it had the mill down there.

White: The Old James Mill?

Flynt: Yeah. "And since the nearest post offices were in Brandon and Westville." And see, they'd have these carriers that would bring the mail from Brandon to Westville, and they'd go right, straight through here, but they would not hand them any mail here. They'd take it on, but they'd pick up what they had here and take on with them.

White: Well, see, my folks were from around Westville. We probably kept y'all from getting that mail.

Flynt: Yeah, (laughter) I imagine so.

White: I'm going to stop this just a second to change tapes. (End of digital file titled tape one, side one. The interview continues on digital file titled tape one, side two.) OK, Ms Flynt.

Flynt: After they had written to the postal service for several times, then they got a, the postal service sent a list of short names. Mill Haven was so long, and they sent us a list with four letters in the names. And the penman, D'Lo, they decided Delo, D-E-L-O, was the one that they liked, but one of the people who wrote the word Delo, his penmanship was not good. So he put a D, and his little E was way up, and so that, later on they changed it for the D-apostrophe-L-O. So thus D-apostrophe-L-O was officially the name in 1881.

White: So these stories about it being named for the French words for the water are absolutely—

Flynt: That's not true.

White: —wrong.

Flynt: That's not true.

White: Well, they're interesting, anyway, aren't they?

Flynt: And Mrs. May, now, Mrs. May was the first post—we called it a mistress back then, but I think they say master now.

White: Well, they said mistress back then. Ms. Archie Patterson(?) used to be our postmistress in Pinola years ago.

Flynt: Well, we called Ms. May the postmistress. So and she was down there for a long time. She was a big lady, and I showed you the picture of the little, tiny post office that we had, the first one. And the window was up high. So my mother'd send me to get the mail every day, and I was just big enough to kind of look over there, and Ms. May'd say, "What do you want?" And I'd say, "I'd like to get our mail, please." And I was scared to death (laughter) because she talked so harshly. So I'd get my (laughter) mail and run home with it.

White: Well, who were some of the—I'm not changing the subject here, but you reminded me of (inaudible). Who were some of the other personalities around D'Lo during your childhood? The teachers, were they an inspiration to you? Why did you go into teaching, as a matter of fact? Did some of the teachers inspire you?

Flynt: Well, I don't know, really, who did. Miss Naomi Kraut(?) was one of my early teachers, and I admired her an awful lot, but I always wanted to teach.

White: Is that right?

Flynt: I did, always. And so—

White: There was no question about that, then.

Flynt: No, no question about that.

White: Where did you go to school after you graduated from D'Lo?

Flynt: Oh, I graduated from D'Lo on Friday night. On Sunday I went to Delta State Teachers College, and I went there until the bank closed.

White: During the Depression.

Flynt: Yes.

White: What year did you graduate from high school?

Flynt: [Nineteen] twenty-nine.

White: That's right. You had told me that.

Flynt: And when the bank closed and my mother wrote me, I knew then that there was a terrible responsibility for her and my daddy to be sending Jack to [Mississippi] State [University] and me to Delta State. And so I decided for me, I'd just drop out. So I dropped out so Jack could go on to school, and I went back later. I went to USM [University of Southern Mississippi].

White: University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg?

Flynt: Uh-huh.

White: Was it called—

Flynt: It was called Southern Teachers College.

White: That's what I thought. My mother went there, and she called it Teachers College.

Flynt: Uh-huh, Teachers College, and then I went there, and then I had work after graduation.

White: What schools did you teach at? You didn't come straight back to D'Lo to teach, did you?

Flynt: My first school was at D'Lo.

White: Was it?

Flynt: No, at Union, I believe. I taught first.

White: Union in Simpson County?

Flynt: Union in Simpson County.

White: Well, you weren't too far—

Flynt: I taught there two years.

White: You weren't too, too far away.

Flynt: I went to Union. I taught two years there, and Floyd Edwards(?) was the superintendent there.

White: Did you board there?

Flynt: No, I didn't. I boarded with the Lees.

White: No, no. I meant did you board near Union?

Flynt: I boarded down at Union.

White: Oh, OK.

Flynt: Uh-huh, with the Lees, Robert Lee and his family.

White: I knew the roads weren't too good then. I wouldn't imagine you would have been coming back and forth to D'Lo.

Flynt: No.

White: That's the reason I asked that.

Flynt: No.

White: You boarded there all two, both two years you taught there.

Flynt: Yes, I did. And the mathematics teacher taught there with me. Well, the first year I was there, Mr. Bethea was there, and he went to Foxworth and tried to get me to go down there, but in the meantime I had met Flynt, (laughter) who I married later, and he didn't want me to go that far. (laughter) And so—

White: Did he live in D'Lo then, or was he from around Union?

Flynt: No. He was the superintendent at Everett(?). Yeah. And so then I taught there that year, and the next year I came to D'Lo to teach.

White: When did you and Mr. Flynt get married?

Flynt: When?

White: When, yes, ma'am.

Flynt: Nineteen thirty-three.

White: Nineteen thirty-three.

Flynt: Um-hm.

White: What month?

Flynt: October the twenty-eighth.

White: You can remember your anniversary. My wife says I can never remember ours. (laughter)

Flynt: Yeah. But then I was teaching here, and Flynt at that time then, the year that we married, he went to his home school, and I was teaching in my home school. And then—

White: Now, Mr. Flynt, his full name was?

]

Flynt: William Vardaman Flynt.

White: William Vardaman Flynt, and where was he born?

Flynt: He was born at Weathersby, Mississippi.

White: Is that right?

Flynt: Yeah.

White: And you were married, I think, in Collins.

Flynt: I was married in Collins.

White: That was a long way from home to get married then, wasn't it?

Flynt: Well, (laughter) I'll tell you the truth. (laughter) We married, and we were not going to tell anybody.

White: I thought there was a story (laughter) behind that. I thought there was a story behind that being married away from home. (laughter)

Flynt: Because I did not know how the trustees here felt about a married teacher. See?

White: Uh-huh. Most of the teachers were unmarried at the time?

Flynt: Right. (laughter) And so we decided; Flynt said, "Let's just get married secretly." So we got married secretly, and my aunt who's a dental hygienist, Dr. Beulah Reddick(?) was over here visiting, and so we asked her to go with us, and she did. (laughter) We went to Collins and got married. And then we came back and Flynt's uncle Mr. Willie Williamson lived here, and so Flynt eased around and asked him to find out from the trustees if it would be OK for married teachers to (laughter) teach here, and he said well, he'd find out. And so he did, and they said it was OK.

White: You could come out the closet.

Flynt: So then we came out of the (laughter) closet and told them we were married.

White: And you had three children. Is that right?

Flynt: Three children.

White: Would you name them, please?

Flynt: Yes, I will. (laughter)

White: I figured you would. (laughter)

Flynt: Sandra Kay Flynt(?), and she was born in [19]44. I was teaching out here at D'Lo, and Flynt was the superintendent there. Oh, and that time the superintendent of the school here was also the superintendent of the black school. We had a good black school, good teachers out there.

White: In D'Lo?

Flynt: Yes, out in D'Lo.

White: Where was it located? We'll get back to the children in just a minute.

Flynt: Well, I can't tell you exactly (laughter) where it was. I can't direct you, but out from D'Lo, about a couple of miles.

White: It was out, outside D'Lo.

Flynt: Uh-huh.

White: To the north or the west?

Flynt: Well, and see, this was a separate school district, and so they did just what—they paid their teachers what they wanted to, and oh, by the way, at that time, too, we got our money here at D'Lo, and at the county schools, they had to take warrants. You know, the Depression.

White: During the Depression.

Flynt: And we married during the Depression, and they had to take warrants for their pay and didn't get any better pay than we did, and then they'd have to wait until they could be redeemed or either somebody would redeem them at a discount.

White: Some of the merchants would redeem them?

Flynt: Yeah, or different people, whoever you could get to accept your warrant and discount it. So that was—

White: They made their money on the difference in the money.

Flynt: That was hard. That was hard.

White: I bet it was.

Flynt: It surely was.

White: I bet it was. Why did you get your money here? Because of the—

Flynt: Separate school district.

White: Because they had Finkbine money, basically.

Flynt: Oh, yeah.

White: OK. We've got you married, and we've (laughter) got you one child, now.

Flynt: Well, I've got a (laughter) second child.

White: OK.

Flynt: In [19]46 then, Diane, Evelyn Diane Flynt(?) was born, and then the third child was born in [19]48, Joel Ray Flynt(?), [19]48.

White: I do remember all of them. I went to school at one point or other, I think, with most of them.

Flynt: Well, I think you did, too. Sandra and Diane finished at [University of] Southern [Mississippi], and Joel finished at Millsaps and University Medical Center.

White: Where do they live?

Flynt: Well, Diane's husband has been in service, and he's retired and back now in civil service, and he is over communications, videoconferencing, and anyway, the government sent him to Europe to set up the videoconferencing system over there. And so then this last year, they have called him back to St. Louis at Scott Air Force Base to set it up there, and so that's what they're doing. And Sandra's husband's in civil service, and they're in Chester, Virginia. And then Joel and a friend of his opened a clinic, The Women's Clinic of Hattiesburg in 1980, and since then—there were just those two OB-GYNs [obstetrician-gynecologists]. Since then they have seven, so as they grew, they had a beautiful clinic, and they didn't want to change it to mar the appearance, and so they moved closer to Forrest General Hospital. So that's where he is.

White: Somehow in the middle of this raising a family and (laughter) tending to everybody, you managed to get a teaching job at Mendenhall High School.

Flynt: Oh, good gracious, yes.

White: When was that, and how did that come about?

Flynt: I went to Mendenhall in 1953, and I taught there until [19]74.

White: Is that after the school closed in D'Lo?

Flynt: No. No.

White: The school was open another few years?

Flynt: Uh-huh, yeah. I'll tell you why the school closed in D'Lo. Well, a while there it was just beginning to be so expensive, and so many people had moved away after the mill left. And they could not offer what they wanted to offer. They didn't have enough students going there, so then they sent the high school to Mendenhall, and then later—

White: That was [19]54, maybe [19]53?

Flynt: I don't know. I don't know if it was [19]54.

White: I mean when you went over there.

Flynt: Oh, I went over there in [19]53.

White: You told me. I had just had a momentary lapse on memory here. And you retired in [19]74 or [19]75.

Flynt: Yeah.

White: Seventy-four, is that right?

Flynt: I taught thirty-six years in all.

White: Other than school, what early memories do you have of downtown D'Lo? What were the businesses like? What was shopping like?

Flynt: Well, I would like to tell you that everybody in town had a house on it. When the mill came, people came in from everywhere, and now, the mill built a lot of houses, themselves.

White: You mentioned several very nice homes they built. They built workers' homes, small workers' homes, too, didn't they?

Flynt: Oh, they built workers' homes, and they'd rent them for forty-five dollars, maybe, a month. Oh, and by the way, back then, you might wonder how they got their water.

White: Yes.

Flynt: Well, Clyde, now, ran the water filter. They had a pumping system down on the bank of the river, and it was way down underground, and he had all the pumps down there, and he—

White: On the Strong River.

Flynt: Uh-huh, the Strong River. So they would pump the water up to the filtering system up here at the mill, and then he had, Clyde had his office up there. And they filtered the water, and he tested it regularly. They had good, drinking water, and they piped that out to all of their mill town houses, and then D'Lo got that water, too.

White: Oh, the same water supply came from the mill, eventually.

Flynt: Eventually, eventually, yes, after they had—

White: They didn't have to use wells anymore for their water supply.

Flynt: No. When we moved here, though, my daddy put a pump out on the back porch. He had a back porch and put a pump on that.

White: A hand pump?

Flynt: Yeah, a hand pump.

White: I remember one of those on our back porch when we were coming up in Pinola. (laughter)

Flynt: Yeah. But then as soon as we could get the water from the mill, we did so. Oh, and by the way, sewerage, too, was quite a unique arrangement. They had outdoor toilets—

White: Privies.

Flynt: —for every one of those houses. Yes. And underneath those they had these huge pipes that took this sewerage off, see, and was disposed of, and I don't, as a child I didn't ever know where that went, (laughter) but anyway they—

White: It was probably like the modern-day (inaudible) lines or septic tanks and was absorbed back into the ground.

Flynt: Possibly so. I don't know. Now, we have this lagoon, you know.

White: City treatment facility.

Flynt: Yeah. Oh, and I wanted so much to—

White: We were talking about shopping, now. Let's don't get off of shopping (laughter) (inaudible). I'm not trying to head you off.

Flynt: Let me tell you what.

White: I'm afraid I'll lose my thought.

Flynt: All right. Well, now, where do you want (laughter)—shopping. You could buy anything you wanted to.

White: Could you?

Flynt: Just about it.

White: If you had the money.

Flynt: If you had the money. Now, that's right. And (laughter) we had pretty good luck along then because my daddy was working for Finkbine. But anyway, the mill, Finkbine, built a big Kew, and they had everything you could imagine for sale in there.

White: I didn't know Finkbine sold material like that.

Flynt: Yeah. They did. They had a Kew. And Mr. Bell—

White: Was it for the workers only, or was it for all people?

Flynt: Oh, everybody could go there, and the workers, now, could have a certain amount of money, if during the week they wanted to go over there and buy something, they could go by their office, and by the way, that mill office was built in my father—well, first run, from my father's home until they could get the office built. So they used my father's home, J. Warren Sr.'s home for the office. But they could go by and pick up some written form showing—

White: Scrips (inaudible).

Flynt: And they could take it to the—

White: Now, how are you spelling Kew?

Flynt: K-E-W.

White: That's a new word for me.

Flynt: And I have a picture of the Kew.

White: K-E-W.

Flynt: K-E-W. Yes. And Mr. Bell, T.T. Bell, he helped the ladies plan their dresses, and he sold the material. They had all kind of laces, just anything in the world that you wanted to use. And you could use these, they were wooden chips, like, that they called—I've forgotten what they called them, that they got, you know, the workers would get from the mill, and they could take over there and spend them, but you could only spend them at the Kew.

White: Oh, little wooden tokens?

Flynt: Yeah. You couldn't go downtown and spend them. You had to spend them at the Kew.

White: (Inaudible) tokens.

Flynt: Well, yeah.

White: But what other type material did they have for sale in there?

Flynt: Everything that you would find in a big store, and they had fertilizers and seed and everything that anybody would need for their gardens.

White: Did that bother any of the merchants downtown, or did they compete directly?

Flynt: Well, I don't think they minded because they got a lot of extra trade, too. The mill brought in a lot of trade for them.

White: Did people come into town on Saturdays then like they did for years (inaudible)?

Flynt: We all went in town on Saturdays, all the children, the parents, and the parents would sit on the fronts of the stores down there, and the children would play in the streets. We didn't fear a car.

White: Streets weren't paved then, either; I don't imagine.

Flynt: No, no, no. They weren't.

White: What were the fronts of the stores like? Did they have a bench or anything like that out in front of them or seats for people?

Flynt: Well, they'd have benches. Yeah, they'd have benches, and people could sit down there and talk.

White: Did they have a movie here, a movie theater here?

Flynt: Oh, at the YMCA we had silent movies, and when I was in high school I took voice. And when I was in high (laughter) school, I would sing. You know, they had reels. These were silent movies. And when they changed reels, we'd have music. Thelma Cassibry would play music according to the mood of the film. And then when they'd be changing reels a lot of times, I would sing. And then in that same building was a YMCA, and they had tables. It was a big, big room. They had tables, oh, about this square, a yard square, and chairs all around them, and a *huge* fireplace that they'd almost burn logs in and kept it—

White: Is that what heated the room?

Flynt: That's the way it was heated, and then the men go there after work, go home and clean up and go back.

White: Was that a community center, in effect?

Flynt: It was, and mostly used for the workers. That's what they built it for. Of course, other people could use it, too, and they would sit around there and play dominoes and checkers and cards, and sometimes they'd sit by the fire and talk. It was just a good meeting place for them. And by the way, Finkbine Lumber Company had professional basketball and baseball teams.

White: Oh, really?

Flynt: Yes, they did, and they would sit—

White: Did they play other companies?

Flynt: Oh, well, they—

White: (Inaudible) teams.

Flynt: They were just the best teams from other places, and they would be champions from these other places, and they would send out scouts to bring in the best high school students and college students and give them positions at the mill, (laughter) so that they would—and then they could practice, see? And they'd play ball. That's how they—

White: That sounds like some of the same philosophies (laughter) being practiced today (inaudible). (laughter)

Flynt: That's how they got their players.

White: Well, when you went downtown to shop—I'm excited about this. I hate to keep interrupting you, but when you went into town to shop, as opposed to out—well, maybe even out there, were most people, by then, owners of cars, trucks, or did they still bring their mules and wagons into town?

Flynt: Oh, a lot of them came in with the wagons.

White: When was the last time that you remember a team (inaudible)?

Flynt: Listen, we had a livery stable down there when I was a little, tiny thing, and Mr. Murray(?) ran that livery stable, and they had horses there and buggies and surreys that you could rent. If people came in on the train, they could rent a buggy and go where they needed to go.

White: And just bring it back.

Flynt: What?

White: And bring it back.

Flynt: Oh, yeah.

White: That means they must have had a blacksmith shop handy.

Flynt: They did have a blacksmith shop, and Mr. Albritton ran the blacksmith shop. And they had a shoe shop, and they had dry goods stores, and well, downtown there was a store on every block. And we had some cafes down there and a lot of hotels. You know all about that.

White: No, I don't know all of that. I should, but I don't.

Flynt: We had several hotels.

White: I think at one time they had four or five hotels over here.

Flynt: Oh, we did have. Oh, and by the way, had a hospital here, too. Finkbine had a hospital, and they had two doctors, Dr. M.L. Flynt who was my husband's uncle, was one of the doctors up there, and then Dr. Burnett was another doctor. I had my tonsils removed out at that hospital. (laughter) It was good. We had the best doctors and the best nurses anywhere around.

White: Now, did they have ice cream after you had your tonsils removed?
(Inaudible)

Flynt: Yes, that's all I could eat. That's all I could eat.

White: I think that was pretty traditional back then, which leads me to my next illogical question here. My mind goes to icehouses. Where was your icehouse?

Flynt: Oh, I want to tell you about that.

White: I thought you might. (laughter)

Flynt: We had a big icehouse here, and the iceman came around every day. Every morning he would start early, early, and we did not have refrigerators then, electric refrigerators. We didn't have any electricity then. We didn't. And all the people would have these iceboxes, they called them. You know, the top part, the lid would lift up; underneath you put your food. And in the top part, I know we always put, Mama would put paper down in there to wrap the ice up, see, so it wouldn't melt so fast. And then every day you'd get so much, enough to do you till the next day. And of course if you were going to make ice cream, you had to get extra or have to go to the icehouse to get it.

White: Used the hand-crank ice cream, no doubt.

Flynt: Oh, yes.

White: Since you didn't have electricity.

Flynt: Oh, yes.

White: Do you ever remember having to change that tray of water underneath the icebox?

Flynt: Yeah. (laughter) Well, let me tell you what. My daddy wore a hole in the floor and had to put a funnel down there, and it went through.

White: He didn't have to worry about changing that, then, did he?

Flynt: No, sirree.

White: You know, that's a thought. I remember my mother fussing about that. That's one thing she hated was to empty that water tray under the icebox.

Flynt: I (laughter) know. Well, my daddy said he'd fix that.

White: What kind of household chores did you have when you were growing up, as far as learning to cook and clean and that type thing?

Flynt: I went in and made the coffee every morning.

White: You were the coffeemaker.

Flynt: Right. I'd grind the coffee and make the coffee. We had the little coffee grinder up on the side of the kitchen wall. I'd grind it, and my mother made biscuit and cooked sausage and whatever.

White: Well, how did you make the coffee then?

Flynt: We had—

White: Like my folks did? You didn't have a filter, did you? Did you just put it in the pot? How did you do it?

Flynt: You just put it in the pot and boiled it. (laughter) We later had a percolator, (laughter) but at first it was boiled coffee.

White: That's the way my folks made it when they were coming up. They were talking about it. Did you drink coffee at that age?

Flynt: Only when we'd take medicine, and my mother would give me sweetened coffee with a lot of milk in it, and she'd give me—you know, back then we had to take castor oil. (laughter)

White: I've heard of that; I believe.

Flynt: You've never taken any?

White: I have taken it, too.

Flynt: Well, (laughter) my mother would squeeze orange juice in there and then put the castor oil on it, and we'd have to take it, and then she'd give us sweetened coffee.

White: That probably made it worse. (Inaudible)

Flynt: I (laughter) imagine it did.

White: What other kind of medicines did you have back then?

Flynt: Oh, I want to tell you this about going to my granddaddy's. I told you he was a doctor, and they had a big, white house with the bedrooms built on the front, and then there was a curb that came up to a walk with banisters on it to the kitchen and dining room. And we'd go there and visit, and when my granddaddy would go to his office to fix his saddle tacks they'd put on his horse.

White: Saddle bags?

Flynt: Saddle bags, right. Well, I'd go with him. He'd let me go with him and climb up those steps, and he had all lined up the wall around with medicine, and he would fill capsules with calamine, and he had a little square bottle that fit right in this saddle bag, and he'd fill all these bottles with medicine and different medicines that he would use and get everything ready, and then when the patients would come, well, he'd have everything ready to go. And he'd stay there till that patient got well or got much better.

White: Stay with the family, huh?

Flynt: Stay with the patient. I know in the wintertime, well, one of my uncles, one morning (laughter) when it was about three o'clock in the morning, I think, they came for my granddaddy. And so he called his youngest son, Dave. Said, "Dave, go saddle my horse." So Uncle Dave didn't want to get up, but he went on out there, and he put the saddle on hind part before. And so when my granddaddy went out there and got up on the horse, the horse started (laughter) in the wrong direction. I mean, my granddaddy was facing the back end of the horse. And so he said, "Tut, tut, tut." (laughter) He had to change the saddle on his horse. (laughter)

White: He looked at the saddle and not the horse.

Flynt: Yeah. (laughter)

White: I'm going to stop this, and I'm going to change the tape, again. (End of digital file named tape one, side two. The interview continues on digital file named tape two, side one.) Ms. Flynt, you were talking about your grandfather and his medical services.

Flynt: Yes. I told you how he did when he rode the horse. But then in the wintertime it was too cold for him to ride the horse, so he would use the buggy, and they would have heated brick, and they'd wrap them and put them in the buggy to keep his feet warm.

White: Take them out of the fireplace and wrap them up.

Flynt: Right. They kept them by the fireplace all the time. And then he would take newspapers and put in between his coats to keep his chest from getting cold, and he'd always go, and regardless of how the weather was, he would go to his patient, and he would stay there in their home, right by the patient, until that patient got able for him to leave and go home. And then he always carried his medicine with him, so he'd give them the medicine, and away he'd go, home. But he enjoyed helping other people, and he would not dare leave a patient until he was able for him to leave.

White: Well, you know D'Lo sort of achieved national prominence during World War II, I think, for having sent more soldiers, per capita, to the service than any other city. That's per capita. I believe *Look* magazine or *Life* magazine, one, recognized them for that, and then it had its heyday during the Finkbine Lumber Company years, and during recent years, after the school closed down in the [19]50s and the hospital closed and the mill closed, D'Lo became a pretty sleepy, small town. How has it changed over the years, and what's it like today in comparison?

Flynt: Well, there was for a while that we didn't have many people coming into the town because we were just here. That was all, and you couldn't see anything going on. But I want you to know that in 1993, Emory Veeza(?) became our mayor, and things began to wake up around here.

White: He wasn't from D'Lo, was he?

Flynt: No, not originally. Now, he married a D'Lo girl, Bonnie Cockrell(?) she was. And for years back, he had been out in California. He was with an oil company, but they had moved back here, and so he became interested in helping the town. So he became our mayor in 1993, and prior to that time, if we wanted to do anything for the town, it was always, "We didn't have enough money," or, "There wasn't money for that." But the first thing he did—he always found money. And the first thing he did was to form a volunteer fire department, and as a result of this department, the fire

insurance rates were lowered. And then he started a D'Lo gospel jam and a Christmas parade, and both of them were successes from the beginning. And he blacktopped (inaudible) Street from the park to Highway 49 as well as the Third Street. And then the community house was remodeled, and a new five-ton heat and air unit was installed. He just kept doing one thing right after another, and there was also new lights installed. A gazebo was built, and a walking track was built around the gazebo. And that gazebo, see, was built out here on the old school ground. And that was Mr. May, you know, originally—

White: Right, the father of D'Lo.

Flynt: —had given that, yeah, had given that to the town.

White: (Inaudible) piece of land.

Flynt: Yeah. And then he helped the drainage by clearing out a ditch from the railroad track to the river to help keep the black community from flooding. And always before that, those towns down in the black neighborhood would, they'd just overflow and all out in the yard. They couldn't get in the house, or they couldn't get out, but when he became mayor, he opened up that ditch down to the river.

White: This is basically on the west side of D'Lo?

Flynt: Yes. And now they don't have any trouble with that flooding anymore. And he installed bigger culverts across Pine Street, and that relieved the flooding there. And then he ran new waterlines and reworked the water wells to make our water system better. And he helped to get it approved for a housing grant to build new homes for the needy people here in D'Lo. And all of our lift stations have been replaced to upgrade the sewer system, and our water tank was repainted inside and out. The museum was remodeled. Lights were installed. And last year we had our first motorcycle rally and our first Mardi Gras celebration. We received a grant, then, to get a new woodchopper and a new tractor, and a backhoe was bought for the town.

White: To keep the town clean.

Flynt: And I think that's a wonderful record.

White: Helps keep the town clean. What difference, too, did the D'Lo Water Park here make?

Flynt: Oh, he continues to help build that up, and that has helped a lot. We have places down there for these—

White: I know you have walking trails in it.

Flynt: Well, yes, we do have walking trails and places for trailers to park.

White: Picnic tables.

Flynt: Picnic tables, all kinds of entertainment for children down there.

White: Well, you know, we've talked about a lot of aspects of growing up and living and working in D'Lo and the town and the shopping and the hospitals, and we haven't discussed the religious life. Can you give me—I know you were—was it pianist or organist for one of the churches here, or both of them for years?

Flynt: Well, I was pianist and organist down at the Methodist Church for a long time, and I was pianist down at the Baptist Church.

White: You didn't feel like you were betraying one of those religions to go over and play for the other one?

Flynt: No, no. (laughter)

White: How did that come about?

Flynt: Well, (laughter) they just had a need for somebody to help, and so I just got in there and helped.

White: Did you take music lessons when you (inaudible)?

Flynt: I did. I took music lessons and took voice lessons and (inaudible).

White: I knew you had mentioned voice lessons.

Flynt: And I was soloist out at the church.

White: Do you remember the music teacher?

Flynt: Ms. Grace Baker was my music and voice teacher in high school. And we had Ms. Burnett. I don't remember her first name, but I didn't take voice from her. Oh, and at first, now, they had—I'll tell you how these churches worked. At first they had their school here, and then Mr. May gave property for that school to be built, and of course, the children had to go to school, you know. Then the people would worship in the schoolhouse. And then in 1900 the Methodist people, Mr. May gave them land to build them a church, so the Methodist people, then, built a church down there, and it was later sold to W.R. Roberts. And now Mrs. Bonnie Sullivan lives in that place, and it made a very pretty dwelling.

White: That's where the church was?

Flynt: That was the First United Methodist Church, and then in about 19—

White: Did it burn down, or was it torn down?

Flynt: No, no. They built a new one. See, the congregation grew.

White: So they tore the old church down.

Flynt: And so when the mill came, see, it wasn't big enough, and so then they built a Methodist Church out here, and about 1916, I think's when they built that, and my father J.A. Warren Sr. hauled all the wood that they used in building the church. And my brother Hugh Warren hauled all of the brick that went in the church. And on Sunday afternoons we would all walk up there and see what all they had done during the week.

White: You said he hauled all the brick. Where did they go? To Jackson and buy it?

Flynt: I don't recall that, but I'm quite sure they did.

White: I can't remember a brick—

Flynt: Yeah. But the lumber came from Finkbine Lumber Company. That was that longleaf pine that they had. Then the Baptist Church, now, they organized in 1901, and they built—I don't recall the name of that street now, but anyway it was later, after they built the new one, that was the Francis(?) House, across from (inaudible) just stuck.

White: Where Charles Edwards lives now?

Flynt: Yes, where Charles Edwards lives now, and I know when they had the church, the Baptist Church there, I would go by after school and go in, and we'd have Catechism. Ms. Johnston(?) the pastor's wife taught us the *Sunbeams*. And see, I lived near there, so I'd go by the Baptist Church. In fact, in town you could not tell the difference in the Methodists and the Baptists. The Baptists'd go to the Methodist Church, and for a long time we had just service two Sundays a month, and the Baptists did the same thing, so we'd go to their church, and they'd come to our church. And the Presbyterians, after the Methodists built their church, would have their services the fifth Sunday out in the Methodist Church. Well, back to the Baptist Church. After they built their church where Charles Edwards now lives, their congregation grew, and they then moved, built a new church, and that was about the same time that the Methodists built theirs in [19]21, I believe is when they completed theirs.

White: So the houses, basically, that are built where Charles Edwards and where Ms. Bonnie Sullivan live now, basically were built around the early 1920s, about 1921, [19]22, somewhere along in there?

Flynt: No, no. That was built earlier because I joined the church in that church where they lived, and I joined the church there in 1917.

White: And the church was already built there then?

Flynt: Uh-huh. That was the old church, see. And then after that we built this new church.

White: Right. I'm just trying to figure out. There are so many pretty, older homes in D'Lo, and I was trying to get an estimate of how old some of the homes are and what ages they range to.

Flynt: Nineteen six a lot of the homes were built. Now, this (phone rings)—just pick it up and put it down. This Bell home was T.T. Bell, Tilton Bell, his home was brought from Braxton, torn down from up there. They have a lot of old homes up there, beautiful, old homes. And his home was torn down there and brought to D'Lo and put up here. (phone rings)

White: Let me stop the tape a minute so you can answer that telephone. (brief interruption) We're recording again now, after you talked on the telephone, Ms. Flynt. Go ahead.

Flynt: Yes. And Mr. Bell's home is on Cherry Street, or the Old Highway 49, which is now [Highway] 149. And right across from him is the home that Mr. Berry, who lived at Braxton, brought his home down and put it out there.

White: Why did they move the homes from Braxton here? Did they just—

Flynt: Well, they had a tornado up there and just tore up the town.

White: And what year was that, 1922?

Flynt: Nineteen twenty-two, I believe it was.

White: I think that's right.

Flynt: Because I know when that tornado came, they let us out of school, and we all ran home, and we stood out on the porch of the Daniels, which is next door to my home, and watched as that tornado hit Braxton. And my daddy took his trucks up there and brought those people who were hurt down to the hospital.

White: Yeah. The Finkbine Hospital was (inaudible).

Flynt: Finkbine Hospital, yes, that's where they brought all those people, and there was one big house that was left standing, and that was a mystery to me, and houses around that were taken. But this big, beautiful home was left, and that's where they

took the corpses. And so as they would get them ready for burial, they'd take them up there, and they just had them lined up in that house.

White: Oh, that was sort of the funeral home, the visiting parlor (inaudible).

Flynt: Well, we didn't have funeral homes in those days, and—

White: There were no funeral homes around (inaudible).

Flynt: No. No funeral homes there.

White: Most of them were conducted from home.

Flynt: Right.

White: And in that instance, most of them had no homes, did they?

Flynt: Well, see there. Now, I know when my daddy died, they brought him home. You see, they didn't have any funeral homes then, and it was just so much better when we did have the funeral homes. Now, Francis, A.P. Francis(?) had a store here, had one of the first stores here, and then he grew, and he moved down farther, and then his business grew, and so he moved across the street and had a big business there and put in—he sold caskets. And they had a hearse that we called them back then.

White: Was it horse-drawn?

Flynt: No.

White: Because I've seen a couple of old, horse-drawn hearses still around.

Flynt: Yeah. But this was not.

White: (Inaudible).

Flynt: And his son Nathaniel Francis drove the hearse, so—

White: But there was no embalmer (inaudible).

Flynt: No.

White: I would imagine the funerals had to be rushed up.

Flynt: They did have to be right (inaudible).

White: Well, was that house that was in Braxton from where all the bodies were buried—

Flynt: I can't remember the name who—

White: Is it still there?

Flynt: I suppose it's still there.

White: It wasn't moved to D'Lo?

Flynt: No, I don't think it's been moved. I don't think so, but it was a beautiful home, and it's strange to me how a tornado will do, just leave one house and take the others.

White: Well, had there been any bad storms, or other than wartime, any really seriously damaging events by water—

Flynt: Around here?

White: —or anything else around D'Lo?

Flynt: No, not that I—

White: No community-wide calamities, as it were.

Flynt: No. And this is a great place to rear a family. People are concerned about each other, and we have a lot of people now that have moved in from Jackson, and we have one family from New Orleans and just different places that have come.

White: It's nice to see not only some people coming back home again after moving away, but—

Flynt: Oh, a lot of these are people who were in service.

White: But also restoring some of the older homes.

Flynt: Oh, yes. Oh, yes.

White: Really nice, nice properties.

Flynt: Yeah, that's true, too. Yeah. And then some of the service people you see have come back home and built their homes after they retired.

White: I don't mean to pick on you or pick on this phrase, but how many famous folks have come from D'Lo? I'm sure all of them are famous in their own right, but if you had to select—

Flynt: Oh, well, now, I've told you about Will Thomas from the Methodist Church, went out from the Methodist Church. He was well [known], in fact, nationally known as a chaplain in service for years and years and years. So that's—

White: I should have also said infamous people. Wasn't D'Lo the home of the last state executioner?

Flynt: (laughter) Oh, yes, Jimmy Thompson, (laughter) he was a character, (laughter) but he didn't mind doing that. He said somebody had to do it so—

White: Wasn't he the last—

Flynt: He was the last—

White: —state-hired—

Flynt: Yes, yes.

White: He had a, if I remember rightly, a traveling electric chair.

Flynt: It was.

White: I guess it was, that they would carry around to the different (inaudible).

Flynt: Yeah, where anybody had need of it, well, he'd take it to (laughter) them. Yeah. Now, he was reared just out from here, and they all went to school here.

White: Is that right?

Flynt: Uh-huh, and his mother, they were near enough just to walk in here.

White: What were his parents—did he retire back here?

Flynt: Yes.

White: That's what I thought.

Flynt: He did. I just did not know his father because he was dead years and years ago, but his mother was named Neeny(?); I believe it was Neeny Thompson was her name. She was an old lady back then.

White: I know every town, no matter how small it is, has people scattered all over the world. And several times in my life, I've run into people from my small town of Pinola in the strangest places on Earth. Have you ever traveled anywhere and run into a D'Lo person when you were away from home somewhere?

Flynt: I don't know that I have. Now, my husband and I traveled quite a bit. We toured Germany; then we went to England. We didn't—

White: If they were from D'Lo, they didn't hold a sign up then?

Flynt: No, (laughter) they didn't hold a sign up, so—

White: I was just curious about that.

Flynt: No, I don't know that—

White: I'm very fond of small towns.

Flynt: Yeah. I don't know that I have. And then one summer in [19]59 we took the children and went out west and went through all of those western states and on up into Canada. Of course just family is the only ones we saw. Went down in Mexico, Old Mexico.

White: Mexico.

Flynt: Um-hm.

White: How much connection, do you remember of any connection with the Native Americans, with the Choctaws or anything thirty-years ago? I know D'Lo was never a settlement of the Indians, according to what I understand, but it was a major crossroads of the Indians.

Flynt: Well, now, you know the Six Town(?) Indians were down about from Weathersby, out between Weathersby and Athens, back in that area there was the Six Town Indians.

White: D'Lo was mostly a crossroads, I think, according to an archeologist who came through and did a dig (inaudible).

Flynt: Uh-huh. Now, you know the Choctaws held meetings down on the rocks, but that was just—

White: But you don't remember of any Native Americans or anything?

Flynt: No.

White: Even being around here when you were growing up?

Flynt: There were not any Indians around here when I grew up. Oh, I want to mention this, now. We had so many young men in service; you referred to that earlier. And we have a monument honoring the D'Lo World War II Veterans, and it was

erected in 1993 and down adjacent to the D'Lo Community House, very nice. And we're proud of that, and we have this service to recognize our veterans every year, memorial service out here, and it has grown to be quite large.

White: What about the D'Lo Community House, or Community Center or whatever you call it. The Simpson County Historical Society meets there, and I meet with them and enjoy it. That building serves a multiple number of purposes.

Flynt: Oh, yes, it does. The garden club has been down there since [19]36, I believe, and Eastern Star is upstairs and the Masons.

White: Was it built for them originally? Do you know?

Flynt: It was just built for anything that the town needed.

White: It was built as a community center. Is that right?

Flynt: Oh, yeah, yeah. And the Masons are the one that really outfitted the top, and Eastern Star meets there, and the Cub Scouts would meet downstairs, and just different organizations would use that. And now they do permit reunions there, but you have to reserve, and of course there's charges to it to reserve the community house for that, but they've done a lot of work down there, and it's a nice place.

White: It certainly is. What kind of summer activities—

Flynt: Do we have here?

White: —did you have when you were growing up? I know this used to be a big basketball territory years ago.

Flynt: Oh, it was, and we went swimming all the time in the Strong River.

White: I think I would have, too, had I lived that close. (laughter)

Flynt: My brothers taught me to swim, and one brother taught me to drive when I was twelve. (laughter)

White: Is that right?

Flynt: I was twelve years old. You didn't have to have a license or anything to drive. If you were big enough to drive, (laughter) you'd just get up there and drive.

White: I imagine some of the Mendenhall folks would come over and swim in the Strong River, also.

Flynt: Well, I'm sure they did, and a lot of them would come, and we'd have picnics down on the rocks. And they would from Mendenhall, different (inaudible).

White: I have a friend who remembers playing basketball on a clay court at Braxton High School up through 1940, I believe it was. They didn't even have a wooden court (inaudible) basketball.

Flynt: Well, now, you know D'Lo had the first wooden court anywhere around.

White: Is that right?

Flynt: That's right, and it was walled up all the way around, so you see in the winter we could play.

White: Well, that was really an innovation.

Flynt: Well, now, that's where I practiced basketball. And oh, I'll tell you who one of the best players we had, and of course she's older than I am and played before I did, was Pauline Mannel Hall(?), she is, now. She was one of the best players we had. Earline Grantham(?) was my best girl friend. We lived together (laughter) just about it from the fourth grade on through high school.

White: Does she still live in D'Lo?

Flynt: No. Every morning she'd come down to the corner. She lived up above me, and she'd come down to the corner, and I'd meet her. I'd look out and see what she was wearing, and I'd wear something like it, and we'd go downtown. And Mr. Rhodes(?) here had a store down there; J.P. Rhodes would say, "Here comes the golden dust twins." So see, we'd walk the long way around to get the mail, for fear we might have a letter, and then go on to school. And we played ball. Now, she was a forward, and I was a guard. We played ball up there on that court, and we'd go practice in the afternoon after school.

White: Well, do you remember mostly summers having time to play, or was there time during the winter? (phone rings)

Flynt: Well, after I finished high school, I went right on to college, and I went to college summer and winter, so I didn't have any summers to play around.

White: Well, I was thinking of in fourth and fifth grade, somewhere along in there. You probably came home and had household chores and homework.

Flynt: They didn't have anything special for them. Only the churches would have Bible schools and things.

White: There were no organized ball teams or anything like that. (Inaudible)

Flynt: Not then, but we do have now and have had for several years. We've had several tennis courts down here near the river.

White: My grandson practices with his buddy ball team over there, one of them, right now.

Flynt: They did have the baseball and tennis and I don't know, several things. I didn't ever go down there, but we would hear them playing and see the lights at night.

White: But all in all, D'Lo's been a pretty good place to live?

Flynt: It's been a great place to live. And my brother coined this phrase, and it's been used all the time for a long time. D'Lo is not the biggest, but the best.

White: Your brother coined that phrase?

Flynt: He did.

White: I have read that numerous times. Sounds like a good note to end an interview on, don't you think, Mrs. Flynt?

Flynt: Oh, and we have a Lion's Club here. I forgot to say that.

White: Well, we'll certainly mention them.

Flynt: And they met in the community house.

White: Just a moment, please.

(end of interview)