

Mississippi Oral History Program

Simpson County Historical and Genealogical
Oral History Project

An Oral History

with

Mary Lee Walker Magee

Interviewer: Joe White

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An Oral History with Mary Lee Walker Magee, Volume 1217, Part 13

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Biography

Mary Lee Walker Magee was born to Rev. Frank Walker and Mattie Burkett in Shivers Crossing, MS in March 1932. She had three sisters and five brothers. She went to Dry Ridge School through to the eighth grade, and later to Harper School in Mendenhall. Mary Lee married Junior Magee in 1947. Junior served in the armed forces for three years during World War II. They picked cotton on land owned by Junior's grandparents. Junior drove to New Orleans, LA to sell truckloads of cotton. Though Mary Lee and her husband did not have children of their own, they raised the children of her brother and sister-in-law after separation. Junior worked as a mechanic at Mendenhall High School. Mary Lee joined her husband at Mendenhall H.S. as a custodian, where she worked for ten years until her retirement in 1991. Her husband died in 1992.

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AN ORAL HISTORY
with
MARY LEE WALKER MAGEE

This is an interview for the Mississippi Oral History Program of The University of Southern Mississippi Simpson County Project. The interview is with Mary Lee Walker Magee and is taking place on May 3, 2003. The interviewer is Joe White.

White: This interview is conducted under a grant from the Mississippi Humanities Council as a part of the oral history project directed by The University of Southern Mississippi. Today we are interviewing Mrs. Mary Lee Walker Magee at her home in the Hawpond Community, ten miles west of Magee and south of Mendenhall. I've just given your full name, so I'm not going to ask you your full name again, but your maiden name was Walker. Is that right? What was your dad's name?

Magee: Reverend Frank Walker.

White: And did he live in Simpson County?

Magee: In Simpson County.

White: Where was he born?

Magee: Simpson County.

White: Oh, he was born in Simpson County, too. And he was a minister, and did he also farm?

Magee: Yes, sir.

White: Was his farm somewhere around this area?

Magee: Down at Shivers Crossing.

White: Shivers Crossing.

Magee: Yes, sir, Shivers Crossing.

White: That's down Highway 13.

Magee: Down Highway 13.

White: And that's where the sign now stands that says Shivers and points that way.

Magee: Right.

White: OK. I've never heard that referred to as Shivers Crossing, but that was an obvious answer. And what was your mother's name?

Magee: Mattie Burkett.

White: Burkett, B-U-R-K-E-T-T, and where was she from? Where was she born?

Magee: Simpson County, too.

White: Oh, she was born in Simpson County, but down close to the Jeff Davis County line?

Magee: Later, after they got married and everything, they moved into Jeff Davis County.

White: OK. I knew there was some Jeff Davis connection there. I wasn't sure just where (inaudible).

Magee: And later than that, they moved back, bought some land, and come back to Simpson County.

White: Back close to here?

Magee: (Inaudible) Shivers. That's where their home (inaudible).

White: Oh, is that right?

Magee: My home is at Shivers Crossing.

White: Did you have any brothers and sisters?

Magee: I had three sisters and five brothers.

White: Pretty big group. Can you name them for us?

Magee: Excell(?), Jamsie(?). We always called her Sane(?), but her name was L.E.

White: L.E.?

Magee: L.E. and Elizabeth(?), Booker T., J.W., R.B., Arthur Lee(?).

White: That's some initials, there, right in the middle.

Magee: Them all initials, that's what we all call them. That's all initial names.

White: Uh-huh. Did they have full names, or did they just have initials?

Magee: They had full names.

White: Some people just went by initials. I've got an uncle who didn't have a name. He just had two initials. That's all.

Magee: But J.W., that was just J.W. That's all his. Booker T., but R.B. is Robert.

White: Robert.

Magee: Robert. But James and Excell, that's Excell, that's all I ever know, just Excell.

White: Most of them stay around this area?

Magee: They did. You see, all of them has deceased but R.B., Robert.

White: Is that right?

Magee: All of them deceased.

White: One boy, huh?

Magee: One boy and one girl. All the rest of them deceased.

White: Where does he live now?

Magee: He live at the Shivers Crossing, which is called Preacher Walker's Road.

White: Preacher Walker Road.

Magee: Named after my father.

White: You later married.

Magee: Junior Magee.

White: All right. Is that his name?

Magee: He went to service for three years, and Uncle Sam didn't give him another name.

White: They didn't (inaudible).

Magee: (Inaudible) so he kept it.

White: They didn't give him a middle initial either, huh?

Magee: (Inaudible) and an honorable discharge, just J-U-N-I-O-R.

White: Believe that's odd because most—there are a lot of people in Simpson County who don't have middle names, and the government usually gave them an initial either because they were ready to collect social security, or their mail was getting confused with somebody else's, or they went in the military service, and that's the first person that I've heard of from Simpson County who went in the military, who wasn't assigned a middle initial.

Magee: Right. And it was odd to a lot of peoples in them—they couldn't believe it when he got out when he went to sign up for different things, they asked for that middle name. He said, "Well, I had one, but when I went in the service, that's the way I signed it, and they gave me a honorable discharge with that. (laughter)

White: That's really odd.

Magee: Three years.

White: Really odd. Where did you get married and when?

Magee: In [19]47 at my father's and my mother's home, on the porch.

White: Is that right? Who was the preacher? Who (inaudible)?

Magee: Reverend George Dixon(?) from Shivers.

White: George. Got a lot of Shivers connections around here.

Magee: Right.

White: In (inaudible). I forgot to ask you when you were born.

Magee: Thirty-two.

White: Nineteen thirty-two. And what month and date?

Magee: March the twelfth.

White: March the twelfth, 1932. And you were born in what community?

Magee: In the, they call it the Dry Ridge Community.

White: Where was that?

Magee: That's still in the Shivers Cross, on Shivers Road.

White: That's Dry Ridge right down the road toward Shivers, off from [Highway] 13?

Magee: Right. Yes, sir.

White: I've heard of Dry Ridge, but I didn't know exactly where it was.

Magee: It's down [Highway] 13, and you'll see the Shivers sign, like you're going to Shivers, but we don't live that far. And you see the sign, Preacher Walker's Road.

White: I think I've seen that sign, come to think of it. Where did you go to school?

Magee: First we went to what they call the Dry Ridge School, and then later they moved us to Mendenhall.

White: That was the Harper School in Mendenhall?

Magee: Yes, sir.

White: How many grades were included in Dry Ridge?

Magee: The eighth grade.

White: First through the eighth, then. When they consolidated the schools, is that when you went to Harper?

Magee: Right.

White: Do you remember about what year that was?

Magee: I know that had to be in, somewhere along in [19]47. I don't think it was Harper when I went there. It wasn't Harper. It might have been Harper, but I can't think it was Harper, but I don't think it was Harper.

White: Did they have a dormitory there then? Did they have boarding students then?

Magee: No.

White: That was later, I think—

Magee: Right.

White: —that they—

Magee: Later they did that.

White: —had a boarding school.

Magee: Right.

White: The [19]50s maybe when they did that. What was your first grade teacher's name? I'm going to question your memory (inaudible).

Magee: Mattie. They called her Mattie Ball(?).

White: Mattie Ball. Is that Ball?

Magee: She was a William, but her name is Mattie Ball, but she was a William.

White: Her last name was Williams, huh?

Magee: William.

White: Well, I wonder if that was her maiden name or something (inaudible).

Magee: I'm sure it is because I know her brother John William. That was her brother, and I'm sure that was her maiden name.

White: Well, did they live around that area down there?

Magee: Same ever where I lived because she lived right at Preacher Walker's Road that you go down, the Preacher Walker's Road.

White: (Inaudible) out. Did they have a teacher for each grade?

Magee: Sure did. (Inaudible)

White: That was a pretty big school then, wasn't it?

Magee: That's right because one of them was Macatullis(?), and I can't think of the other one, but I know Macatullis, and we called her Aunt Mattie Ball.

White: You remember the principal's name?

Magee: The principal's name (inaudible) Macatullis.

White: And you went there until the eighth grade when they consolidated and went to Harper. Who were some of the teacher's you had at Harper? I don't think I've asked anybody else that.

Magee: Oh, boy. (laughter) (Inaudible) I can't think of those teacher's names now for nothing. Anyway, anyway one—

White: You hadn't been asked for them—

Magee: That's right.

White: —in a while. (laughter)

Magee: One of them, she was a Hays(?), Hallie Hays. One of them was Hallie Hays.

White: Well, if you happen to think of them during the interview, we can name them. We try to figure out as many relatives and as many neighbors' names and things like that because a lot of people do genealogical research from these tapes, and that way they—

Magee: I know it was Hallie Hays, and she lived in the (inaudible); I mean the (inaudible). And no mistaking, I think Macinturist(?), he was there, too.

White: Some of the people, when they closed the school up—

Magee: Right.

White: —out there, some of the people moved into Harper, teaching.

Magee: Right. Mr. Macinturist was there, and Mr. Lee(?), a little, short man, named Mr. Lee, he was there, too. I think Mr. Phillips(?) was there at that time.

White: They have pretty good, pretty large classes at Harper when you went?

Magee: Sure did, large classes. But we was in, at that time, you know, didn't have no bus, but they had Sam Walker(?), one that had the bus. They had made a bus, and we transferred like that, on that bus.

White: Sort of a private bus—

Magee: Yeah, that's right.

White: —was what it was.

Magee: Sam Walker. And the man that drove it was Lee Norwood(?), Danny Louis was Norwood drove the bus.

White: Well, there are a lot of Norwoods around here.

Magee: Right. And his name was Danny Louis Norwood.

White: Did he kind of drive around through the community, picking people up?

Magee: He did. See, he picked up the Dry Ridge and the Hawpond Community, taking them to Mendenhall.

White: I know Harper drew a lot of students from all over the county because there were not a lot of black high schools in the county at that time, and the schools were not integrated. Was that—

Magee: Right. (inaudible) was Harper, and they had New Hymn(?).

White: Right.

Magee: Them's the only two.

White: I don't think there were any buses at New Hymn that I've ever heard anybody mention. Was there just one bus at Harper, or do you remember?

Magee: I can't remember no more than (inaudible) like I'm saying. Sam Walker had this bus, and some way they like made it or something. I can't remember, but I know Sam Walker was the owner of this bus, and we called him Ned(?), but his name was Danny Louis(?). He drove the bus for Sam Walker, and he picked up the kids from Dry Ridge to Hawpond, take them to Mendenhall.

White: Who paid him to do that?

Magee: I really don't know how he come by the pay, but I know the bus was Sam Walker's bus. It didn't belong to the school. I don't know whether Mr. Harper(?) and them was paying him or who. (brief interruption)—Sam Walker's bus. Like she said, (inaudible) would take it off. It was a made body. It wasn't no school bus. It was a made body.

White: But you don't remember him logging or anything else with that truck during off season or anything?

Magee: I really don't know what happened after that, but I knew he had that body made, and Ned drove us to Mendenhall on that bus.

White: And when you were growing up, what church did you go to?

Magee: They called it Dry Ridge, but they call it now Greater Dry Ridge.

White: What's the difference in Dry Ridge and Greater Dry Ridge? (laughter)

Magee: I believe they changed it because of the history of it. It wasn't so much. Then when they learned more knowledge and everything, then they changed the name into Greater Dry Ridge.

White: What denomination was it?

Magee: Baptist.

White: Missionary Baptist?

Magee: Baptist.

White: And you're a member now.

Magee: Is St. Peter.

White: Which is a very large church around Hawpond (inaudible).

Magee: Right.

White: We've learned more and more about it on these tapes, people talking about. Obviously it has a big draw and has really been growing the last few years, too.

Magee: Right.

White: For a number of years. When did you get married? Oh, I asked you that a little bit before about when you got married and everything. Did you have any children?

Magee: No, sir. We didn't have any children.

White: But I notice we got one over here.

Magee: Well, me and my husband didn't have any kids, but his brother and his wife, they separated, and they had a girl and a boy, three and four. So we raised them and put them through school and everything.

White: And what were their names?

Magee: The girl's the oldest. Her name's Margery Magee(?), and the boy named Tasrow Magee(?). And we raised both of them, sent them to school, and they finished school and went to Co-Lin to college. She went two years and a half, and he went a year and a half.

White: And this young man who's living with you right now.

Magee: And this is my great-nephew. My baby brother deceased in [19]90.

White: What was his name?

Magee: Arthur.

White: Oh, the same name as—

Magee: Named him after—

White: —his son, here, huh?

Magee: Right. Only he has his name Arthur Desiner(?), but his name was Arthur Lee; his granddaddy was. And then his mama—he was helping his daughter with the four kids, and that one made the fifth one, and he deceased, and the mama, his grandmama had to have her leg amputated, and she couldn't help her with it. And she asked me to take the baby. They didn't want him. She was going to give him up for adoption. And my older brother told me, before he deceased, he told me, he said, "Take the baby." I said, "Unh-uh, honey." I said, "I'm too old for that." He said, "Naw." And they called me Murry(?). He said, "Murry, please take the baby." He said, "I'll do everything I can to help you (inaudible) we may not never see him no more." And I went to Chicago and picked him up at four weeks old, and I been having him ever since he was four weeks old. So now he's four years old.

White: I think I can tell by your expression he hasn't been too much trouble, either, has he?

Magee: No, sir.

White: (laughter) I get the impression he's been a real blessing to you (inaudible).

Magee: He is, been a real blessing to me because I had a accident with the mower. The mower just flipped all the way over. I went all up in the air on the mower, sitting on it. And it fell down, and he ran and come back, said, "Mama, what's wrong?" And I said, "Nothing." I said, "Just call on the Lord." And I, "Bring me something to get my feet out from under there." And he brought me an old piece of axe handle. And that axe handle broke. I said, "Baby, go get me something else." And he went and got me a piece of iron. That iron bent. And I taken that half of axe handle and pry my feet out from under that wall before I could get off the mower. And if it hadn't been for him, nobody would never saw me because I was back there in the car shed.

White: Well, he's been a blessing in more ways than one then, hasn't he?

Magee: Yes, sir. Yes, sir.

White: And he's in, I believe you said, Head Start in kindergarten.

Magee: At (inaudible) County at Pinola. He at (inaudible) County in Pinola.

White: Well, that's my hometown, Pinola.

Magee: Oh, it is?

White: Yeah.

Magee: Well, that's where he goes to (inaudible) County at Pinola.

White: Well, that is good.

Magee: And he's real smart, and I teach him all the time. I buy some color books, and I color, and I told him, I said, "Now, always stay in the lines." So he came in one evening, and he said, "Mama." And he'd been crying. I said, "I told you to obey your teacher. Obey your bus driver. That way they won't whip you." And I said, "Don't come to me, crying." He said, "Mama, the teacher didn't do nothing to me." I said, "Well, the bus driver whip you?" "No, ma'am." He said, "I got out of line a little bit." And he said, "You going to whip me?"

White: Upset him, huh? (laughter)

Magee: "You going to whip me?" I said, "Naw, but I still tell you, 'Stay in the lines.'" And it hurt him to see that he had made a little error. He didn't want to make no error.

White: I can look at his work right there and tell he's doing a really good job, too.

Nephew: I made that.

White: Yeah. That looks good, too. Now, you worked outside the home for a number of years, didn't you?

Magee: I worked at Universal for ten years. Then I left Universal, and I came home, stayed about a year or more, and then my husband's already mechanic at Mendenhall High School, and so I went up there and started in custodians. I worked there for ten years, and I retired from Mendenhall High School.

White: What years were you custodian up there?

Magee: Oh, let me see. I can't remember how—it had to been [19]90—

White: We can probably date it to your retirement there.

Magee: My husband died in [19]90. Had to be [19]91, [19]92, somewhere.

White: So basically from [19]81 to [19]82 to [19]91 to [19]92, you were custodian at the—

Magee: Right.

White: That was at the high school?

Magee: At the high school, Mendenhall High School, and Mr. Mack Long(?) was the principal, and Mr. McCaffrey(?) was the assistant principal.

White: Did you enjoy it?

Magee: I loved it. I really loved it. They were so nice to me, and I enjoyed every minute of it. I hated to quit, but had come a time, I had to quit.

White: Well, what about your ten years at Universal? Did you enjoy that?

Magee: I enjoyed the ten years at Universal. It was nice, and I remember one time; it was when we was all out there. And Glen Edward(?) was my foreman, and everybody would talk nasty talk, and so they passed the rule; they said they didn't want nobody to say no bad words no more. So Glen Edward said to me, he said, "It won't be but two peoples in this building, where we work at in this department," said, "won't be but two in there." And two asked him, said, "Who would be the two?" He said, "That's Ms. Magee and me." And said, "You'd be the first (inaudible) and I ain't never heard Ms. Magee say a bad word." And he said, "That way I know she'll be here, but the rest of y'all be gone." (laughter)

White: They got where they were talking a little too rough, huh?

Magee: Yes, sir. And I mean, they was using that bad language, and so they passed the rule that we couldn't talk like that. And he came and told us that. So he said, "Well, I know it won't be but two people left on this line." And they asked, "Who was it?" He said, "That's Ms. Magee and me, Glenn Elvison(?)." They said, "Glenn, you be the first to go." (laughter)

White: Universal made a lot of difference in the employment in Simpson County for most black people and white people, I know.

Magee: Yes, sir.

White: And it was the first opportunity that a lot of people had to work together. Were there any problems that you know of?

Magee: It was a plenty problem, but I never have been (inaudible). I stayed there them ten years, and I just come to love, and everybody just come to love me. Mr.—hm, I can't think of his name. He always want me to come in, me and his wife, and we'd test the (inaudible) units because I run a tester. And they always want me. And he'll come in and test the unit, and they always—Mr. Adam Edwards(?) and Glenn Evers(?) and Mr. Willie Ben(?), they always want me to come in and help them. I went a lot of overtimes with them. I fell in love with them, and they fell in love with me. Then when we have some parties or something, like somebody's birthday, we would cook, bring food. They always want me to bake a potato pie. Said, "Lord, she can make a tater pie." (laughter)

White: You better be careful talking about food, now.

Magee: Oh! (laughter)

White: Let's talk about food a little bit.

Magee: OK.

White: Where did you learn how to cook? Did your mom teach you how to cook?

Magee: My mother taught me how to cook real early. And I mean, I really love to cook.

White: Was she a pretty good cook?

Magee: No, sir.

White: She wasn't?

Magee: She was a good cook. (laughter)

White: It wasn't any pretty good about it.

Magee: Not pretty (inaudible) she was a good cook. She would take anything and make something out of it. And I mean, it was delicious.

White: What were some of the foods you really liked that she fixed?

Magee: Just any of them. (laughter)

White: Sounds like she was a good cook.

Magee: Yes, sir, she was a good cook. So now they name me the same way because I have a lot of cousins on my husband's side in Chicago, and we have family reunion

every year in August, the second [Saturday] in August. And my cousins always tell me, they send me a card and send me a little something to go on, and say, “We want you to make the dumplings.” And they all tell me, say, “Won’t be no more dumplings made after you gone,” say, “because Big Lady don’t (inaudible) go to town and buy these already made. You make the homemade.”

White: Is your dumpling recipe the same one your mama had?

Magee: Same one Mama had. Roll that dough out thin, and let that broth be boiling and drop one at a time.

White: What about pie crust? Is your pie crust like—

Magee: Roll, make the pie crusts.

White: I figure anybody that makes dumplings is bound to make their own pie crust, too.

Magee: Right.

White: Do you like to make pies or cakes more?

Magee: Any of it. I just love cooking. I really do.

White: But you started when you were pretty young.

Magee: I was real young because she said—as my mother and them, I can’t never remember her doing nothing in the field because my daddy said when they first married, they had us right on top of each other, and they would go to the field, and he said he had to hoe her row and his row and said he decided one day, he said, “You go to the house,” (laughter) he said, “because I’m doing it all anyhow.” And so she went on home, and when I grew up, I can’t never remember her doing a day’s work in the field. Everything she done was something in the garden or in the house; never did a day’s work in the field. I can’t remember her being out there with us.

White: Did you help her can, put up vegetables, and things like that?

Magee: All, like because, see, I was the knee girl. The other two was older than I was. She always let me stay and help her. I quit earlier than the rest of them and go out and help her cook.

White: You worked in the field a while, though, huh?

Magee: Right. And I would be glad of that. Lord, we were picking up cucumbers. Whew! (laughter) I hated that.

White: Didn't make your hands itch, did it?

Magee: Whew! Naw, it hurt your back. And so my brothers, I would be cooking and helping my mama be cooking the breakfast, and I looked down there and see they about through. And I said, "Brothers." And they get to the house; they, said, "Myrlie"—they called me Myrlie. Said, "Myrlie wait till we get through with this. You calling breakfast. You know she got breakfast done before then." (laughter) But that kept me from picking the cucumbers. (laughter)

White: Well, I never was a fan of picking cucumbers, myself, either. I tell you.

Magee: No, sir. But we had to do it, and I enjoyed it. But Lord, Lord, that was some hard work.

White: Did your dad sell cotton or any of the produce off the land?

Magee: Yes, sir. (Inaudible) And why they left Jeff Davis County, they were sharecropping in the Jeff Davis County, my daddy and my older brothers and sisters, and then this man was named Ed Walkman(?). That's who he was sharing a crop with. And then after he found out they had this land up here in Simpson County for sale, and then my daddy told him he would like to buy it. And he called my daddy Frank. He said, "Frank, when you make this crop this year, I'm not going to take nary a penny from you. I'm going to let you put every bit of it on this land, and then the next year, I'm going to let you put it all on your land. Then the next year when you make a crop, start a paying me back." And that's how my daddy came up with us a home, a hundred and something acres of land. And now me, I never been on a sharecropper because, see, my daddy was on his own when we came. And then when I married my husband, his grandparents and them, they had they own land. So I never been on a sharecropper place because where I was born at, my daddy bought that. Then my husband's parents bought theirs.

White: Well, did you and your husband farm?

Magee: Ooh, Lord have mercy. (laughter)

White: Sounds like you did.

Magee: Yes, sir. Because I remember one year a man named Charlie William(?), we had some cotton up there close to him, me and my husband. And Lord, that year it rained so much, and you couldn't see the cotton for the grass. He told my husband, he said, "Junior," he said, "you better tell them, 'Don't step on the grass because the cotton's up under there.'" (laughter)

White: It was higher than the cotton.

Magee: Yes, sir, it was higher than the cotton.

White: Where'd y'all gin your cotton?

Magee: At Pinola, ginned the cotton at Pinola. And sometime they would take it to New Hebron.

White: You remember waiting in line down there, or did you ever go with them when they went to market?

Magee: I never did get to go with them until up in—I never did go there. I never did get to go nowhere. Rode in the wagon one time to New Hebron with my brother and his wife. We called him Book(?), and her name was Bert(?). And they went down to New Hebron to get something, and I got in the wagon, went with them in the wagon.

White: That was a long ride to New Hebron in a wagon, wasn't it?

Magee: The only way we had to go or walk. Didn't have no cars or nothing.

White: But you and your husband had a truck, probably, when you (inaudible).

Magee: Well, when I married in them (inaudible) years, my husband, he bought him a truck. And then we had a (inaudible) to come here that name was W.H. Hinds(?). And it was a lot of people didn't have no way to go to church or nothing, and he had an old, flat-body truck, and he would go round in the community and pick all the peoples up, young peoples and old peoples, and bring them to church.

White: Is that St. Peter?

Magee: St. Peter Church. And when we'd get there, they'd have their heads tied up, and pull our shoes off and wipe all the dust off, and then come on in the church. It was great. And then later after that, my husband, he was still driving a truck. Like I'm saying, he built like a body on that flat, black truck, and brought the people, still, to church. And they enjoyed it. Now, there's a lot of young children. Think about that. If it hadn't been for Mr. Magee, see, we never would have got to come to church. And they lived on the sharecrops, and they didn't have no way of going nowhere.

White: Well, your husband, later, and you said, I believe, became a mechanic for the school system?

Magee: He was a mechanic at the school, and he drove. He sold—we raised watermelons. He carried watermelons to Chicago, St. Louis.

White: He had a big truck by then.

Magee: Right. Went to New Orleans with truckloads. He hauled cotton. He was just a truck man, and he did a lot of work.

White: Did he haul stuff for other people?

Magee: Well, he was under Ralph Walker(?). He was hauling under Ralph Walker.

White: When he got tired of being on the road, is that when he went to school up here?

Magee: He had a accident, and then the doctor didn't want him to drive trucks no more. He was coming from (inaudible), Texas, had a load of stumps, taking them to Hattiesburg, and he was in Tylertown, and he said a lady was coming right into him, and he had to move over, and he hit another car, to keep from killing these people, and he went right on, and one of them little stumps went on top of that bank, and it just cut that fifth wheel off of that truck and (inaudible) wasn't nobody in there with him. All of that just closed all that side. He was just sitting in there and didn't get but one little scratch on his thigh, but they thought he was gone. But it didn't bother (inaudible). But it cut that fifth wheel off of his truck.

White: Well, that truck must have had a headache rack, what they call a headache rack on it back there to keep something from running up over the truck (inaudible). He probably bent it and tore it off, too.

Magee: Right, right. But see, they had a headache up there on account of to hold them stumps.

White: Right.

Magee: (Inaudible) to hold the stumps up there. So yeah, he got (inaudible). I was sitting there. We went back down there, and it was a white man and a white lady, they had come from Florida, and they had stopped in there. Said, "Well, I know the man is dead in this truck." I said, "No, ma'am." I said, "Here he is right here, alive." And he said, "I can't believe it." And so then he grabbed my husband, and he hugged him. He said, "You are blessed." And he said, "Yes, sir." Then he looked up. My husband always kept his little Bible with him. He said, "That's what kept (inaudible)." Said, "You had the Word with you." Sure did.

White: Well, there's not much better thing to have with you, (laughter) at a time like that.

Magee: Sure not.

White: Well, did he retire from the school system?

Magee: He retired from the bus barn at Mendenhall, Mendenhall High School.

White: Did he have any time much to enjoy his retirement before he got sick?

Magee: Yes, he sure did.

White: Well, that's good.

Magee: He enjoyed it real good, and Dr. Meadow(?) was his doctor, and she had told me, she said, "Well, his heart done enlarged. His (inaudible) is done enlarged." And so she prepared me to (inaudible) he quit. And he still wanted to do something, had gardens and stuff like that. And that day before Thanksgiving he went out there in the garden, cut okra, pepper, tomatoes and went to prayer meeting that night and came back, sitting up in here. And I was getting ready to cook a cake. He said, "Come here, baby." I said, "Unh-uh." I said, "I'm trying to fix us a cake." "No, come here." And I bought cake. And I don't know when I have made a cake with my hands. I came in here and sit down, and he moved and went over there, and he said, "I believe I want to read Revelations (inaudible)." And I said, "OK." I kept on stirring the cake. All at once the Bible fell out his hands, and I asked him, I said, "You telling me you went to sleep on the Word?" And he didn't say nothing. He made one (inaudible), one down. Ain't (inaudible), went on (inaudible).

White: Sound like a blessed way to go, too. It really does.

Magee: Yes, sir. Never moved his feet; didn't move his hands or nothing.

White: Well, I know you miss him, but I know you got a pretty full life right there with that young man.

Magee: Yes, sir. Yes, sir.

White: And he's going to be enjoying school, big school here. I think they call it big school.

Magee: Well, he tell me that now, "I be going to big school." I say, "Yeah, you be going to big school." (laughter)

Nephew: Mom, will I be going to big school?

White: Sure will, and you'll be back in the get-them-to-school business then, won't you? (laughter) Well, I appreciate your talking with us tonight. And I know we got here mighty late and everything.

Magee: No problem.

White: Thank you very much, and I appreciate your doing the interview with us.

(end of interview)