

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW  
WITH  
JAMES N. LASSITER, JR.

OCTOBER 10, 2007  
READYVILLE, TENNESSEE

INTERVIEWED BY EVAN HATCH

PARQ  
PRESERVE THE AREA'S RURAL QUALITIES  
ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW #3



ALBERT GORE RESEARCH CENTER

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MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

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## **ABSTRACT**

James N. Lassiter, Jr. (January 17, 1925—April 4, 2011) was a native of Curlee, near Readyville and the border between Cannon and Rutherford counties in Middle Tennessee. He lived on his family's farm until drafted in 1944. In this interview he relates his service in the army during World War II, including stories of one of his commanding officers who was killed in combat. He served in France and moved into Germany at the end of the war. He liked the German people and described them as friendly. After the war he returned to the family farm where they raised mostly corn and livestock. He tells stories of his youth on the farm when they grew wheat that was sold on shares to the Readyville Mill, but notes that his family no longer did so after the war. Lassiter speaks of the community around Readyville, including a mechanic shop located over the raceway to the mill, Russell's Store, and Tilford's Lumber. He shares his memories of the way the population dealt with times when money was scarce. At the time of the interview, Mr. Lassiter lived in Woodbury, Cannon County, Tennessee.

## **PHOTO**



James Lassiter

PARQ photo by Evan Hatch

## Sketch of James Lassiter

When James Lassiter was a boy, he used to help his father cut the wheat for shipment up the road to the Readyville Mill. He recalls how his father and other men would use a wheat cradle, a multi-prong device designed to both cut and catch the wheat, to leave piles of wheat that others would then bundle and arrange vertically in rows of twelve. They would then spread two more bundles over the vertical ones to act as a sort of roof to protect the wheat from water. James' job was to follow up afterward and be sure that all the wheat was properly covered. Even as a boy he was involved in the process of turning home grown wheat to flour.

Mr. Lassiter recalls that times were tough for farmers in Readyville in those days. There was frequently no cash to pay the mill for milling the wheat so the mill took a share of the wheat for payment and sold it to others. Most of the flour that the Lassiter's wheat produced was kept on deposit at the mill, and the Lassiters could get what they needed at a later date. Mr. Lassiter explains that his father rigged a special cradle in the rafters to hold the flour, making it of wires hung at an angle so rodents couldn't get to the flour. Besides the flour, which his mother used to bake large numbers of biscuits, they ate vegetables and beans from their garden. When food was really scarce, his mother would take a pillowcase into the woods and they would hunt wild greens. Things were tough, but they didn't starve.

Mr. Lassiter tells how he earned his own money for shoes as a boy. He would get coins as presents or for doing a job, and his parents would have him save them until he could afford to buy his own cow. When the cow produced a calf, it was sold and the money used to buy shoes. The next calf would be ready to sell about the time young James needed another pair, so sell it he would and buy the pair he would. James learned the value of business and providing for oneself at an early age in Cannon County.

Mr. Lassiter served in Europe during the Second World War, returning to Cannon County and the old farm. He married and continued to work on his father's farm for awhile, but soon obtained a job as a postal carrier. His father was too old to grow and harvest wheat, so the farm concentrated on livestock and corn to feed it. Mr. Lassiter still remembers that time in the Readyville area, however. The mill, along with Tilford's store and sawmill and Russell's Grocery were the center of the community. And a community they were, always willing to lend each other a hand. He tells of the flooding on the Stones River and how all the neighbors would rush to help those being flooded out save their belongings. That type of community life left its mark on Mr. Lassiter in a way that one doesn't see much today.

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HATCH: This is Evan Hatch recording an interview with Mr. James Nolan Lassiter. Correct? I just saw on that piece of paper.

LASSITER: Mm-hmm.

HATCH: On—at his home in Woodbury on October 10, 2007. Let this be known that this interview will now be called James dot Lassiter 10 dot 10 dot 07, part one. Today we're going to be speaking a little bit about the history of the Readyville Mill and its relation to Cannon County and its burgs in general. Mr. Lassiter has a few specific memories about the mill, and I have a feeling might have some, some memories that maybe connected to that in some way. This is the second time I've interviewed Mr. Lassiter and he tells a mighty fine story. So sir, you have one specific story—actually, let, let's get some information first if I might. Can you tell me your age and your date of birth?

LASSITER: January the 17<sup>th</sup>, 1925.

HATCH: 1925. So you were born where, sir?

LASSITER: Up the Bradyville Road.

HATCH: Okay.

LASSITER: Half a mile from Curlee.

HATCH: Okay, and the community—you know the community you were born into?

LASSITER: Well, they all called it Curlee community over there, you see, but, we was a half a mile from the Curlee school.

HATCH: Okay. What else was in Curlee?

LASSITER: [unintelligible] store and school and church and . . .

HATCH: What kind of church was that?

LASSITER: Church of Christ.

HATCH: Church of Christ, okay.

LASSITER: Yeah, that's the oldest Church of Christ in Cannon County.

HATCH: Okay.

LASSITER: And . . . when I was six years old and started to school and moved from half a mile north of Curlee School to half a mile south of Curlee School.

HATCH: Okay.

LASSITER: And lived there then until I was drafted and went to service in 1944.

HATCH: Getting into the war kind of late, there?

LASSITER: August 2, 1944.

HATCH: Little over a year before it's over.

LASSITER: And then, had seventeen weeks of basic training at Fort McClellan, Alabama.

HATCH: Okay.

LASSITER: And went overseas. Sailed from Boston, Massachusetts, the third day of January 1945. Landed at Le Havre, France—

HATCH: Yes, sir.

LASSITER: Fifteenth of January '45. And then on the seventeenth, two days later, was my twentieth birthday.

HATCH: What'd you do on your birthday?

LASSITER: I jogged along the railroad track beside the—train was in the snow.

HATCH: Was it full-packed?

LASSITER: No, the pack was in the train, see, they, they put us in a train where your haul eight horses. They call it “forty and eight”—forty soldiers or eight horses. No seats, no nothing, just old freight car. And, no heat nor nothing, and it's snow on the ground, and they'd always wait for the supply trains to go through, you see, and then, but I celebrated my birthday jogging along in the snow by the side of the train.

HATCH: Stay warm?

LASSITER: To try to stay warm, you know, get the circulation in your feet and everything. And the, the thing of it, we stopped at some little village or something, and somebody found a fifty-five gallon barrel and they'd put it in the car we sat in and we built up a fire in.

HATCH: Was that against rules?

LASSITER: And, I guess. Anyhow, this smoke was so bad, you know, you had to lay down on the floor to survive. Then, we'd finally have to open the doors a little bit, slide them back and then we'd have an election, and we'd vote to kick the thing out and they'd kick it out, and we had about three different barrels before we got to where we was going, and finally the last barrel got so hot that it was red and it burned through the floor, the wooden floor of the thing and fell down on the cross steel rods under there, you see. And we'd have the election to get a barrel and we'd have one to throw it out, you know, and we finally, finally got there and then the first time that, that I was anywhere where there was a wounded soldier or anything, they were trying to build a pontoon bridge across the Saar River and the Germans were sinking it every time. So some of the engineers was wounded, and they asked for volunteers to go down and carry them out. And it took ten men to carry one out.

HATCH: How's that?

LASSITER: Well, the, the snow was on the ground and it had warmed up a little bit and it was just a terrible, just had to go down a big hill.

HATCH: Mm-hmm.

LASSITER: And, and it's six carrying and four rotating every little bit, and we's coming up with this soldier and he's, he had both legs broke and both arms broke and some ribs broke. And we was coming up the hill with him and big trees and everything, and while we's going up this thing, course sometimes it's so slick and everything, somebody would fall down that was carrying, but, anyhow, we'd keep getting him out, and a big shell hit in the tree right close to us. Limbs was falling on the ground, they just sit him down, and everybody run behind a big tree. And, and he begged us to come back and get him. He said he was married had two daughters, and I think he lived in South Carolina. And, but just soon as things quieted down, we went back and carried him out, but I didn't volunteer to go do anything anymore after that.

HATCH: Why'd you volunteer?

LASSITER: Well, just figured somebody was, needed some help, you know, we'd just go and . . .

HATCH: What would you have done otherwise?

LASSITER: I just didn't volunteer anymore.

LASSITER: But anyhow, we never could get the bridge built, then we had to cross the river. It was a narrow river; it might have been half again as wide as the Stones River, but real deep. And we'd cross it in boats and . . .

HATCH: Was it very swift?

LASSITER: No. No, it wasn't swift, it just, just real deep, and it, the only times that I saw it, it looked like it was half muddy, you know, it wasn't clear water, it was kind of muddy water. And there was just one little gravel road from the creek, or river, to the hill that had steps dug in it so you could get up it.

HATCH: Mm-hmm.

LASSITER: And, but we got across and no shells come in and we starting up this hill.

HATCH: The stair steps?

LASSITER: The stair steps on that hill going up, and, and we had to rest before we got to the top. And there was a, a frame built up and pine trees was turned upside down hanging on this frame around, and you had to separate them like that to go through this little path. When you separated them, there was a German soldier sitting there with a machine gun, but he was dead, and when we got on up a little bit further, why, then that's when we sat down to rest, and the fella behind me says, "Why didn't you tell me that that kraut was there?" You know, they called all the German soldiers krauts.

HATCH: Mm-hmm.

LASSITER: And I said, "The fella in front of me didn't tell me!" He just set you up. He didn't say nothing when you just, all of a sudden, there was . . .

HATCH: Did you think he was alive for a second?

LASSITER: No.

HATCH: No.

LASSITER: No, cause we'd been coming up that hill, and if he had a been, why, we'd been all killed, you see.

HATCH: Yes, sir.

LASSITER: And, but soldiers always quit firing when there's a little bit of ammunition left. They try to be at least from eight to twelve cartridges left, that they wouldn't shoot anymore because if they shot them out, and then you captured them why, you would say, "Well, that rascal would have killed me if he'd had more, more ammunition." So a lot of time they'd kill them. And I never did see anything like that done, but I'm sure that it was done. But anyhow, this went on until the thirteenth day of February. And . . .

HATCH: Still in Le Havre? Still in France?

LASSITER: No, was in Germany.

HATCH: You were in Germany at that point?

LASSITER: Yeah, we'd already got into Germany. And it was a real hot battle. And we were all down in the big woods and everything and my squad leader hollered for me to go across the little gravel road and clear the dugout that's over there cause there was some fire coming from over that way.

HATCH: What'd he call you?

LASSITER: He just called me by the name.

HATCH: Called you . . .

LASSITER: By name.

HATCH: Lassiter?

LASSITER: Yep. Go. Go.

HATCH: You were, what, a private?

LASSITER: Yep, private *first class*.

HATCH: Oh!

LASSITER: You automatically got that when you drive up.

HATCH: I'm sure you were first class private; no doubt.

LASSITER: And, but anyhow, when I stood up by this big pine tree, a bullet hit the tree just about a foot above my head, and I hit the ground. He hollered again, "Go clear the dugout!" I said, "You go yourself; they know where I am!" And in just a little bit, the company commander come running down the...they all stooped over and running and touching my heel and said, "Come with me to clear the dugout." So by the time I could get up and everything and got to the middle of this little gravel road, why, he'd already hollered back and said, "You can go back, the dugout's clear." But there was three soldiers that's in the woods right over there, course we didn't know it at that that time, and as I turned to go back, a bullet knocked the gravel up right at my feet and I dived over in the ditch, but when he was running back 'cross the road, they got him in the back and he fell in the ditch. And he was groaning and his name was Lieutenant Sourpan. And . . .

HATCH: S-A-R-P-A-N?

LASSITER: S-O-U-R-P-A-N. Sourpan.

HATCH: Huh.

LASSITER: And ...

HATCH: What ethnicity was he?

LASSITER: What?

HATCH: What, where did, what, what country did—what kind of name is that?

LASSITER: I don't know, just, he was just American soldier.

HATCH: So, okay.

LASSITER: First lieutenant, company commander.

HATCH: Yeah.

LASSITER: And course I hollered to him, I said, "Where you hit?" And he said, "In the back!" I said, "How bad is it?" And he said, "I don't know. It, it hurts awful bad." And then he started groaning, and course we were supposed to stay with the wounded soldier till, you know, we got a medic there and everything and take care of him. And course I couldn't raise up out of this ditch anyway. And I'd put my helmet on my rifle barrel and stick out there, you know, bullets are smacking the bank, and him was groaning and I was hollering for the medic with my face right down to the ground.

HATCH: With the radio? Or just yelling?

LASSITER: Just yelling.

HATCH: Could they hear you?

LASSITER: Oh no, they couldn't hear me like that, you see, but, finally, I'm laying there and my rifle is laying right by the side of me and a German soldier came out of the woods and right around the curve like that, just running real fast and in a little bit another one and a third one come out and left. Then I put my helmet up and no bullets was hitting the bank, and so I got everything ready and jumped up and got up on top of the bank up there behind the big pine stump. And then I hollered for the medics and they heard me then.

HATCH: Mm-hmm.

LASSITER: And then the, the company was moving on through the woods and leaving me and the company commander back here by ourself and him wounded, and that's not good.

HATCH: Why'd they do that?

LASSITER: Well, they's in a battle. They's going right on. And so he just lay—laid there for a long time and I was hollering "medic!" loud as I could, and,

finally, somebody took me by the heel and I thought surely the Germans had me. It was the medic. He said, "Where you hit?" I said, "Oh, it's the company commander right there in the ditch." So he got off in the ditch, and two hours later he died. He was hit in the spine.

HATCH: Mm.

LASSITER: And, of course, I ran and caught up with the company, you know. You didn't wanna be in Germany on a hillside by yourself. And so it, we went on that day and course they was, they was retreating and, and we got on back, and I didn't know, didn't hear for, till late that evening, you know, that Lieutenant Sourpan had died. And then that was the 13<sup>th</sup> of February. On the 14<sup>th</sup> of February, we was gonna take a hill, and we tried three times that day. And the first time I got along, we went up the little road and turned left and about twenty yards out, we started up through the woods. And there was a cleared up place that was about, I guess about seventy-five feet circle.

HATCH: Mm-hmm.

LASSITER: Round. That everything was cleared out. And when I got to the middle of that cleared up place, the Germans opened up with machine gun fire and everything. And, there was a, a pine log that was laying there, about five feet long or five and a half feet long—big enough I couldn't reach around it. And, I got me a, a shell came in and hit on the same side of the log that I was on, and piled dirt on me, so I couldn't get up over the log, so I just turned on my back and picked the log up and laid on the other side of me and relax, you know. I thought, "Boy, I'm hiding behind this log." And a shell hit on that side and piled dirt on me. I moved the log back and forth three or four times. And then, while I was laying there, a shell came in and hit the, a big pine tree right where the woods started again, and our squad leader was, was right by this tree, and it cut that tree off and shot it up in the air about three foot, and it come back down, and then it fell back, but it fell over to the side a little bit to where, just whip me a little bit with the limbs. And course the concussion of the shell would've killed him and then the tree shot up and come right down on him and fell back and so, but just in a little bit, some guy running out and we Americans never did retreat, they always advanced to the rear.

HATCH: Mm-hmm. [several seconds of jostling with the microphone is audible] Exactly. Well, that's a good way of saying it, I think.

LASSITER: And, we sure did advance to the rear! And we tried three times that day and never did get the hill. And then on the fifteenth of February, why, they, they said, "We're gonna take that hill today."

HATCH: Oh my God . . .

LASSITER: And, course, the Germans had already backed off and everything. And only one shell . . . that heard even come in, and I was the only one that hit the ground, and I got hit with a piece of shrapnel on the fifteenth, under the right shoulder blade. It's right up there in that middle of that thing. And thirty-two days in, in the hospital, or to and from the hospital anyway. When we got back, and we, I joined the company in Frankfurt, Germany. When we got back and there was two boys that were just, just getting there, recruits that'd just come in. The three of us went there and they was serving supper when we got there. And they, this guy that first was a serving bacon and he had some tongs like he's picking up this bacon, let the grease drain off of it, you know, then put it on your plate. And, and he says, "You fellas don't have anything to be afraid of and everything. Everything's quiet up here." Said, "This is not even dangerous or anything." And just a little bit, he's still talking and, and he begin to tell about the day that Lieutenant Sourpan was killed, and he told this story just like he was right there. And course, he was thinking it was all three recruits. When he finally got through, I told him, I said, "That's not the way I heard it." He said, "Whatta you know about it?" I said, "I don't know much, but you wasn't around anywhere!" [laughs] And just things like that happened around, and . . .

HATCH: Was there ever any sense that you were, that you were winning the war, or was there ever sense between the troops that you all know that you were dancing in Germany and, and defeating the Germans?

LASSITER: Oh, ah—yes, I think so. Yeah.

HATCH: What was that like? What'd, what'd they, how, how did you know that?

LASSITER: Course, it was still just as dangerous, you see, but we, they was about six of us sent out on a patrol. And the sergeant had gotten mixed up, and he had a paper, you know, where we're supposed to go, and so he said, "Let's wait a minute. Let's get over here in this ditch, now." We was going out this road. Said, "Get in this ditch, and let me look at my paper again so we know where we're going." And while we was squatted down in this ditch, they was seventy-five German soldiers come walking out of the woods with their hands up. They thought we'd spotted them, and they knew that Germany was losing. And so . . .

HATCH: And you hadn't even seen them?

LASSITER: No, we hadn't even seen them at all. Scared the life outta me when they come walking out!

HATCH: They had their hands up?

LASSITER: They were, yeah. There wasn't a shot fired nor nothing, they just come on out. We, we stop where we was going and took them on back, and they just marched on back there, you know. And . . .

HATCH: Did you feel like you were fighting Nazis or did you feel like you were fighting for the U.S. to do what, I mean, did you, did they drum up any sense of patriotism in you?

LASSITER: Well, yes, but it, but we knew there was, we's fighting the Nazis.

HATCH: Mm-hmm.

LASSITER: And the German people was friendly as they could be.

HATCH: Okay.

LASSITER: Course, I guess they realized that they needed to be, but they were, they were much friendlier than the French. And, and I never was in England, but some that was in England said that they were more friendly than the English was. But oh, here's a, a thing of it, and I think about when, when Germany surrendered the 8<sup>th</sup> of May . . .

HATCH: Mm-hmm.

LASSITER: '45. It was just an old misty rain and foggy and everything and, you know, hadn't been in my house in a long time, infantry was just digging holes on the hillsides and everything.

HATCH: Mm-hmm.

LASSITER: And this guy came up with a big radio strapped on his back and they announced that Germany had unconditionally surrendered. Well, I, I was what they called the "anti-tank grenadier." I had a grenade launcher that went on the end of my barrel and carried grenades to, if there was a tank, you see, you'd get up there and blow the track off of it. And then I had the phosphorus grenade that you'd burn a house down, you see, if it was in that, you see, but the one's got that, you gotta go up to the tank, and then you gotta go up to the house and throw it in the window and everything, and I told myself that's, that's fortunate with me that I got to be all of those things. But when I heard that Germany had unconditionally surrendered, I pulled the thing on that phosphorus grenade and threw it as far as I could. And, boy, you couldn't even look in that direction. I bet you flame was going thirty-five feet high and by the time it burnt up and everything, why, a jeep come running up the little road said, "Who threw that grenade?" Course, I was the only one had one, so I said, "I did, sir." And he sure did chew me out, but twenty years old and thinking, "Boy, I'm gonna get to go home." And the German army could have been two or

three hundred yards over in the woods right there, but I never thought of that, I celebrated.

HATCH: Mm-hmm.

LASSITER: But, anyhow, it's just, I remember those things.

HATCH: They wouldn't have been around. You hit them with the phosphorus grenade, I bet. I don't think you would've heard anything about it.

LASSITER: [Laughing].

HATCH: What'd you do when you, what, what'd you do when you came back?

LASSITER: Well . . .

HATCH: When the war was over.

LASSITER: Course, they paid us, little bit. I drewed a check for a little while.

HATCH: Mm-hmm.

LASSITER: And then I got out to, in April. I believe the twenty-sixth of April, '46, when I was discharged from Camp Campbell, Kentucky. And then I's just farming with my daddy on a small farm and everything.

HATCH: Was that in Bradyville?

LASSITER: Well, half a mile up above Curlee.

HATCH: Mm-hmm.

LASSITER: Three and a half miles . . . well, just three miles from the flashing lights. Mm, I'm pretty sure. And . . .

HATCH: Old farm still there?

LASSITER: But yeah, it's been divided up.

HATCH: How many acres?

LASSITER: Two. There wasn't but seventy acres, I think. And . . .

HATCH: What were you growing?

LASSITER: Well, we'd grow corn and wheat, now, now we didn't grow any, grow any wheat after I got out of the service.

HATCH: Why's that?

LASSITER: But, well, I don't know, my daddy'd got old, and this is one of the stories, now, that I can tell you about the wheat crop.

HATCH: Mm-hmm.

LASSITER: When I was about ten, we had five or five and half acres of wheat, and my daddy used a wheat cradle to cut it. And, of course, with that, you know, you just get a little bit wheat and they'd throw it in little piles, and somebody would come along and pick them up until he get enough to tie a bundle.

HATCH: Mm-hmm.

LASSITER: And pull three or four straws out and put around it and tie it and throw it down, go ahead picking up the others, you see.

HATCH: What does the, what's the size of one of these bundles?

LASSITER: Well, they just be about this big around.

HATCH: About the circumference of a stove pipe? A little bit bigger?

LASSITER: Well, some of them would be a little bit bigger, but not much.

HATCH: And how long would they be?

LASSITER: And just whatever the wheat . . .

HATCH: Two or four feet—two or three feet?

LASSITER: Well, yeah, between two and a half feet, probably.

HATCH: Okay.

LASSITER: And—

HATCH: When I say how much, it's, I'm just trying to make record of it.

LASSITER: Yeah. And so my job was to if somebody else came along and picked up the little piles of wheat and tied it in bundles and laid it down and went on, my job was to carry those and put them in a pile, fourteen bundles to the pile. Then, somebody else came along and shocked it; they'd put twelve, twelve bundles up the, grain up, you see, and then take two bundles and spread it all out and put it on top to cap it off. And so, one day, my daddy was cradling, and as he come around, you know, he'd reach up there and he made a mistake and, and, and hit the blade of the cradle and split his finger till you could just see the bone. And course, you know, a ten or eleven year old boy, that just . . . my dad, he just lay the cradle down and went to the house and, I guess, put some alcohol on it and something else

and wrapped it up and come back and just started cradling again and cut the wheat. And I couldn't . . .

HATCH: Saw his bone.

LASSITER: Yeah.

HATCH: You remember it?

LASSITER: Oh, yeah, yeah; the bone was just as white—where it laid that finger open and then he just put it back together. And never, never went and had no stitches in it, nothing, just bounded it up real tight, and come on back and started cradling wheat again.

HATCH: Did he complain at all?

LASSITER: No, no. He was born in eighteen and seventy-six. And when he's back there . . .

HATCH: Wow, that's the centennial!

LASSITER: [Laughing].

HATCH: That was the centennial of the United States, right there, you know?

LASSITER: And my mother was born in 1884, the seventeenth of May, 1884, and so there's about eight years difference in their ages.

HATCH: Mm-hmm.

LASSITER: And but I can remember that, and then whenever—course, we, we never owned a car, just had a two-horse wagon. But, when it could get somebody that had a truck or something, why, they'd, my daddy get them to haul the wheat down to the Readyville mill.

HATCH: Can I ask you one quick question? You know, you took the, you took ten of those, and you, and you grouped them together and capped them with two?

LASSITER: Took twelve and capped them with two.

HATCH: Capped them with two—why, why, why cap them?

LASSITER: Well, that would drain more water off, you know, from going down when it rained, you know, course, they didn't stay there too long.

HATCH: Mm-hmm.

LASSITER: But it would drain the water off, instead of going right down on the . . .

HATCH: And rotting the wheat.

LASSITER: The head.

HATCH: Okay.

LASSITER: And when we get somebody to haul the wheat to, to the mill at Readyville.

HATCH: In a pick-up truck?

LASSITER: Some kind of truck would get, you know, and, and they'd take the wheat and they'd weigh it, and then they gave you so much flour. You just traded the wheat for flour.

HATCH: So, would it, would it break out evenly?

LASSITER: Well, no, they had to have . . .

HATCH: More.

LASSITER: He had to have more wheat than for what it'd be for the flour cause if we didn't have no money to give them, he just had to get, you know, his pay out of the weighing the wheat and how much flour. And of course we'd bring three or four sacks of flour home with us, and the other was on deposit. And you could go back and get it. And of course, they was making flour all the time, you see, and it wouldn't stay there. But when you went back, you know, you got fresh flour . . .

HATCH: Could it have been anybody else's wheat?

LASSITER: Yeah.

HATCH: Okay.

LASSITER: And . . .

HATCH: Was it bleached flour?

LASSITER: No, not much, you know. It wasn't . . .

HATCH: What color was it?

LASSITER: Well, it wasn't too brown, but it was as good enough and I guess it bleached just as much as it could back at that time in that kind of a mill. And but . . .

HATCH: Was it as fine as powder as it is nowadays?

LASSITER: About it, about as—of course Readyville mill was supposed to be one of the best ones that was around anywhere in this area. And, but you know back then while mice was real bad . . . rats was real bad, and up in the attic of the house, the . . . where the rafters come down like this. My daddy put

two big wires, you know, from about one rafter between, you see, it . . . come down here, then two from this other side and come down to an angle. Then he had poles across here and wood planks put on it and everything, and that's where he took the flour up there and laid it on that.

HATCH: So the rats couldn't climb that wire.

LASSITER: No, if it had been straight down, they'd slide down it but he put it over here and it'd come down to an angle and they couldn't go down that.

HATCH: Did other people do that same kind of system?

LASSITER: Some of my . . . I heard them talk about it. I didn't know it at the time but they said, "Oh, my daddy done ours that way, too." But then when we got short of flour, we'd get somebody to go down to the mill and get three or four bags of flour.

HATCH: So, let's say you're bringing home more bags of flour. Is that a . . . is that a happy day around the farm or is there anything to be celebrated about that?

LASSITER: No, it'd just a regular, regular thing you see because we had to grow all the potatoes we needed. Sweet and Irish potatoes and enough of cabbage to have cabbage to eat and make kraut.

HATCH: Mh-hmm.

LASSITER: And, and then the cornfield, the last time we was going plow the corn, we had to go along and plant whippoorwill peas. Right in the row, and then when they plowed, it covered them over. I guess it wouldn't cover a few of them over, but it'd cover them up enough till it'd have plenty of pea crop running up the [recording cuts out and then back in] field. We had two pairs of shoes.

HATCH: Okay.

LASSITER: And then when we'd come in from school, we had two pairs of shoes. One we wore to school and church and one we wore out to work. And when you'd come in from school, you'd change clothes real good put on your old holey shoes and go out to the cornfield and pick whippoorwill peas. And when you got your sack full, one of these grass sacks, you got that full of whippoorwill peas you'd go to the house and . . .

HATCH: What's a whippoorwill pea?

LASSITER: Well, it's just a, kind of a little old brownish speckled pea. I don't guess they even call them that now, or anything, but . . .

HATCH: Like a pinto bean or a speckled bean?

LASSITER: Well, it's a little round.

HATCH: A little round. Do they taste like green peas?

LASSITER: Ah no. Uh-uh. It was . . .

HATCH: Like a black-eyed pea?

LASSITER: It'd been just like . . . the juice you know where it's cooked in and everything would be brown just like pinto beans cooking.

HATCH: Okay.

LASSITER: And . . . but . . . You didn't dare go to the barn, or to the field, with your good shoes on. You had to put the old ones on and they'd last a lot longer, and . . . but before we moved from the first house where I was born, I left there when I was six and we used to visit an elderly couple. My mother helped tend to this man's mother. She was in real bad shape, and she'd just pass out and everything, and they'd run and come up to the house and get my mother and go, and then she'd work with her and everything. Done that several times. Then we'd visit this, these sons of hers, you know. And they, when we started to leave, now, me at four years old and five years old, he would open up his little change purse and fool around in that until he would find a copper. We called pennies *copper*. He'd come out and give me a copper and he said, now, if you spend this you'll never gain anything, but if you'll save it, it'll amount to something one of these days. And of course other people was giving me some money too along, and by the time I was six years old I had fifteen dollars and a half, and the man that lived over on Burgen Road sold the county farm. You know where county farm used to be on the right going up Bradyville Road? Patients was there, people lived there then and they, he sold this Jersey heifer, a year old past Jersey heifer to the county farm, and my daddy went down there and give fifteen dollars for the heifer outta my money and made her my cow, and so when she calved the first time was a Hereford red and white faced, and when it got big enough to wean my mother and daddy bought it from me for eight dollars, and took me to Woodbury and bought me some shoes and pants and shirts and stuff.

HATCH: They took you and your money and said you had to spend it?

LASSITER: Yep, and the next year was another Hereford but we called the first calf "white head" because all of ours were Jerseys you see. It's just the red and white head. The second one was a brindle looking face, and we named her John Dillinger [laughs] and the third one was a complete white face with little blue speckles all over it and everything, and when she got up two years old she took charge, you know, and so we named her Bossy and she just bossed the other cows around and everything, and every year I'd sell them to my parents for eight dollars and get me some new shoes.

HATCH: Let me ask you this. The brindle one. Why did you name it John Dillinger?

LASSITER: I don't know. It was back about when John Dillinger was real . . .

HATCH: Real popular. Was John Dillinger a hero to you or was he an outlaw?

LASSITER: Oh, he was an outlaw, yeah, but I remember we named her John Dillinger. But there just things like that going on, and course after I got out of service, why, I got out in April of '46 and married the 27<sup>th</sup> of October. You know, getting pretty close to sixty-one years now.

HATCH: Had you met your wife at that time? Did you know her?

LASSITER: Oh yeah, I knew her before.

HATCH: You'd planned to get married when you came back?

LASSITER: No, uh-uh. I hadn't planned about it, but it is just all of a sudden. I never even told my parents about it, but we were going to Chattanooga to visit one of my aunt's uncles, I mean my mother's uncle, and so we had already planned this, we was going . . . we would just go down to Rossville and get married, and . . .

HATCH: Rossville?

LASSITER: Yeah.

HATCH: Okay, why there?

LASSITER: Well.

HATCH: You eloped basically.

LASSITER: You just, could go down there and get married anytime you know and everything, he'd . . .

HATCH: You talking about in Woodbury?

LASSITER: No, you a . . . you go down there and you get, you buy your license and everything right there in that thing and just get married, and so when we got there to the house, why we told my parents that we, we gonna drive around and look Chattanooga over a little bit, and I had to wait down there. When we got down to the place to get married, why, there was a couple there and they asked us, said, "Where'd you stay last night?" I go, "We stayed at home" and "Where'd you stay?" Said they stayed in a hotel. They was off from a little piece further and everything. And so they signed our marriage license and we signed theirs, never seen them before or anything. When we got back over to my great uncle's house, why, they

was just still sitting around the table but they had finished eating dinner, and my mother put her arm around my wife . . .

HATCH: But she didn't know yet.

LASSITER: Uh-uh. And introduced her as a future daughter-in-law. And she said, "Not anymore Granny. It just happened a few minutes ago." And my mother cried, cause I hadn't even told her about it, and . . . but that was the 27<sup>th</sup> of October. And a funny thing that happened, of course, oldest child was a girl, Bob Melton's wife – Carol Melton. She was born the 6<sup>th</sup> of December and we'd have people in and everything you know and my wife would be telling about we married 27<sup>th</sup> of October and every time she'd tell that I'd speak up and say, "And Carol was born the 6<sup>th</sup> of December." She said, "But it wasn't the same year." I said, "I didn't say it was."

HATCH: You're not leading anybody on are you? Just trying to mess with her a little bit.

LASSITER: And several times you know when different people, I'd say that every time she'd tell when we got married, and forty-nine years, and going for the fiftieth anniversary, the 27<sup>th</sup> of October, she passed away the 24<sup>th</sup> of March, 1996, and the nurse that was there, the charge nurse asked me how long we'd been married and I told her. He said, she said, "What did your wife want for fiftieth anniversary?" I said, "She wants a full karat." I said, "When we got married you had to have a magnifying glass to see that little speck." And then on the twenty-fifth anniversary why she got a half karat, and she wants a full karat on the fiftieth. She said, "Well do you have it on lay-away?" I said, "Well no, but if the bank will loan the money we'll get it when we get to the 27<sup>th</sup> of October." Of course she didn't get that far along, and so it's, let's see this is the 10<sup>th</sup> isn't it?

HATCH: Yes sir.

LASSITER: So I got about seventeen more days to be sixty-one years, and we lived with my mother and daddy for . . . I don't know what we'd have done if we'd been out by ourselves.

HATCH: So they didn't kick you out of the house for getting married and not telling them? They let you live with them. You had to work for them, I suppose.

LASSITER: Yeah.

HATCH: Still farming?

LASSITER: Still farming, and but I was going to, what they called for the soldiers, a farm training school, and I got ninety-five dollars a month.

HATCH: To go to school?

LASSITER: And that was big money back then, and, so it's just finally got enough money to buy a car, and . . . but it's, go to thinking way back and everything, when Carol was born she had six months colic I reckon, and of course doctors then didn't know nothing about, you know, what changed the formula and everything like that. And of course she cried for six months and then just got over it. And if I hadn't had our mother to help us and everything, and I don't know how we'd have got by, but anyhow it come time that they was going to give tests for a mail route in Readyville, and former superintendents taking exams, and school teachers, and everybody is taking this, forty-two people took the examination for mail route, and . . . but I told them, I said, I never was too smart to begin with, so it don't cost nothing, I'll just go up there and take the test and if I don't pass it'd be alright. Won't be no worse off. And so I went up there, we took the test and never heard of anything for a good long while and finally me and my brother both took the test and I got a letter and he got a letter. And mine said, "As of now you are number one on the list." And his said, "As of now you are number two on the list." And found out later because we had disability, they automatically put them up ahead, but didn't know it till then. And I told people, I said listen, we get aggravated at things that happen to us and we don't realize that maybe it was for the good. When I was drafted I didn't think it was good. When I went overseas it wasn't good, when I got hit with a piece of shrapnel it wasn't good, but whenever I took a mail carriage test I got put up number one on the test because of these things. Wouldn't have happened hadn't been for them. And then Mr. Jim Cummings was lawyer here and had been in Congress and everything, you know, and all, representative in Tennessee. And the first case that he ever had after he got to Woodbury, my daddy hired him, and so I went to him and asked him, help me get the route. And he said I can't help you. And he said, now I'll tell you what, two brothers, one of them is number one and the other one is number two, you don't think I'm going to help one of them over the other one. He said you have your mother and daddy come up here and tell me which one to help and I'll help him. And my brother was already working at VA, York VA.

HATCH: Mm-hmm. Murfreesboro.

LASSITER: And so he said he finally said you just go on up there and tell him to work for him, I've already got a job, course it paid as good as this other one I guess, and so he did. That's the way I got it. He got it for me through Joe L. Evins, and I started to work in June, the . . .

HATCH: Were you based in Readyville?

LASSITER: Twenty-third day of June. Now we moved down to Readyville the first of June and rented a half of a house. Cost thirty-five dollars a month.

HATCH: A month?

LASSITER: And another couple lived in the other side of it, and I had got up enough money that I had bought an old '38 Chevrolet car and just a few days on the route I found out that that wasn't going to work, so I had to buy a new car.

HATCH: Well didn't you have to have one on the other side like one of those postal trucks or no?

LASSITER: No, there wasn't no such thing as that.

HATCH: There wasn't?

LASSITER: Then everybody had to do their own, you know furnish their own equipment and everything, and it was, cost fifteen hundred and ninety-five dollars, '49 Chevrolet and . . .

HATCH: Brand new, huh?

LASSITER: Yeah, brand new one, and I was making a 116 dollars twice a month, 232 dollars a month. And I had built a house down there in Readyville and I was paying sixty-five dollars a month on the money I borrowed from, to build the house, and forty-eight dollars a month on the car, and had a wife and two children. We could just barely make ends meet, and there wasn't any paved road anywhere except Highway 70.

HATCH: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm, the old highway.

LASSITER: That's the only pave there was on the whole route and tires didn't last very long.

HATCH: I'd imagine not, so you're saying that . . .

LASSITER: Somebody asked me one time, said, "Will a set of tires last you three years?" I said, "My goodness, three sets of tires will last one year if I have good luck but, if I have bad luck it takes four sets in a year." But all them gravel roads and the maintainer going on, and pulling ditch lines out that steeples had flew out of wire fences and everything you know. It's always having flat tires and everything, and . . .

HATCH: You got pretty good at changing tires, then huh?

LASSITER: Oh yeah, I never did have more than three flats in one day.

HATCH: You said, let me just ask you something else. You had another old story about the Readyville mill, that you had said you were not around when it went to flooding. Why did it flood now? What happened there? Can you tell me something about that?

LASSITER: Well, when it comes a big rain, all of Readyville floods you see.

HATCH: Still does, doesn't it?

LASSITER: Yeah, and it hadn't done it in a long time now but where Russell's Market is was Miss Annie May Burnett had a store there, and it got . . .

HATCH: Same place as Russell's?

LASSITER: Yep, uh-huh, and it might be since they built the stuff, it might be just a little bit difference in the height of the store than what it was. But the river got high enough that she had to take a case knife and stuff a paper and a table cloth, pieces of table cloth in under the door to keep the water from coming in the store.

HATCH: Oh, my goodness.

LASSITER: And there's a place down there, used to be, and I think this man that owns it now has worked a whole lot on it, and I don't know whether it's the same or not, but the highest watermark was about five foot high. And every time that the river was getting up real big, people—on that side over there—would have to get over there and carry all the stuff up on the second floor.

HATCH: Why would they do that?

LASSITER: Well, the water would ruin it.

HATCH: Just to help him?

LASSITER: Yeah, just to help.

HATCH: But their houses are basically underwater at five feet aren't they?

LASSITER: Well, that house that is right across the race bridge there you know, why it got up in that one time till it floated Ms. Hollingsworth's cabinets where she had all her dishes and everything, you know. Floated it up and turned it over, and . . . and they'd be old slimy mud, that deep, on the floor and everything and everybody had to go in, you know, and didn't have no hose pipes back then, you know, no watering or nothing. They'd have to take buckets of water out of the race up there and brooms and just keep washing until, wash it all out and everything.

HATCH: Are you saying it was more of a kind of a community back then, people were more . . .

LASSITER: Oh yeah, yeah. It was, yeah, everybody was working together and I remember we used to give a wreath when somebody died in the community.

HATCH: Yes sir.

LASSITER: And it would cost twenty-five dollars back then, and I had a list of names. And whenever . . . before we took the list of names and got them all fixed up and everything, why I, I would get it and Paul Tenpenny lived next door, and if we didn't make up enough, if we just got fifteen dollars me and him had to go five dollars a piece you see to get that . . .

HATCH: To get the right thing done.

LASSITER: Yeah, money made up, and finally got the list made and had had, had thirty names in the community on the list, and I'd burn a lot of gas driving around picking up a dollar from each one of them. And then, five funerals, the sixth one was free. Because I was getting thirty dollars and giving twenty-five for the wreath, and then the, the sixth funeral, why, I'd have the twenty-five dollars to buy the wreath with and didn't have to take up no more. And it just, just community like that, you know, just everybody.

HATCH: What was the center of the community? Was it a store, was it the mill, was it a building? Was there a meeting place?

LASSITER: Well, the mill, and Tillford's store, and Burnett's store, and the post office was right across from Russell's Market then, that brick building.

HATCH: [Unintelligible word] where the hair place is now?

LASSITER: Yeah, mm-hmm. That's where I started working, and it was, you know, all that right there together, and course everybody was bringing in the lumber and sawing and all this kind of stuff.

HATCH: Now was that taking place at Tillford's or was that taking place over at the Mill?

LASSITER: That's just Tillford's mill, behind Tillford's store up there where the saw mill was.

HATCH: Oh, okay so there, it wasn't the same, the saw mill and the flour mill were not the same.

LASSITER: Oh, no, no.

HATCH: Was the Readyville mill not used as a saw mill?

LASSITER: Uh-uh.

HATCH: [Unintelligible words] for flour.

LASSITER: They used to make ice.

HATCH: Now I heard that, they electrified, they also electrified the area too didn't they? Do you know anything about that?

LASSITER: Well, yeah, and up in the Dobbs Hollow there was a fellow that had a spring branch come down and there was a crevice in a rock and he built a thing and picked a water wheel that turned there and made electricity. And he had, he had electric lights up in the Dobbs Hollow before he ever had it anywhere else.

HATCH: Really?

LASSITER: And I can't have never found out how in the world he ever done it but, but they had . . .

HATCH: That wasn't the same guy who did it in Readyville?

LASSITER: No, uh-uh. Of course that was way back before my time, but they had the ice plant in Woodbury after, after that, and they would come and, and haul fifty pound blocks, they made hundred pound blocks and cut it in two, and you could buy fifty pounds to go in your refrigerator and your little ice box. And it'd last two or three days.

HATCH: Fifty pounds, two or three days, huh?

LASSITER: Yeah.

HATCH: Oh, before it melted.

LASSITER: Yep.

HATCH: Okay. But you could not use it?

LASSITER: Oh, we'd use it, and about, about twice a week they'd come around with a, sell you I don't remember how much that you had to pay for it. A little bit, wasn't much.

HATCH: Ten cents or something.

LASSITER: I don't remember even close to what it was, but old man I. H. Mathis had a peddling truck and he'd come by and . . .

HATCH: He sold ice? He peddled ice?

LASSITER: No, he just peddled groceries and stuff, bought eggs and all that kind of stuff, and but it was a, a tough time way back then. But everybody else was the same, same shape, nearly everybody was in the same shape and of course I don't know how any of the greens that's growing on the hillside now. But my mother knew what you could cook, cut and cook and eat, and when we got to where we didn't have anything to eat she'd take us and some big pillow cases and stuff like that you know, and, and she knew what to cut and she'd cut these greens and everything till we filled that all up and we'd come back home and cook and have a big meal.

HATCH: You said greens?

LASSITER: Yep, just, just like turnip greens now, you know, people have turnip greens, it was wild greens up off the hill, and . . .

HATCH: Put anything like pork in them or anything like that?

LASSITER: Oh yeah, yep, mm-hmm.

HATCH: And what did you do with the flour? What did ya'll do with the flour when you got it from the mill?

LASSITER: Well, my mother cooked big pans of biscuits every morning, and . . .

HATCH: Was that the biggest meal of the day?

LASSITER: No. It, we had three big ones.

HATCH: Okay.

LASSITER: But I can remember before I had to go to service and I was sixteen, seventeen years old I had a dog, and he was, his momma was half collie or shepherd, and half other dog, and we thought that the daddy was a black and tan coon hound, because he had a brown breast and everything and he was short haired though, brown spot over each eye. And I never did call him anything but Pup. And I guess when he was just a little pup I'd take him down, and my job down then was to not let our cattle go down on Mr. Whitfield or up on Mr. McCrary, the high water would wash the fence down and I had to keep them on our property, and I'd take Pup down with me.

HATCH: What would happen if they went onto the other property? They'd just get upset?

LASSITER: Well they'd have cornfields you know, and it . . .

HATCH: Okay, wasn't good for the corn.

LASSITER: Yeah, wasn't, didn't want that. And, but I'd take this pup with me down on the creek and I'd sling him around and around by the front feet. Just around and around and around. Then I'd set him down and I'd run out in the tall Johnson grass stuff and lay down and hide. But he'd finally find me you know and come around, and when he got grown why he was like a bench-legged feist. His shoulders was just real big out, you know, and everywhere, and he was the most vigorous thing that you ever heard, and he had three different barks. If the cattle got close to the yard fence it was one, you could tell that's what it was when he barked. If it was a varmint, it was a different bark, and if it was a human, you better get out there

pretty soon because it was a different bark. And that thing [the microphone] fell off again, or I'm a knocking it off.

HATCH: You're not knocking it off. It's just not hanging on too good.

LASSITER: And, but, I'll tell you two or three stories about him. He, he got so that, we had a hickory back stick that sit at the back door and when we come out of the field we had to get a pan of water there and wash your hands and face before we went into the kitchen to eat. My mother had rules. And you wasn't allowed to go into the house with your hat on. You had to take your hat off. And so Pup one time, I told him to, I called out, I patted on this block and I said, now this is you gotta get up to the table if you want something to eat. And he tried and tried and tried, he'd get up there but he'd fall off cause his walk was just about this big around, and finally he learned how to do it in just two or three days, you know, and he'd get up there and if he was, if he was hungry, and we was sitting on the north porch, front porch out there, maybe have company, he would come around and get right in front of me and he'd say [smacking lips sound]. I'd say, "Pup are you hungry?" [smacking lips sound] I said, "Well go get up to the table," and by the time you got through the house he was sitting up on that hickory block, so I fed him twelve big biscuits every morning.

HATCH: Twelve?

LASSITER: Mm-hmm, and they were big ones, and I'd break it in half and give it to him, twenty-four halves. And so I asked my daddy one day. I was feeding him. I said, "Do you believe if I tell Pup that half this biscuit is poison he wouldn't eat it?" He said, "I don't believe he would the first one you give him." I said, "Well, we'll see about it," and next morning, why, Pup was up at the table, and, the first biscuit I broke it open, daddy was standing there, and I said, "Smell of this, Pup," he stuck his nose out and smelt of it, and I said, "Now this is poison. If you eat it, you'll fall off this block as dead as you can be, you can't eat this now," and I laid it down on the block between his front legs, and I took the other half and I said, "Smell of this." I said, "Now this is good you can eat it," and I laid it down right beside that and he eat twenty-three halves of biscuit right there and never touched that at all. And my daddy is standing there and I said, "What do you think about it?" He said, "I don't know what to think about it." And I said, "Well you wait just a minute," I said, "Pup, Papa thought you was an idiot and he didn't think that you had any sense, and I really lied to you about that, there's not anything wrong with that piece of biscuit, you can have it if you want it." He just reached down there and got it. And, I'd never have to tell him anything twice. He seemed to understand everything, and there was a man come one time and I heard him bark and I rushed out, and he had this guy bayed right around the corner of the house, and when you'd go out there you'd say, "It's alright Pup" he'd come right

around he'd hit sit right by my left knee, his head was right at my left knee, and if anybody touched me he'd go after them, and all the boys would come around, I had boxing gloves and we'd all box and everything. I said, "Now listen," cause when it come my time to box I'd give him a little pat on the ear, and say, "Pup it's time for you to go to the house," he'd just go to the house and never look back. And I'd tell him, I say, "Now don't grab a hold of me or hit me when Pup is around." And but this man had come and when I told him it was alright he come and set down, and he said, "Is that the dog everybody is talking about?" I said, "Well that's the only one that's here." He said, "Well have him to do something to show me how smart he is." And I said, "Well if I have him to do something, you won't know what I've trained him for six months to do it. You tell me what you want him to do." And there was a big washing tub sitting down in the yard. He said, "Tell him to go down there and get in that washing tub and sit down." So he was just still sitting right here beside me, and when I'd say, "Pup," he'd move right around and his ears be up he'd be looking right at you. I said, "Pup, that's Mr. Thomas, he's one of our neighbors, and he's asked the foolish thing I've ever heard of. He wants to see you go down there and get in that washing tub and sit down." And he'd never even heard the name washing tub, but I pointed down to it. "He wants you to go in there and get in that and sit down." Well, he just walked real slow down there and just put his head over it and turned around and looked back at me and I said, "No, he wants you in the tub." Well he couldn't hardly get his back legs over it at all but he finally got in there and he was all humped up standing there and I said, "No he wants you sitting down." So he sat down and he was facing away from us.

I guess we talked twenty minutes or something and he turned around and he said, "What's that old dog doing still sitting in the tub?" I said, "Well that's what you wanted to see him do." And I said, "I hadn't told him to get out." And he said, "Oh, I can't understand that. Looked like he'd already got out." I said, "No." He said, "Well tell him to get out." I said, "No, you're not convinced." But we talked a little while longer and he turned around and he said, "Well, that dog's still in the tub." I said, "Well if I tell him that he can get out and he leaps out all of a sudden, just one big leap right out of that tub then you'll know he was waiting for me to tell him won't you?" He said, "Yeah I will." And I said, "Pup," and his ears went up you know. I said, "You can get out of the tub now." And he scooted it back on the ground as he jumped out and ran right around and sit down and put his head right at my left knee. And I said, "Now," John Lee was Mr. Thomas's name, I said, "Now John Lee, it wouldn't do for you to come over here and take a hold of me because he'll get you if you do." And, we was boxing one day and this boy and forgot and pup had come back down, and we had been boxing a good long while and he finally just slipped on one of the gloves and he just barely hit me on one of the shoulder just a little bit. I heard the growl and I turned and I caught

him up in the air going up at that fella's throat, and he spun me all the way around. And I gave him a pat on the rear end and I said, "Go to the house Pup." And he just went to the house and everything. When I turned back around and this boy was white as a sheet. I said, "I told you not to hit me when Pup is around." He said, "I know you did, but I won't never forget again."

HATCH: That's great. That's time right there. Hold on. I'm going to stop and switch over to this one, okay?

## **END OF INTERVIEW**

[NOTE: Apparently this interview continued for another forty-five minutes, during which most of the discussion of the Readyville mill occurred. The recording for this second part did not come to the Albert Gore Research Center from PARQ. However, Evan Hatch prepared timed interview logs for the two parts of this interview. These logs may be found in the pages that follow as an appendix, along with Lassiter's obituary from the Murfreesboro (Tenn.) *Daily News Journal*.]