

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
WITH
JAMES & ANNE LOKEY

2 OCTOBER 1995

MURFREESBORO, TENNESSEE

INTERVIEWED BY REGINA FORSYTHE
FOR THE Q. M. SMITH ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
INTERVIEW #QMS.113

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Albert Gore". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "A".

ALBERT GORE RESEARCH CENTER

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT



**ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW WITH
JAMES & ANNE LOKEY
Q. M. SMITH ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
INTERVIEW #QMS.113**

FORSYTHE: This tape is part of the Q.M. Smith Collection designated as QMS.1995.113. This is Regina Forsythe, I am interviewing Anne and James Lokey. Today is Monday, October 2, 1995. This interview is being conducted in the Gore Research Center, Room 111, of the Ned McWherter Learning Resource Center. The tape of this interview along with a transcript of the interview will become part of the Quintin Miller Smith Collection and will be available to the public. Future researchers may include portions of this interview in their publications. **FORSYTHE:**
Is that all right with you Mr. and Mrs. Lokey?

JAMES: Yes.

ANNE: Yes.

FORSYTHE: I want to get your full names. You want to start?

ANNE: Anne Elizabeth Davis Lokey

JAMES: James H. Lokey.

FORSYTHE: Ms. Lokey what is your birth date?

ANNE: February 3rd, 1919.

FORSYTHE: And yours.

JAMES: December 13, 1913. And I am glad we are going on tape number 113 because I was born on the 13th, of 1913.

FORSYTHE: It is a luck number for you. What is your birth place,

ANNE: Well, East Lake, which is near Chattanooga.

FORSYTHE: I used to live there. What about you?

JAMES: I was born in Murfreesboro.

FORSYTHE: And your father's name?

ANNE: W.E. Davis

FORSYTHE: And he was a minister?

ANNE: Right.

FORSYTHE: And your father's name?

JAMES: B.H. Lokey, Benjamen Houston Lokey.

FORSYTHE: His occupation?

JAMES: Well he was in the grocery business in Murfreesboro, most of my young life.

FORSYTHE: What was the name of the grocery store?

JAMES: It was "B.H. Lokey Grocery"

FORSYTHE: Where was it located?

JAMES: On Maple street, the building is no longer there.

FORSYTHE: What is your mother's name?

ANNE: Tell her about Lokey Lane..

FORSYTHE: Yeah.

JAMES: Well there was a name by the store it was named Lokey Lane and then as the street extended they changed it to Lokey Avenue and it is called Lokey Avenue at the present time, it goes East and West in the Northern part of Murfreesboro.

FORSYTHE: Was it named for your father.

JAMES: Named for my father yes.

FORSYTHE: And your mother's name?

ANNE: Anne Elizabeth Henegar.

FORSYTHE: Her occupation?

ANNE: Housewife.

FORSYTHE: Your mother's name?

JAMES: Annie T. and she was a housewife.

FORSYTHE: What was her maiden name?

JAMES: Smith.

FORSYTHE: Do you have any brothers or sisters?

ANNE: I had two sisters, one was Lois, she was older than I and Ruth who is an alumna from here she was older than I.

JAMES: I have no brother's or sisters.

FORSYTHE: Do you have any children?

ANNE: Two boys, James Houston Lokey Jr., and William Davis Lokey, we call him Bill.

FORSYTHE: Anyone beside the two of you come to MTSU?

JAMES: Our younger son Bill is working on a graduate degree here now, he has his bachelor's from David Lipscomb, he is working on a master's in psychology.

ANNE: My sister Ruth attended here.

FORSYTHE: What years did you come to school here?

ANNE: '36 to '40.

FORSYTHE: And you Mr. Lokey?

JAMES: From 1931 to 1935.

FORSYTHE: Why did you decide to come to school here at MTSU?

ANNE: Well I wanted to be a teacher, it was near my home place, it was just the thing to do, my sister had already started here.

FORSYTHE: What about you Mr. Lokey?

JAMES: I guess the thing because of the convenience, being raised at Murfreesboro, intending to live at home, come to school.

FORSYTHE: So you lived at home and came to school.

JAMES: Yes

FORSYTHE: Did you live on campus?

ANNE: Yes.

FORSYTHE: Can you tell me about that?

ANNE: Well I lived at Rutledge Hall, and we had some mighty good times here.

FORSYTHE: What did the room look like?

ANNE: We had two twin beds and a dresser, and I am sure chairs, I don't remember a desk but we must have had one, I lived on the ground floor my whole four years with two big windows, just like I am sure it is now.

FORSYTHE: What memories do you have of living there.

ANNE: I was celebrating one of my birthdays. We had planned to cook sausage at midnight when the house mother would be asleep, and we had cold drinks and just as we were having a good time warming the sausages on a hot plate, a girl on the second floor had a severe pain, they had to call the doctor, she had appendicitis, the room mother of course had to get up she smelled the sausages, we were caught.

FORSYTHE: What happened to you?

ANNE: I don't really remember I am sure we had to go to the council, I was told that was just like I had committed a crime but we got out pretty light.

FORSYTHE: Do you remember coming to chapel or going to chapel?

ANNE: I just remember going.

JAMES: I do very well. Miss E. May Saunders, and any time we had a guest on the platform it was the funniest thing to watch the people start to get the songbooks out and turning to "Onward Christian Soldiers" to have it ready before she announced the song, she would always announce "Onward Christian Soldiers" and we sang that one better than any song

in the book. So if the guest was there on the platform we always sang "Onward Christian Soldiers." Chapel was not compulsory, but there was not much exciting going on at least half or two thirds of the students went to chapel almost every day. I can't remember if it was every day or three times a week. I believe it was three times a week.

FORSYTHE: Was it over in the auditorium.

JAMES: It was in the auditorium in Old Main.

FORSYTHE: If you didn't have a guest what would happen?

JAMES: They had announcements and that was the main purpose of it just announcements. No one person conducted Chapel regularly, I guess the main purpose was announcements.

FORSYTHE: You were in the first Band of Blue, tell me about that.

JAMES: I was in the first band. I started playing the trumpet when I was a freshman in high school, and had had four years of trumpet lessons, when I came to Middle Tennessee State, and compared to most of the others I was an accomplished musician, because we had very few people who had any band instrument training, some had training on the violin and some had sung in choirs, and could read music and with very little help got to the point where they could play simple band music. Then October 1931, I decided I would get a band to march on the football during the half-time of the football game, and I got twenty brave souls to come out, and we learned to play one number, called "Our Director March" and we learned to play the trio of "Our Director March" without music and it was the only thing we could play, and we started on one end of the field and marched to the other end, did and about face, came back to the middle of the field, formed a T and played the Alma Matter, and then walked off the field, the same end we came in on, now a twenty piece band sounds like it is might small, but just before and the night before Thanksgiving we had a pep rally, and the man who was in charge of the band asked me if I would be in charge of the band at TPI, the next day so I was glad to do it so I was director of the band on its first trip Thanksgiving 1931. We did about the same thing at TPI that we did the first day we went on the field. TPI was the only trips, so in 1934 which was an even year, the band was not going to get to take a trip at all that year, so I went into the presidents office, and told him the band was not going to get to take a trip that year, couldn't we possibly go with the football team to the University of Chattanooga. Now that was a big school to us, Chattanooga was a big city, I taught if we could just get a trip for the band to the University of

Chattanooga football game the band would really get a good shot in the arm. This was right during the heart of the depression and President Lyon told me that we could just not finance the band, there were too many other organizations that wanted money, so I accepted his explanation, but that didn't satisfy me. I went to the N, C, and St. L. rail road, and told him that if I could get two hundred students to ride the train to Chattanooga, could they give us a real good price, I think they felt sorry for me, and for the band so they gave me a real good price, if I could get two hundred college to go to the football game they would give us a couple of cars on the train and they would let the band go free. So I started to work and I got about two hundred students, no where they got the money I don't know and what they charged, I don't remember, but it was certainly less than two dollars, but that day two hundred student and the band boarded the train went into Chattanooga, we got off the train, the student body and the band marched from the station to the football stadium, and when the last whistle blew the score board didn't show us ahead but we were way ahead because we had had a wonderful trip, and when we got back to Murfreesboro, it was certainly worth the effort I put in getting the transportation for the band.

FORSYTHE: You want to tell me about the first dance.

JAMES: I don't know whether it was a law or whether it was just a regulation, but the state colleges could not have dances on campus. In 1935 I was the president of the science club at the time, and president Lyon called me in the office and told me that he had got permission for us to have the first dance on campus and he wanted it to be successful and he was going to turn that over to me, he wanted me to take any steps I needed to take to be sure that no problem came up and make it possible for us to have dances in the future. So I got an orchestra, what they were afraid of was the girls going out after the dance and gong out to the wild blue yonder, so I got the Matron of the dormitory to be on the door to the gymnasium where we had the dance, to be sure that none of the girls left until the dance was over. The dance went off fine and since that time there have dances on campus frequently.

FORSYTHE: What about the music, was it live music?

JAMES: Yes. I don't know the name of the band that played it was not a well known band because that was during the heart of the depression, there was not much money around. It was a band from Nashville, but not a recognized band.

FORSYTHE: Did you have to pay admission to get in?

JAMES: No it was free, free dance for the students. It was limited to students and alumni.

FORSYTHE: What do you remember about President Lyon?

JAMES: Well my memory of president Lyon was very favorable, the college was so small that he knew half to two thirds of the students, he knew my father and was a friend of my father so that gave me an entree into his office any time I wanted to go in, in fact he would call me several times such as the first dance, and so I felt rather close to president Lyon, probably even closer to president Smith when he came here.

FORSYTHE: Tell me about President Smith.

JAMES: Well I first met him at church, we went to church together, and then just casual conversations until he had a vacancy on the campus school and he called me in and wanted me to take the job, and I was going to get a \$35 raise, that was big money, so I jumped at the chance. So I went to Training school, I had charge of the Science program, and I also had a charge of the people who were to become band directors or band teachers. So I had charge of the band program and the science program, of the campus school.

FORSYTHE: Do you remember President Lyon?

ANNE: No I just know he was the president and I have seen his pictures often, nothing like the contact he had with him.

FORSYTHE: What about President Smith.

ANNE: He was about the same.

FORSYTHE: You student taught at the Training school, can you tell me about that?

ANNE: Well I was a music major and they made me feel that they were really in need of any help that they could get in music. I taught second grade and fifth grade music, the second grade teacher made me feel very important she said she didn't know much about music so she turned me completely loose and I had a wonderful time, the fifth grade teacher knew a little more about music, so she would ask me if I would, for instance, go over a certain song, that the children didn't know to well. Well I had never seen the song, so instead of telling her I didn't know it I tried to sight read and get through it but when I finished I was showing the effects of embarrassment, but I think I got through it O.K.. Also I

played the cello, and then I taught some private lessons in one of the room there. Because of this, I didn't teach every day, the strung it out for two different semesters.

FORSYTHE: Who was that second grade teacher?

ANNE: Ms. Harrison.

FORSYTHE: Marguerite Harrison?

ANNE: Yes.

FORSYTHE: Did you have a job on campus?

ANNE: No

FORSYTHE: How about you?

JAMES: No.

FORSYTHE: I have a list of people here that I took out of the catalog, if you remember anything about them let me know. Mrs. Beasley?

ANNE: I taught Bill Beasley as a special project through elementary education, I was just supposed to observe him, talk with him, help him in any way. It was very interesting.

FORSYTHE: What do you remember about Dean Beasley?

JAMES: These people were personal friends of mine because the school was so small, between five and six hundred at the time, there was never a day I didn't speak to Dean Beasley, I was very fond of him. When I think of the campus here, the two things I think of when I was a student, one was the economy. That was right during the heart of the depression, in fact we came within one vote of closing this school forever, if one more person in the legislature had voted to close it, this school would have been closed forever. So the depression and the strict rules and regulations are the two things that probably stand out in my mind. The girls had such strict rules, it is comical to think back and Dean Beasley was kind of responsible for enforcing a lot of those, he had to do a lot of things that he didn't want to do, he had to campus a lot of the girls and sent a few girls home. He was a strict disciplinarian and he was certainly good for the institution while he was dean here.

FORSYTHE: Tell me about Anne Orway.

JAMES: She was a good English teacher, more like a high school teacher, she really saw to it that the students did their work, checked on the work and was a very excellent English teacher.

ANNE: I admired her very much.

FORSYTHE: Mary Frizell

ANNE: She was certainly liked and respected a lot in elementary education, I didn't have a lot of courses under her, my sister did and just thought she was fantastic, she lived most of her days in the dormitory at David Lipscomb elementary school, she had arthritis very badly. But she was a very religious person.

FORSYTHE: What was your major?

ANNE: I meant to have music and English, I would up with three majors and no minors, I kept taking French, I don't know why, I just kind of like it, we only learned to read we never did really learn to do much speaking so I haven't used my French a great deal, but I had music, English, and French majors.

FORSYTHE: What was you major?

JAMES: I majored in chemistry and mathematics.

FORSYTHE: Miss E May Suanders

ANNE: Well I loved Miss Saunders very much, she was very impulsive, as my husband has said, school was small and the music department was even smaller, we were like one big family. I remember one time we were trying to work on an opera or an operetta, and we didn't do things to suit her and I think she knew that if she walked out Tom Hugley would pick up the pieces and go on, which he did, she just said "I give up, I am walking out of here" and she did and she went home and Tom Hugley and next time she was fine. She was very good to me, if I needed a course in music but it conflicted in schedule with another one she would work around it some way so that I could make that up. Later I was invited to become a member of Delta Kappa Gamma which is an honorary society for women educators and I was so thrilled to realize that she was a former member of Delta Kappa Gamma, I admired her very much.

FORSYTHE: Who was Tom Hugley?

ANNE: Tom Hugley had a very forceful personality, he was very good with the band and he wound up for his lively hood selling band instruments and you might want to add to this about Tom or E. May.

JAMES: Well Tom Hugley came here while I was a student he had had more background in band instrument than anyone who came here while I was a student, he could play when he got here. He was a contribution to the band, he was interested in music as a profession, either directing a band or selling instruments he was a very interesting person and a lot of fun, other than that I can't say much about him other than that I knew him very well and I like him as a person.

ANNE: Would you be interested to know how we met as a boy/girl relationship.

FORSYTHE: Sure

ANNE: James continued to come to band to help us, we were struggling band. I thought he was very stuck up and very snooty and felt very important about himself, so I didn't waste my time trying to get to know him. So we went as a band to TPI and I am going to ask him to take over from there on, oh it rained, it was very muddy, we marched on the field at the half, I remember one of my shoes nearly came off in the mud, but when it was over and when we went to load the bus one of the boy members was in each seat, they had beat the girls there, and you take over. I was embarrassed because I did not have any dating relationship with any of the boys, and who was I going to sit down by? I was just very timid about it, he asked if I would like to sit down with him and I was very grateful that somebody had taken the initiative to tell me where to sit, I found out he was a very nice person, so from there on we continued seeing each other.

JAMES: I don't know why there was not more dating because I was not a student at the time, but there was not more dating among member of the band, but one of the boys said "Why don't we just take one of the double seats so the girls will have to sit with us." So that was what we did, all the girls came in they had been cleaning the mess off of their shoes so that way we got to meet each other on the way back from the game.

ANNE: Of course we dated about five and a half years before we married because of the war.

FORSYTHE: What was the campus like, were you around here during the war around Murfreesboro?

JAMES: She was teaching in Nashville during the war, and I was at the training school when the war started or the campus school as you referred to it and I left there to go to the war and never did come back here.

FORSYTHE: What years did you teach at the Training School?

JAMES: From '39 to '42.

FORSYTHE: Gabrielle Valdes

ANNE: All I would say is that I loved him like I would a grandfather, he was just so sweet and a very good musician.

JAMES: He was a Spaniard, I had difficulty understanding him he was a very excellent musician, and I think this is one of the biggest contributions that Tom Hugley made to the school made to the school, he knew Valdes and arranged for him to come here to direct the band, so he was the first real band director that we ever had. While I was a student here there was a man who taught physics, I think he sung in a choir somewhere and he just could read music, and they had no band director here so they asked to take over the band, that is why I got to direct the band as a student because he didn't know anything about directing the band and he was glad to turn it over to me and I didn't know any better than to take the opportunity to lead the band.

FORSYTHE: Was Tom Hugley a student or a teacher?

JAMES: Student.

ANNE: Do you not have a picture of Valdes?

FORSYTHE: I think I have seen one in one of our annuals.

ANNE: I think it is only right that you should have one.

JAMES: Tom was never on the faculty here, when he graduated he went to Columbia high school, to direct the band.

FORSYTHE: Philip Mankin

ANNE: I had English under him. He seemed to take a personal interest in me, he gave me a book once that I think had a lot of French in with it. I just

remember that he was an eccentric person. But very sweet personality under it all.

Side B

FORSYTHE: Mr. Lokey what do you remember about Philip Mankin.

JAMES: I didn't have a class with him but, well things like this probably shouldn't go on tape, but he was just a little bit far out in the opinion of most of the students. The boys didn't really like him too much but I think he was a very kind person, a very sincere person, his desire was to help anyone that needed help, he was just a little different than most of the boys that were on campus at the time, he was not one of the most popular teachers among the boys.

FORSYTHE: Mr. Mebane

JAMES: Now Mr. Mebane was the one I was talking about taking over the band. He started out in the science department and since I helped him along greatly, with the band I was kind of his pet. I had physics under him, I had organic and physical chemistry under him and I remember one day in physical chemistry class there were only four of us in the class, for the examination and he came in and gave us each a copy of the examination and said he had to go downtown to the bank and he would probably be back by the time we got through taking the examination. So I said "why do we need to write this out four times?" So I got one of the boys to write down the answer to all the questions and we all put our names to it and left the examination of his desk, and we all passed!

FORSYTHE: But there was only four people in the class?

JAMES: Yes. One day I remember coming from Old Main over to the science building and met him on the way and we were going to have a test that day. He said "I am going over to the post office and will be over there several minutes, tell the class to wait for me and don't let them leave." Well I went into the class and I said "I saw Dr. Mebane going into the main building and he told me to put the test on the board." Well I made up the question and put them on the board and I put up the hardest questions I could think of, and I put the questions on the board and at that time I got through he came in and I thought he would erase all of it and put his questions up there, but he looked at them and said "they look like good question to me, you all take the test" and that class almost killed me! So Dr. Mebane was a good friend of mine.

FORSYTHE: How about Clayton James

JAMES: He was the love of all of us. He was really a kind person, a good teacher and I don't know how to describe him much better than that, rather than just being a very likable and conscientious teacher.

FORSYTHE: Horace Jones

JAMES: Maybe I shouldn't tell some of these things, but Horace Jones was a lazy teacher. He was not to interested in his students going into advanced mathematics, so most of us didn't care if we did more than pass. I didn't think he was a good mathematics teacher, he may have known mathematics but he was not a good teacher. I had to go on to Peabody to get some math that I didn't get when I should have gotten it here.

FORSYTHE: What about Katherine Monohan

JAMES: I had Miss Monohan and I did not let my books interfere with my education. I remember if you listened to her in class that was all you had to do. I don't remember her as an excellent teacher but I remember here as a kind person, interested in her students.

FORSYTHE: What about Dr. Sims

ANNE: I was used to making A's and B's but I was delighted when I made a C under him. I thought I was not going to pass. He had a habit of putting his hands over his mouth when he talked and I could not understand him and I was too bashful to tell him so. So I really struggled and I was really proud of my C.R.: What about Coach Faulkinberry

JAMES: He was an excellent coach and an excellent disciplinarian and when he came to Middle Tennessee State the boys had dormitory Lyon Hall and they had run every body off that had been over there before but Faulkinberry came. He called all the boys together and they thought they were going to here the usual speech but he told them that he was in charge of that dormitory now and any body that didn't do exactly what he said he was going to stomp the Hell out of them, and I think he meant it and they thought he meant it. So he didn't have any trouble at all in the dormitory and he was an excellent coach and turned out some good football teams. Is it all right to say things like that?

FORSYTHE: Oh yeah, that is what I like! Elizabeth Schardt?

ANNE: Now back to my French. This was my first experience with French so I presume she was a good teacher and at that time they didn't teach conversation, well she tried to talk some things to us, she asked us the

same questions every time in French and I learned those answers, but I enjoyed it or I wouldn't have stuck with it four years.

FORSYTHE: What about the library, is it like today where you can just go get your own books and check out?

JAMES: No you could not go back to the stacks, you had to go to the counter, either look up the number and ask for it by Dewey decimal system or you know sometimes you would get help, but you were not allowed in the stacks ever. I was really shocked when you went to graduate school when you could go back and look for your own books.

FORSYTHE: Where the stacks blocked off?

JAMES: Yes you had to go through a gate, right by the desk, go back behind the long desk where the employees handed out the books.

FORSYTHE: Miss Mary Hall?

ANNE: She was one of the founders of the Delta Kappa Gamma society and we loved and admired her very much, she was an encourager, she taught elementary education, and I understand was an excellent teacher. She was always an optimist, we hated to see her depart this life.

FORSYTHE: What about B.B. Gracy?

JAMES: He was the father of B.B. Jr. and Martha Moore and I was at his house a lot and the biggest thing that happened on the campus every fall other than the football games was a opossum hunt. He had a club called the rural life club. He taught agriculture and he had a rural Life club and that was the biggest event on the campus, and anything for those girls to get out of that dormitory, everybody wanted to go on the opossum hunt. I never saw a opossum and I never saw anybody looking for opossum the four years I went. B.B. Gracy was also the tennis coach, and I played on the college tennis team, so I played with his son quite a bit and the trips that we took, I went of course, so I admired Mr. Gracy very much.

FORSYTHE: These opossum hunts, where were they held?

JAMES: They would get some trucks and put some hay in the trucks and they would find somebody that had a farm several miles from town, but was the biggest event when the girls started coming in, in the fall, the boys started looking for the dates they were going to get for the opossum hunt.

FORSYTHE: What memories do you have about teaching at the training school.

JAMES: My memories from over there were very pleasant, and I enjoyed it very much, I was in charge of the science teachers, people who were training to be science teachers, I had excellent students, the students who went to the school were more or less a select group, they weren't screened as such but it seemed that the people who wanted their children to get the best education in town sent their children to the training school. The faculty there was excellent, I enjoyed my association with them, my experience over there was very pleasant.

FORSYTHE: Frank Bass

JAMES: Frank Bass was the director of the training school when I went over there, so Frank and I were good friends to. I thought very much of Frank Bass.

FORSYTHE: Is there anything else we should cover?

JAMES: Well as I said before, the thing that I remember the most is the economy that we lived through. The students who came here did not have any money, and as I mentioned the legislature just lacked one vote closing the school, and just didn't have the money for anything and I lived in town and had an automobile and I like 8 o'clock classes so I usual came to campus and pulled up in front of Old Main at a quarter 'til eight every morning. At a quarter till eight I was either the second or the third car, to pull on the campus. I don't know of more than two or three students that automobiles of their own. I don't know how to describe the economy, I was laughing telling her the other day. All the girls wore silk stockings nylon had not come into being as yet, those silk stockings had a run in them the first time they wore them, and every girl on those campus what did they do, they would darn those stockings.

ANNE: The sewed up the runs and they darned any holes.

JAMES: One time, or two times, or three times, that is just how tight money was.

ANNE: But everybody did it so that was the thing to do.

JAMES: We didn't know we didn't have money, we loved each other and we had pleasant association and we mentioned the faculty. They were a good faculty they were a caring faculty and even though money was very

scarce, I loved MTSU. I am glad I came here of being an alumnus of this institution.

FORSYTHE: Tell me about this . . .

JAMES: That was the senior invitation, and I was the chairman of the committee that got that together, they sold them for twenty five cents each, and I took orders for them, and when they came a lot of people didn't have twenty five cents to get them out, so what became of them I don't know. They were in the bookstore, and of course a number of people mailed those out, it is a list of the June and August graduates.

FORSYTHE: Tell me about your father's store.

JAMES: Well my father was in the grocery business, it was just exactly opposite from what the grocery business is today. Everybody bought their groceries over the telephone, they didn't have automobiles, they called, gave their order, he delivered the groceries to their house, he didn't need a large store because he didn't need to have the supplies, and he never told the customer he didn't have something that was part of the grocery business, he didn't have it he would pick it on the way, he didn't want his customers calling any other grocery. I have seen grown boys and girls that told me they never had any groceries other than from Lokey's grocery. My dad was a very successful grocery man, and I had a very wonderful childhood.

ANNE: Didn't you deliver some of the groceries?

JAMES: Sure.

ANNE: When you were how old? I thought you said you were driving the car when you were about twelve years old.

JAMES: Yeah I could drive a car at 12 years old, we didn't have any drivers licenses at the time, and I drove the car all around Murfreesboro

FORSYTHE: What happened to your father's grocery store?

JAMES: He retired, and sold the store, and that type of grocery was no longer needed because they want a large store where you go and select your own groceries and carry it out with you. It is just an entirely different business than what it is today.

FORSYTHE: What year did he retire?

JAMES: He retired in '36 I guess it was, when he started teaching and he saw I was going to make a living on my own, and that they didn't carry me off the first week, he went into the insurance business, so he wanted something that was less taxing than the grocery business, he took a lot of his grocery customers over to the insurance business, and he served them as their insurance agent.

FORSYTHE: Tell me about growing up in Murfreesboro.

JAMES: When I was in high school, I could almost deliver the mail without any address on the envelopes, I knew just about every one in town, and every where I went I knew everyone, as I went to elementary school a half mile from my home walked to school, went to high school just across the street and attended here in college, I didn't go away from home until I went to Peabody, to work on my master's.

FORSYTHE: How did your father survive through the depression?

JAMES: My father, I don't want to brag, but my father was a good business man, he made satisfactory money in the grocery money in the grocery business, and he bought real estate, he was going to rent. During the depression we were much better off than most people, and we didn't feel the effects of the depression at all, in fact Rutherford County could not pay their teachers at the end of the month they would give them warrants, to be paid when they could pay them, many people bought those warrants, at much less than what they were worth. My dad didn't do that, he would pay them a dollar for a dollar, and he was a great help to many of the teachers here, but he had money coming in during the depression years the depression didn't effect us.

FORSYTHE: Do you have anything else you want to add about the school?

ANNE: Well I loved the school to, and as he said, we were all alike, if we were poor we didn't feel it because we were all the same way, there was a lot of love and affection and we have kept in touch with a lot of people, still.

FORSYTHE: Well I want to thank you for coming out, today.