

**Dr. Evelyn Speaks:**

Today is January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2002 and were at Elder and Mrs. James Strickland's home, and my purpose for being here today, is to interview them for the African American Historical and Genealogical Society of Surry County, and my name is Evelyn Thompson, and Reverend Elder Strickland and Mrs. James. Thank you for having us here today (yes). Uh-my questions will be generally about your family, your background; we want to go back as far as we can in your memory, um to get things that your children would not be able to tell me. That's why you're so valuable here today, to get the information that you have. So I want you to go back uh, um as far as you can of for the -the, the grandparents, great grandparents you remember and tell us their names where they were born, -wh, where they lived, and what they told you.

**Rev. James Speaks:**

Well of course, -uh My -uh great grandparents on my father's side, was uh- grandpa Will Jessup Moore we called him Mo-

***(Tape Breaks from 1:19-2:05)***

On my father's side and somehow I guess my grandfather adopted me, to a certain extent he always kept me with him, and I stayed along with him. I learned a lot from him, duh- I think that's part of the reason that, I can say what I am today. Uh- I remember one thing in particular, that my grandpa said to me as we were going to Mt. Airy on a two horse wagon and I asked him, grandpa I said grandpa, who, what, why are you going to town, he say I'm going to pay my debts, he say and he looked at me he said James, said time to pay your debts when you got money. When you don't have money you cant pay your debts. And that followed me from the age of 9 years old, up until the age I am right now. I find that to be a wonderful and a great policy to practice. And then :furthermore than that, ah-, he my grandfather and I we worked together a lot. Had him a cane, and-ah, I- I would go around asking him all kinds of questions. To the extent that sometimes he would get so uh-uh aggravated with me, I guess And he'd mark me sometimes, but I still ask him questions, And he'd always tell he never hesitate to tell me the -a -and give me answers to the questions I'd ask him. We'd be going across the tobacco field, and he'd have that cane, he'd be reaping tobacco. I'd have tobacco plants in a- a little basket and he'd take that cane, and make the hole, and I'd put the plant in the hole, and then he would cover it up. And from then on -we, we just worked together on a lot of stuff, just getting up, whatever we had to do on the farm. I would watch as my grandpa, and-uh so during that time -uh my youngest aunt which is Aunt Bee. Uh, she got so jealous of me, of my grandpa at the time. She felt like he was giving me more time than he was her. And she still feels that way today (laughter).

And I'm -Ima , but I'm grateful though that that -uh I had a grandfather like that. And, my grandmother. She was the same way. And she- nobody could cook no better, she could cook. And I would -uh leave home. I'd may be at home, and I'd go to my grandma and grandpa's house, and they'd be eating, and I still want to eat again., she'd ask me come on and eat. And I go eat again, so I was, So, So I just had a lot of enjoyment. Me and my- my grandparents.

**Evelyn speaks:**

Do you remember where they were born, or did they-uh your great grandparents go back to slavery; did they tell anything about their background?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Yes,-my my grandfather he grew up uh- in a slave home. And um, that's the reason why that -uh we have some, actually supposed to be Mitchells, but-uh-uh grandfather came up in a, in a home (studder) wh-where uh- the slavery was, the slave master was a Strickland and so he carried the name of Strickland And that's the reason why we are called Strickland's today. And uh- so but he- -tha-that's what we supposed to be.

**Evelyn speaks:**

Wh- Where was that located? Was that here in North Carolina?

**Rev. James speaks:**

This is, in North Carolina, -uh my grandfather was raised down here on 89, -uh just beyond -uh the um, church down in Westfield, what's that?

Evelyn speaks:

(Woodsville?)

**Rev. James speaks:**

Woodsville Baptist Church, on the left going east. On 89, and-uh I think the home right now, is; I don't know who owns it now, but at that time, it belonged to Inman's. And he was raised up in that home, and, ---an after that he came to be a man. Then um- the slave master -uh sold him 300 acres of land, and told him that he would let him have it for 50 cents an acre. So after he, -uh she made that -uh contract with him, she told him say now I'll give you all the time you need-ta, to pay for it, but during the time that he was working there as a slave, then they would give him an allowance and he was saving his money so when they told him what they were -uh asking for the land, and he had cash money to pay for it at that time. And so that was, that's something-that I, th- that -uh, meant a lot to me. You know, to, -to, -to, -uh have money, to buy what you need, and pay for it when you get it.

**Evelyn speaks:**

Plan ahead, plan ahead wonderful, -um so (non-transcnbed statement) well his land, where was his land, was it in that area?

No, it was located in Chestnut Ridges

**Evelyn speaks:**

Oh,ok

In Chestnut Ridges, which is-ah, North of Chestnut Ridge's school on 89, North on 89

**Evelyn speaks:**

And he farmed?

**Rev. James speaks:**

He farmed

**Evelyn speaks:**

And what did he raise

**Rev. James speaks:**

He raised tobacco, corn, wheat, and cattle whatever. And-uh, so, he had, he would,-an, and all, most of the white people in that area called him-uh, Good Liver. They said George Strickland was a good liver, -and whenever lots of white people would come over also enjoy grandmother's cooking, when they'd come, they'd want to eat. Uh- my grandmother's cooking and grandpa always kept good food to eat always.

**Evelyn speaks:**

Wha-What occasion did they have people in, -um on a farm life, what, what kinds of activities did they have?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Woodchops,woodchoppings

**Rev. James speaks:**

(Non transcribed statement) woodchops- we'd, -we'd have, we'd well they had you know woodchopings. Cornshucking, and -uh apple peelings; just naming it that, that they would do it. And, the community would come in together and -uh, yea, wheat thrashing all of that and which was, which was a lot of fun and a lot of enjoyment.

**Evelyn speaks:**

Mrnm-Hrnm, and well what happened, what happened at one those, run, run through it -uh the day you started, now your going to have a -ah woodchop

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Woodchop, woodchopping

**Ev\_elyn speaks:**

Woodchopping, yea, woodchopping today

**Rev. James speaks:**

Ok, -wh, what they would do to have a woodchopping of course they would always -uh notify the people maybe a week or two weeks ahead of time say on a certain day they're going to have gone chop wood, and the community would come in we'd chop wood, and-um, and the women would come in the neighborhood there, they'd come and, and all of them would cook. And have one of the greatest meals that you could ever eat and everybody would be chopping, and thinking about what they were going to eat, time to come to dinner. Then they'd have, same thing about corn shucking, and then sometime we'd have barn raisings and-ah, the community would come together and they'd raise a barn Oh, people didn't look for pay, like they do today.

**Evelyn speaks:**

Yea, right

**Rev. James speaks:**

Yo-, You know they, they believed in helping each other, and I wish that the community was like that today.

**Evelyn speaks:**

Yes, it would be wonderful.

**Rev. James Speaks:**

Wouldn't it though?

**Evelyn speaks:**

Wh-, What would the woodchopping, when you chop; what was that? I mean that's a lot of wood

**Rev. James speaks:**

-That's

**Evelyn speaks:**

Woodcho-, I mean that's a lot of wood, what was that for?

**Rev. James speaks:**

To cure the tobacco with

**Evelyn speaks:**

Ooooh....

**Rev. James speaks:**

To cure your tobacco, -and, and if you had some left then you could burn it on your property (non transcribed statement followed by laughter)

**Evelyn speaks:**

-Ah, how many children did your-gr, grandfather have, that grandfather have?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Fourteen, (repeats vaguely after Evelyn repeats the number with excitement)

**Evelyn speaks:**

Fourteen children! Alright, how about that? Right, are any of those children living today?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Only one, all of them dead but one, that's the only, th-th aunties the only one living. She's the youngest

**Evelyn speaks:**

Uh-huh and where does she live?

**Rev. James speaks:**

-Sh, Right now she's in New York, with her daughter

**Evelyn speaks:**

Alright, Alright, -lets, that brings us to, -uh, well let me just ask you where go back there before both of, come up to your parents where did your grandfather go to church? (Faintly asks-di, or did they have a church that they go to)

**Rev. James Speaks:**

Well actually, -uh Grandma Elder she was a member of State Line and they would go to: State Line, (non transcribed church listing), (non transcribed church listing), and Locust Grove, those churches like that.

**Evelyn speaks:**

Um-, do you have any dates, -yo, you recall, um -1, I am trying to get a hold of -wh, what, uh about what years, what year was that? - That

**Rev. James Speaks:**

Oh, Then, well, uh it had to be lets see. Uh then, I, I was 7, 8, 9 years old when I was a member, I think I was 9 years old when my grandpa passes so that had to be, -re, really I don't remember the years exactly, -so..

**Evelyn speaks:**

Right, prior to it, uh-huh. -But, but from you know how old you are know

**Rev. James speaks:**

Yes

**Evelyn speaks:**

So, on an estimate go back, unless you wanted to tell me how old you are

**Rev. James speaks:**

Oh that would be, that would have to be, that would have to be, that would have to be back in, I think Grandpa (non transcribed name) died something like in the, in the 30's

**Evelyn speaks:**

So in the 30's, late 20's or 30's

**Rev. James speaks:**

L-, let's go back to your parents, -uh, uh your father of course was the son of your-, -George-

**Rev. James speaks:**

George Strickland

**Evelyn speaks:**

George Strickland and he -uh, uh lived on that farm?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Yes

**Evelyn Speaks:**

And worked on that farm?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Worked on that farm and, and of course he, he'd had some other brothers who lived on the same farm, and they'll worked, -w you know with grandpa on that farm, but after grandpa died, then of course, -um

they ah left, left that farm because grandpa he only, ah, owed thirteen hundred dollars at that time, and they'd been deliberating all that year, they thought was fun, get to move off that farm somewhere else, but then they found out their mistake and then my father of course tried to purchase it back, and he bought it back, and ah the bad crops all the handling, couldn't keep it; therefore it was sold for something else.

**Evelyn speaks:**

And where did he go from there?

**Rev. James speaks:**

And after that of course, uh he moved to near Mt. Airy on uh, West on-uh, -uh, what was the name?  
-Wh, wh (non transcribed mutters from both parties)

**Rev. James speaks:**

-Uh, Will Bellums, Will Bellums farm, we moved on Will Bellums farm

**Evelyn speaks:**

Will Bellums

**Rev. James speaks:**

Will Bellums farm, and we lived there for a couple of years, and then after that moved to Arthur Smith's farm, and then from up there we moved here, on this farm here.

**Evelyn speaks:**

And did he buy this farm at that time?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Now-, he and I together, -uh bought it -uh together, -uh I had a, I had a house and lot that I had bought and paid for over in, -uh Combstown, and I sold that house and lot, and made the down payment on this farm here, -an, that was 1940-, 44?

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Yes

**Rev. James speaks:**

And ah, so after that, then of course we started farming here

**Evelyn speaks:**

Where was the original house?

**Rev. Speaks:**

Well, brothers, well my fathers, my brothers his was down below, down on the other end, down in Tobaccoville

**Evelyn speaks:**

Does it still exist, is the house (non transcribed adjective)?

**Rev. Speaks:**

No, no the house got burned down

**Evelyn speaks:**

Oh, okay. Ahight, ahight going up, -ah in your family, with your mother and father on the farm. How many children were there?

**Rev. speaks:**

-Ah, it was ten of us (faint non transcribed noun) in my family

**Evelyn speaks:**

(Non transcribed mutter) siblings, -Ah, -wh, what was life like? -th, you know, -I know- you go-, you got a lot of richness from your grandfather, so what was life like now with your siblings, and on the farm?

**Rev. James speaks:**

-Ah, I guess the most thing, we- had-uh, we, when I was at home was -uh with parents home, I had to be responsible as for getting things as far as work is concerned you know had to, had to do job (non-transcribed verb) and things that we had to do, we had to work on the farm. What people wanted us to do, we had to do that. Which let me, let me know that we have a responsibility.

**Evelyn speaks:**

Where do you fall within the 10? Are you the oldest, middle?

**Rev. James speaks:**

I'm the oldest boy

**Evelyn speaks:**

Oldest child? -Ah, So what did you do for pleasure? I know th-, that on a farm there's always work, did you have any pleasure?

**Rev. James speaks**

Well, we would have a little pleasure on the farm. We'd um, after we'd work, you know, like work all week during the goodness, towards -this, of the summer months uh (non transcribed statement) crop, we'd work all, all, all day till, all the week until, -uh Saturday at twelve 'o'clock and then we'd always get to go to town. Get to Mt. Airy. go to Mt. Airy. sit on the corner right at, at Houser's block, where Houser use to sell groceries. Mo-, Most of the African-Americans go there and buy their groceries, and pay for them in all, and we'd go there and just watch people go up and down the street and just enjoy, it'd be a whole bunch of us together, and enjoy it to the highest. And, -ah so, so that's some of the pleasure. -Ah some of the other pleasure is that we'd ah, have little games that we'd play around on the farm, or in the community and, -uh, -um like pitching horseshoes, playing ball, -we, we didn't have the access to things that you have today, or going to too many places, ah, you know, ah- to do things and uh recreation. We'd have, we'd have ball games. And ah, we had our fun we enjoyed life, very much so

**Mrs. James speaks:**

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Going to church on Sunday

**Evelyn (laughter)**

**Rev. James speaks:**

I'd try to go to church on Sunday, and other than that, -ah we would come back home work another week, get ready for the next week.

**Evelyn speaks:**

Yea, So where did you go to church, -eh with your mother and father?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Oh! Well I was going to my mother and father's church back on, ah Second Sunday we'd go to State Line, and then-um, most Sundays we'd go out here, to- at that time it was (non transcribed noun),

**Evelyn speaks:**

Yea!

**Rev. James Speaks:**

And then uh first Sunday we'd go to Locust Grove, and very seldom we get to-, got to go to Black Jack cause that was way down the road, down near Stuart, but anyway and then other than that, then we'd go to Chestnut Ridge church well

**Evelyn speaks:**

Uh-huh, yea

**Rev. James speaks:**

We'd be down there, growing up you know where I would go as a kid (non-transcribed muttering with Evelyn who vaguely mutters as well) and, then, that's where, we used to, as a young man, well 15, 16 we'd go to church to get to court with the girls. (Laughter)

**Evelyn speaks:**

Yes- that's right, it just changed, I mean if it's true today (laughter shared)

**Evelyn speaks:**

Yea, ah, ah, ah, what type of transportation did, first did your grandfather own a car of his own?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Oh yes

**Evelyn speaks:**

And what car did he drive?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Well grandpa, grandpa he didn't drive no he, ah, first he bought a, a, new Ford, he purchased a 1924 Ford. They told me and uh, uh, he paid 400 dollars for it. I mean brand new.

**Evelyn:**

Laughter

**Rev. James speaks:**

But my-uh, but, uh, my father didn't drive it because my father already had his car, but uh, his name (tape breaks) Strickland, he told me my father had a 19, he bought a 1925 model Ford, uh, I don't know how much he gave for it, but, but, he didn't buy it new, but he didn't give that much for it. And uh, cars, we've had cars in our family all our lives

**Evelyn speaks:**

That is something, a lot of people didn't have cars, so you didn't ride the first wagon for, very much?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Not that much, no, no

**Evelyn speaks:**

Uh, (non transcribed mutter) churches? Tell us a little bit about this 10 children and the relationship in the family, um-

**Rev. James speaks:**

(Non-transcribed statement) I'll let you my wife tell you that

**Evelyn speaks:**

Tell us about his family

**Mrs. James speaks:**

No, she talking about your family

**Evelyn speaks:**

Uh, your 10- your kids, your brother and sisters

**Rev. James speaks:**

Oh, Oh my brothers and sisters

**Evelyn speaks:**

Now di- how did they get along how did your family yo-your parents manage 10 kids?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Oh, we got along fine. Um, they would always whatever we didn't get to go to town most of the time they would leave us at home and by me being the oldest; I'd always be in charge of the rest of them. And um, so they'd always promised me something if I did what was expected of me. Bring back some kind of candy or bring back something, and we'd go out and we'd, if it was in the Winter time, I took the other brothers, and the sisters too, we'd go out there and we'd cut wood and have a pile of wood piled up on the porch when, ah, when ah mama and papa come back you know as soon as they seen we done something they wouldn't mind giving us a (tape breaks followed by non transcribed mutter) and that's what we done things like that, we didn't, we didn't, we didn't sit around like these children's do today, we, we'd get out and do something.

**Evelyn speaks:**

Well did any of those children ever get sick in the home and in back in those days when you were growing up how did the parents handle it?

**Rev James speaks:**

Well, to, I guess today say we have a bad cold, sometimes we'd have the croup ah and mama had a remedy for all of that

**Evelyn:**

Laughter

**Rev. James speaks:**

Whenever we'd catch a cold I knew what was happening my daddy would get me lay me aero-, lay me on across his lap my mother would get a bottle of castor oil and my daddy, my daddy would hold my nose so I'd have to swallow for I can breathe, that's the only way I could get it down. Whenever I'd have the croup she'd pick up she'd take (non transcribed statement) and stuff like that, you know and ah, uh,uh, which ah, ah,ah, was you know kerosene and we'd drink that, and all that stuff worked

**Evelyn speaks:**

Blue ink and kerosene?

**Rev. James speaks:**

That's right, (non transcribed mutter)

**Evelyn speaks:**

Blue ink was (non transcribed statement) was for croup?

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Kerosene was for croup

**Rev. James speaks:**

Croup

**Evelyn speaks:**

Did you put any sugar in it or anything?

**Rev. James speaks:**

No, no, sugar in it nothing, mix that up together, would give it to us next morning, we'd be, we'd be well

**Mrs. James speaks:**

With the, the uh kerosene you drop in one drop of sugar

**Evelyn speaks:**

Yea, one drop of that; kerosene and sugar

**Rev. James speaks:**

Yes,yes, uh one drop (very faint)

**Evelyn speaks:**

Did they have a remedy for worms? Did they have any?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Yes, they had but, wha- with the worms, I don't know that was only if, I didn't- wasn't bothered by worms it, but I had a sister, oldest sister she was the one bothered by worms had to give her something; but I don't know what she had to give her

**Evelyn speaks:**

So wha- (tape breaks) treatment remedy?

**Rev. James speaks:**

That's right home remedy

**Evelyn speaks:**

And nobody got sick enough to go to the emergency room?

**Rev. James speaks:**

No, no we didn't know nothing about the emergency room

**Evelyn speaks:**

Never seen the hospital when you were growing up?

**Rev. James speaks:**

No, not unless you pass by it

**Evelyn speaks:**

Wh-where were you all born?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Uh, down in S-Surry County down in Chestnut Ridge

**Evelyn speaks:**

But were you born at home?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Yes, at home, in the home

**Evelyn speaks:**

Then, wh-who delivered the baby?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Uh, Dr. Gates was, Dr. Gates the one who delivered me

**Evelyn speaks:**

Uh-huh

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Dr. Gates?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Dr. Gates, yes sir

**Mrs. James speaks:**

I thought it was Dr. Tom

**Rev. James speaks:**

Ahight now, I'm sorry. Dr- Dr. Tom, Dr. Tom Smith that's right Dr. Tom Smith, that's right I'm sorry

**Evelyn speaks:**

Yea, you probably remem-

**Rev. James speaks:**

You just erase it?

**Evelyn speaks:**

No, that's ahight. Your revo-uh, so she probably uh, uh, delivered you very, very, very, old delivered most ofyou

**Rev. James speaks:**

Yea, well

**Evelyn speaks:**

With the father

**Rev. James speaks:**

Yea, and then sometimes we had midwives come to, to, to do something about it, my brothers

**Evelyn speaks:**

Do you remember who the mid wife was at the time? Any names of them?

**Rev. James speaks:**

(Non transcribed statement) Mrs. Willis, Mrs. Willis, uh, uh was Smith was one, and uh Mrs. (non transcribed noun)

**Evelyn speaks:**

A, and th-they were down in..

**Rev. James speaks:**

Well, Mrs. Willis lived in Chestnut Ridges, and the ah other time though we lived down, down in Brown Mountain (non transcnbed noun) for about 9 month that's where my uh youngest sister was born, and so (non transcribed noun) sister delivered her we lived their for 9 months

**Evelyn speaks:**

Ok, but now, in your sequence of farms you said it was 9 months at Brown Mountain, but so when your father started his family, when he got married and started his family he, he was at home?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Yea, yea, Chestnut Ridges, uh yea

**Evelyn speaks:**

Chestnut Ridges

**Rev. James speaks:**

He was living with his father

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Grandpa's farm

**Rev. James speaks:**

Grandpa's farm

(At the same time both Evelyn and Rev overlapping)

**Evelyn speaks:**

On her, with his family

**Rev. James speaks:**

Right

**Evelyn speaks:**

And then, then you all moved to Brown Mountain for 9 months before you came up to

**Rev. James speaks:**

Yea, you have to after about uh 10 years I guess

**Evelyn speaks:**

Ok, and then from there you came to Will (non transcribed noun) farm?

**Rev. James speaks:**

(Non transcribed noun) farm

**Evelyn speaks:**

Ok, are you tired? Is that why you reacted to ah (non transcribed verb) or do you want to take a break?

**Mrs. James speaks:**

No, he thought you was talking about our immediate family

**Evelyn speaks:**

Oh, Oh, Oh, yea for the children's

**Rev. James speaks**

(Slight non transcribed mutter)

**Evelyn speaks:**

Ok, I-I see good. Uh, now we want to get a picture of ah the food where it came from, who-

**Rev. James speaks:**

(Slight non transcribed mutter)

**Evelyn speaks:**

At the family meal

**Rev. James speaks:**

(Slight non transcribed mutter)

**Evelyn speaks:**

Your-Your siblings and yo-yo-your fathers

**Rev. James speaks:**

(Slight non transcribed mutter) Well most of the food got to be good to come off a farm, uh you know grandpa uh planted all everything was together with the exception of tobacco patches, corn would be planted together grow the hogs together and there the tobacco would be separate, when it come down to selling tobacco, and y-you whenever either family needed something they would get to go to the one place

**Evelyn speaks:**

Grandpas?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Go to, go to, go to my grandpa's place, yeah a building which was a building that had wheat in it, and corn in it and all, had the meat and all that, and did all that you know, and that just is (slight non transcribed mutter) when we ate, all ate

**Evelyn speaks:**

Yea, what about vegetables, did-were there?

**Rev. James speaks:**

(Non transcribed adjective) and all that and

**Evelyn speaks:**

How were they preserved? Or were they preserved?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Uh, I guess well mom canned a lot (non transcnbed verb) she did a lot of canning and uh, because ah, the meat you know was just cured you know?

**Evelyn speaks:**

Yea, Mmm-Hmm, alright now the dinner table did you raise chickens, did you have any chickens?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Nothing but yard chickens, yeah and (non transcribed noun)

**Evelyn speaks:**

For eating?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Yeah, yeah, yeah, for eating yeah

**Evelyn speaks:**

And ah cows did you have cows for fo-

**Rev. James speaks:**

Yeah, well, well milk cows, of course my grandfather well you know would have a few cows around

**Evelyn speaks:**

(non transcribed mutter) so you have a get your drinks, Ok, um tell me a little bit now were leading up to your-where did the children go to school when you all were down..

**Rev. James speaks:**

Down at Chestnut Ridges, on 89

**Evelyn speaks:**

Tell us about that schoo when you di-didn't

**Rev. James speaks:**

Well it wa-ah, well

**Evelyn speaks:**

Well, its not there now is it

**Rev. James speaks:**

No, No, No, No, No its, it's done (non transcribed mutter) the municipal building now those two buildings, the school I went to was a 4 room schooi had three teachers and the one of the rooms was the auditorium where we was at having our annual plays, you know in our school clothes and Easter play stuff like that. And um, so th-that's

**Evelyn speaks:**

But this is 19, uh when you, when you went to schooi uh wh-when it, it was ah, 1920. At that time you had a 4 room school?

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Yea, he was, he was born in 1920.

**Evelyn speaks:**

Oh, 1920

**Rev. James speaks:**

Or 1921

**Mrs. James speaks:**

You were 21

**Camera Man:**

Nah, yall get together

**Evelyn speaks:**

You need a break (laughter) I didn't think about you

**Camera Man:**

Nab, nab, I'm aight, I'mjus-

**Evelyn speaks:**

Ah, ah, ah- uh

**Rev. James speaks:**

Now see after we ab- see after ah left uh Brown Mountain we lived down there for 9 months, then we came back and I went to Ch-Chestnut Ridge school and lived

**Evelyn speaks:**

Oh, so you were how old?

**Rev. James speaks:**

So, I was about ah-uh at that time then um, I'm going for about 10 years old something like that

**Evelyn speaks:**

Oh, so those hi-

**Rev. James speaks:**

Did you go to Chestnut Ridge school before yall went to Brown Mountain

**Rev. James speaks:**

Yeah, yeah we did, I went to Bro-

**Evelyn speaks:**

Yeah, so

**Rev. James speaks:**

I went th-, I went there at 6 years old

**Evelyn speaks:**

Oh, so, so it was in the 20's they had a Chest Ridges school with 4 rooms?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Mmm-Hmm

**Evelyn speaks:**

Mos-Most of the schools were 1 room schools

**Camera Man:**

- I, is that the same school where I went?

**Rev. James speaks**

Yeah

**Camera Man:**

Is that the one where they wouldn't let

**Rev. James speaks:**

Yea

**Mrs. James speaks:**

You went to Chestnut Ridge School? Or Westfield school

**Camera Man speaks:**

Chestnut Ridge, I went to Westfield 1 year and then um they got a bus-and um, and I, I went to it yeah

**Evelyn speaks:**

Oh

**Camera Man:**

(Non transcribed noun) and (non transcribed noun) Yeah, it was a school's plot, Yeah Jimmy Martin's the one tore it down that whole school

**Evelyn speaks:**

Now, you know we're not getting this on tape

**Camera Man:**

No-were get not getting this on tape

**Evelyn speaks:**

Well, this is history we can't talk about history in the air, when I leave here I won't know what you said

**Camera Man:**

Ok, I was just uh, yeah alright

**Evelyn speaks:**

It's helping him to remember

**Camera Man:**

Yeah

**Evelyn speaks:**

Ok, but we need him to promote, we didn't want to say anymore ifwe got it on tape

**Camera Man:**

An-

**Evelyn speaks:**

Unless you have something to stimulate, I wont listen until you do

**Camera Man:**

And then our milk, we pu-we put our milk in the (non transcribed noun) jug

**Evelyn speaks:**

Why don't you turn this on and tell us

**Camera Man:**

Nah, nab I'm not in it

**Evelyn speaks:**

Yes you are

**Camera Man:**

No (non transcnbed mutter) I am not

**Rev. James speaks:**

Now we could help

**Camera Man:**

Because, well spring whatever we kept our mi-

Evelyn speaks:

Put that tape on and add to what he said, because..

Camera Man:

Um, I'd do that

(All parties speak simultaneously, non transcribed)

**Mrs. James speaks:**

They was in school then

**Camera Man:**

Ok, now why don't we go back to where we was at. We gone start where yall was at

**Evelyn speaks:**

Yeah, what I'm trying to get that clear, on here you did manage to clear that up the 4 room school that was back in the 1920's actually when you learned

**Camera Man:**

Ok, I'm back on

**Evelyn speaks:**

When you were 6 years old, wh-where uh just established that the um, there was this 4 'room school that I was in awe about because most of the schoolJs were one room, and you need you had a 4 room school back in, um you were beginning to tell us about uh, uh, well you said. Tell us about the school how many grades, who were the teachers, uh that you remember.

**Rev. James speaks:**

WeR Emma Jean Jessup at that time was my first teacher when I went to school there

**Evelyn speaks:**

And what grade? Fi-first?

**Rev. James speaks:**

First, first grade yeah, I was 6 years old

**Evelyn speaks:**

Uh-huh, So she was a first grade teacher, and, ah who else?

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Now this school was one of 4 reservoir schools that was built by the state. The reservoirs were Sandy Level Payne Town, Chestnut Ridges and Westfield

**Evelyn speaks:**

Did, let me just ask you this were there, were there other schools that had more than 1 room? These other schools

**Mrs. James speaks:**

I don't know if those reservoir schools had more than 1 room

**Rev. James speaks:**

That's what I think yea. All I seen. Yeah, yeah

**Evelyn speaks:**

Very good, so you had 4 teachers then

**Rev. James speaks:**

Their teachers

**Mrs. James speaks:**

3

**Rev. James speaks:**

3 teachers, yes. 1-1-1 room is used for an auditorium like plays and people got together and have programs and stuff like that the state built and all that

**Evelyn speaks:**

Alright, so were there any other grades in your 1<sup>st</sup> grade teaching, did she teach 2 grades

**Rev. James speaks:**

They were to-, went to the '? grade back then it went to '? grades, I guess

**Mrs. James speaks:**

1 teacher, how many teachers did you have?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Th-three teachers

(All slightly chat)

**Evelyn speaks:**

**Rev. James speaks:**

Yea, but 1 uh, teacher had more than one, one grade, you see?

**Evelyn speaks:**

Alright, what did you do for lunch?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Well, we carried our lunch, -to, to school we had a place in school wh-where we, uh, stored our lunch until it was ready, you know til dinnertime, sometimes we'd go out there and have lunch sometimes we wouldn't would be done stole the meat and everything

**Evelyn:**

Laughter

**Evelyn speaks:**

So what? How did you get to school?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Walked

**Evelyn speaks:**

Uh-huh

**Rev. James speaks:**

Walle to school

**Evelyn speaks:**

How-how, bu- but how many, how far were you from school

**Rev. James speaks:**

A mile, it was one mile fr- from where we lived to the school

**Evelyn speaks:**

But you'd have a lot of people to wa& wi-with you family

**Rev. James speaks:**

Yea, but it would be a lot of us walking

**Rev. James speaks:**

Find the road would be filled, yeah

**Evelyn speaks:**

Mmm-Hmm

**Rev. James speaks:**

Yeah, to schooi th-th- honor of that was something like 2 hours to wa&, but we was between

**Evelyn speaks:**

No, when we were ta&ing about (tape breaks)

**Rev. James speaks:**

Oh yeah

**Evelyn speaks:**

That wasn't related to the school no, no

**Rev. James speaks:**

No, no we didn't go to school though, we used to have to go to the spring and below the school to bring water to school to have to drink; and ah-we'd be so, we'd feel so bad for the teachers to-we'd always want to go get that bring water in so we could get out of class, out of class for awhile

**Evelyn speaks:**

Yea, I'd do it to

**Rev. James speaks:**

And then also in the evening, we'd go have this pot, -ba, stoves to heat the room, and we'd have to go out and get the kenneL and we'd always be happy to do that go out there and get the kenneL so we could get out the classroom for awhile, bring that kennel back. I-wa-, I think he know it.

**Evelyn speaks:**

Ok, who prepared the kennel?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Well we caught, the kids we'd go out there and get the kennel and bring it back

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Ah sticks, Oh

**Evelyn speaks:**

Brea-

**Rev. James speaks:**

Break up with the sticks, yeah go out in the woods and break up the sticks (non transcribed verb)

**Evelyn speaks:**

And who bought the wood?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Well I don't know how they got the wood; I guess th-th- that the state furnished the wood (non transcribed noun)

**Evelyn speaks:**

It was cold?

**Mrs. James speaks:**

It wa-, it was cold

**Rev. James speaks:**

Yeah, it was cold. Cold as it was yeah (non transcnbed mutter)

**Evelyn speaks:**

What were some of the games you all played in school?

**Rev. James speaks:**

We played baseball (non transcribed verb), football and basketball and what not; it wasn't growing at that time

**Evelyn speaks:**

Yeab, (non transcnbed mutter) um just to go back to um community relations, I wanted to- to pick up on that and see what um (tape breaks) community relation; you mentioned it a little bit but the uh the whites coming with your parents life. What was the relationship with uh, the community of whites and blacks?

**Rev. James speaks:**

0, relation they wo-worked together you know, whenever we had chopping you know whites would come back just like um, just lik- you know blacks would go with them

**Evelyn speaks:**

Did you have choppings too? Wi-wi-with your father? Oh after

**Rev. James:**

Yeab, I had several of them here too

**Evelyn speaks:**

Uh-huh

**Rev. James speaks:**

So

**Evelyn speaks:**

Uh-huh

**Rev. James speaks:**

Here, I've had barn raisings and stuff and-

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Cornshuckings

**Evelyn speaks:**

Ob, alright, so they came, came right down and that, and so you-?

**Rev. James speaks:**

I meant to tell you about, you know why we didn't have -uh talk about the barn raisings things like that

**Evelyn speaks:**

Please

**Rev. James speaks:**

We use to have to ab put our milk and butter in a, in a box spring left in the spring to keep it cold. And uh, it bout but I guess it was a half a mile over there to go and get the milk, time we'd go and get the milk even though it'd be hot by the time you got to the house. We'd have to take it down. Every morning, go back at dinnertime get it for damn, and then take it back. And then bring it back for suppertime. And -uh so that was- that was quite a, a job.

**Evelyn speaks:**

Mmm-Hmm

**Rev. James speaks:**

And-uh, so that was, that was quite a job

**Evelyn speaks:**

That was in the summer months?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Yeah, that was in the summer

**Mrs. James speaks:**

How did you keep dogs and things out of it?

**Rev. James speaks:**

In a box, a box with a lid on it

**Evelyn speaks:**

Uh-huh in the water, yeah you would throw it away at-

**Rev. James speaks:**

Or-or either you have to lock it (non transcribed verb)

**Evelyn speaks:**

Well, um but the Winter you didn't have to do that did you? What did you do in the Winter?

**Rev. James speaks:**

In the Winter

**Evelyn speaks:**

In the Winter?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Winter, no, no, no in the Winter time our water was cold as anybody water

**Evelyn speaks:**

Laughter

**Mrs. James speaks:**

And the milk you just sit it out, you know outside on the back porch

**Evelyn speaks:**

Yea (non transcribed statement) God provided didn't he?

**Rev. James speaks:**

O, yeah, that's right

**Evelyn speaks:**

Kids today don't know about that?

**Rev. James speaks:**

They sure don't, can't tell them those things to these children today they look at you like you (non transcribed adjective)

**Evelyn speaks:**

That's right from another space- ah, that's uh important, and so-uh after your father moved your grandfathers farm and he -uh, he carried on in the same manner on his far, by having all of these -ah activities where our he was -so, so the family wherever you lived you had white families around as well as, as well as black families and they always worked together each year you know

**Rev. James speaks:**

Most of the time we helped each other, we just ah- after we moved up here it wasn't many farmers in- in in around Mt. Airy

**Evelyn speaks:**

Oh

**Rev. James speaks:**

A could of (non transcribed statement)

**Evelyn speaks:**

Yea, well lets um, let me ah-let me just ask you this before I jump to the other part of your family how ah (tape break) served in the military

**Rev. James speaks:**

No, not, not, not you mean my father's family

**Evelyn speaks:**

Your father's family

**Rev. James speaks:**

Oh, Oh I had a brother he made a career

**Evelyn speaks:**

Your brother?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Yea

**Evelyn speaks:**

Uh- what do you know what year he served? What year did he go in?

**Rev. James speaks:**

No

**Evelyn speaks:**

Or when he went in?

**Rev. James speaks:**

No, I don't

**Mrs. James speaks:**

(Slight non transcnbed mutter) Archie

**Rev. James speaks:**

Well-th that's on my grandfather's side (non transcnbed statement)

**Evelyn speaks:**

Yea, and who was, all the way back

**Rev. James speaks:**

Well ab all the way-my-my, my father's oldest brother be was in WWI

**Evelyn speaks:**

His name was Archie?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Archie Strickland

**Evelyn speaks:**

Uh-huh, -ah, -um, -ok,-ah

**Rev. James speaks:**

And then my brother he was in WWII and the Vietnam War

**Evelyn speaks:**

Ah, did uh, ah your uncle Archie um, he just served and came home? He served and came home?

(Non transcribed statement) ah where did he stay? (non transcribed statement)

**Rev. James speaks:**

Where did he serve? That well that's (non transcribed statement)

**Evelyn speaks:**

No, where did he serve in the military?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Ob, I-I really don't kn- seems like he was a mail carrier

**Evelyn speaks:**

Mail carrier?

**Rev. James speaks:**

(Non transcribed statement) **Yea**, I did say that

**Evelyn speaks:**

Well if he's not

Rev. James speaks:

He transferred the mail

Evelyn speaks:

Ok

Rev. James speaks:

And he done, I remember they was telling me about one time they was trying to get mail and he got shot um by some other inhis uh helmet, and he always shows that place in his head

**Evelyn speaks:**

Uh-huh

**Rev. James speaks:**

Yea, th-th that is how he got th-th (non transcribed statement)

**Evelyn speaks:**

Now who ah, um who would know about him I mean did he have any children?

**Rev. James speaks**

Yes

**Evelyn speaks:**

Now who would know about him, did he have his children?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Yes, but

**Mrs. James speaks:**

(Non transcribed statement)

**Rev. James speaks:**

Well, -uh, oh (non transcnbed statement) your um

**Mrs. James speaks:**

(Non transcnbed statement)

**Rev. James speaks:**

Well, uh, oh, (non transcribed statement)

**Evelyn speaks:**

(Non transcnbed mutter)

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Married Richard married Richard King

**Evelyn speaks:**

(Non transcribed statement) King see that's five children

**Mrs. James speaks:**

D- Daughter so their son (non transcnbed verb) Odessa Joyce

**Evelyn speaks:**

So that's (non transcnbed statement)

**Rev. James speaks:**

Had-h-had tw- had two daughters and two sons too, James and uh

**Evelyn speaks:**

Joyce

**Rev. James speaks:**

Oh, n-,no, no, no

**Mrs. James speaks:**

There was Joyce and (non transcnbed noun) mainly

**Rev. James speaks:**

Both

**Mrs. James speaks:**

(Non transcribed noun) husband's last name

**Rev. James speaks:**

Otis

**Mrs. James speaks:**

(Non transcnbed noun)

**Evelyn speaks:**

Oh, the last name my thought was there was somebody who was close to Archie's family or him

**Rev. James speaks:**

No, I don't know nobody but him

**Evelyn speaks:**

Ok

**Rev. James speaks:**

All his, all his children (non transcribed statement)

**Mrs. James speaks:**

And then he married (non transcribed noun) and they had 3 children

**Evelyn speaks:**

Ok

**Rev. James speaks:**

All 3 of them are dead

**Evelyn speaks:**

Oh, ok, Ah- so your um, your um brother did he have any kids? (non transcribed mutter) See how far how long (non transcribed statement). You-, your brother did serve in WWII and the Vietnam, di- and be made a career? Where is he?

**Rev. James speaks:**

He lives

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Oh Aaron! Oh my goodness an-and you know where does Aaron live?

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Over in front of (non transcribed Pronoun)

**Evelyn speaks:**

Alright

**Mrs. James speaks:**

How many years did Aaron serve in the army twenty-four

**Rev. James speaks:**

It was over 20 something years

**Evelyn speaks:**

I didn't know Aaron was your brother

**Rev. James speaks:**

Yea, he made a career out of it

**Evelyn speaks:**

Oh, ok those are the only people who ah- in the military-Alright now the other th-the last question on the ah- before I go to the children is um just for the history and you know we've encountered this around different pl- and different families have had different experience. Did you have any encounters with the (tape breaks) **Ku-Klux-Klan?**

**Rev. James speaks:**

No, I haven't had any (non transcribed statement)

**Evelyn speaks:**

(Non transcribed statement)

**Rev. James speaks:**

No, not any encounters (non transcribed noun)

**Evelyn speaks:**

Uh-huh, did reveal themselves, ok ah did uh were there any family members with businesses?

**Rev. James speaks:**

I can't think of any

**Evelyn speaks:**

That you know of

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Back then, they went to West Virginia worked in coal mines

**Evelyn speaks:**

Uh-tell me about that, who went to West Virginia?

**Mrs. James speaks:**

(Non transcribed statement) ex-wife's husband

**Rev. James speaks:**

But uh husband

**Mrs. James speaks:**

None of your uncles did. Did they?

**Rev. James speaks:**

No, yea Oscar

**Mrs. James speaks:**

I'll say Oscar

**Rev. James speaks:**

Oscar, Oscar did Oscar because he stayed behind

**Evelyn speaks:**

Did he stay there and work or did he come back to the farm?

**Rev. James speaks:**

No, no, he died in West Virginia

**Evelyn speaks:**

West Virginia, uh-huh

**Evelyn speaks:**

Um, ah now to let's look at your family your children, who how many children did you

**Rev. James speaks:**

**Evelyn speaks:**

Your just repeating your parents wa-

**Rev. James speaks:**

1-1 guess

**Evelyn speaks:**

Walking in their footsteps and you have 10 children -uh tell us all about the children

**Rev. James speaks:**

(Murmur)

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Well he needs to tell where we got married

**Evelyn speaks:**

Alright, you tell about how you met, and how you got married uh-huh (mutter followed by laughter) may remember better (laughter) is more work for you to do it. Yea, you made your proposal

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Yea

**Evelyn speaks:**

(Laughter) Ok were running

**Rev. James speaks:**

Well, well we were in high school of course, uh, we- went to Jones in Mt. Airy. J-J-J Jones school but to to one way or the other -uh over there

**Evelyn speaks:**

Jones High School?

**Rev. James speaks:**

On Virginia street, and uh we had uh gone till we got to 10<sup>th</sup> grade and then we-went off one Sunday and got married

**Evelyn speaks:**

(Laughter) So just changed this picture up, uh what did you do after that? Had you planned I mean could you get your own place, what did you do?

**Rev. James speaks:**

No, no,no she stayed at home until, su-until summers out and this been May, we got married at the twenty-sixth of May 1940 yeah the year 1940 and uh, so she stayed home til well after school was out and then after school was out then she came and we lived with my parents for 12 years

**Evelyn speaks:**

Mmm-Hmm, and then?

**Rev. James speaks:**

And then after that I uh-rented a farm he-joined the same farm that we lived on. The- family re, farm that we already was into, and he rented to me, made a crop over there and ah first couple I made them, I uh took what money I got and bought the Jot, and built a house up on Hamburg Road so, so

**Evelyn speaks:**

On Hamburg Road?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Hamburg yeah, I'm sorry you don't know about that (non transcnbed statement from Rev. James and Evelyn talking) but anyways

**Evelyn speaks:**

Theres schools' on Hamburg Road

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Yea, schools, there's schools-

**Evelyn speaks:**

An-, and there was a mil, there ah the uh Historical Society is there on the uh where in some type of restoring that bridge there that was a mill on Hamburg Road someplace?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Yeah, it used to be

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Stockmarket

**Rev. James speaks:**

Stockmarket , yeah

**Evelyn speaks:**

So, that's some history

**Rev. James speaks:**

An-so, we lived right at the end of it up up , Hamburg

**Mrs. James speaks:**

At the end of Hamburg

**Rev. James Strickland**

Right there

**Evelyn speaks:**

So you uh- you worked there a year and you got your money and bought-

**Rev. James speaks:**

I bought a th- a lot

**Evelyn speaks:**

With your dad

**Rev. James speaks:**

I then built a house

**Evelyn speaks:**

At, on Hamburg?

**Rev. James speaks:**

On Hamburg yea

**Evelyn speaks:**

Fine

**Rev. James speaks:**

And uh, How long we live there? We live there about 5 or 6 years something like that made down payment on this, then I sold it and bought place here

**Evelyn speaks:**

So you start- how many children there

**Rev. James speaks:**

Only had two

**Evelyn speaks:**

Two children there?

**Mrs. James speaks:**

I mean we had more than that, uh-uh had three

**Rev. James speaks:**

Wehad3

**Evelyn speaks:**

3 children there then you moved here on the farm? Ok, now let's go back to your children, your raising your children fr-

**Mrs. James speaks:**

(Non transcribed statement) He might remember better than I can

**Evelyn speaks:**

Where are yo-, where are they ah, were they in schooi what it was hke?

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Well, well when we moved here on the farm we bought a extra uh house that was sitting where this house is, and we brought that from Mr. (non transcnbed noun) daughter, the farm was previously- had belonged to her daddy (non transcnbed noun) so we bought this little two room house and

**Rev. James speaks:**

(Non transcribed mutter)

**Mrs. James speaks:**

And from there, we lived in that house until we got down to our 7<sup>th</sup> child, 8<sup>th</sup> child and they went to school in this community, do-down at Sandy Level School

**Evelyn speaks:**

And now was that a reservoir school? Four ro--

**Mrs. James speaks:**

It was, it was one of the reservoir schools and they went there until the schools was integrated, well after they integrated they were moved to **this** school and were bussed to the Jones'

**Evelyn speaks:**

Mmm-Hmm

**Mrs. James speaks:**

School

**Rev. James speaks:**

Wa-was it, I **think** the important thing, one thing is that when we bought **this** acres and a half of land with **this** little two room house on it, we just walked, (non transcribed verb) we just raised all those children and back down to 7 and-uh that's how many we had at (tape breaks) the house so, it uh- it was ok. And at that time to I had a-, I had a Ford F-1 pickup, best one I ever owned And I had a 41 uh 2 door Chevrolet

**Evelyn speaks:**

Mmm-Hmm

**Rev. James speaks:**

And-uh so my wife she, she was giving up in building houses. You talk about building a house

**Evelyn speaks:**

Yea

**Rev. James speaks:**

And she'll say we aint gone build no more. Well if its time, so-uh after a while uh- uh we went, went over to uh to the uh (non transcnbed Pronoun) give it time

**Evelyn speaks:**

Yea

**Rev. James speaks:**

(Non transcnbed noun) he was the uh president over there he knew how many children we had, and he just came to me and he said "James he said, come on over, say I'm a make you a loan to build you a house."

**Evelyn speaks:**

Laughter

Rev. James speaks:

And so that's, what he did. Made the loan and we built this house here. And it started from there, just kept going.

Evelyn speaks:

Ok! How many children -uh did you have when you built this house?

Rev. James speaks:

7we had uh 7

Evelyn speaks:

So you had three more children born?

**Mrs. James speaks:**

(Non transcribed statement)

**Rev. James speaks:**

First, the first one born was Phyllis was the first one we had eight children and Phyllis was born the first, we moved here in on December? And in March March th-

**Mrs. James speaks:**

March the-March the (Jh, we moved here i-on March 6. After you built the house we-we moved in March started in December

**Rev. James speaks:**

And then Phyllis was the first one born

**Evelyn speaks:**

So you had all of your children at home? All 10 of them?

**Rev. James speaks:**

No, not all ten, all ten but one

**Evelyn speaks:**

Mmm-Hmm

**Rev. James speaks:**

One of them passed while he was in the hospital. the hospital had burned up her-home in Mt. Airy

**Evelyn speaks:**

So, so did you have a midwife or doctors?

**Rev. James speaks:**

No

**Mrs. James speaks:**

We had doctors most of the time we only had midwives with the 1<sup>st</sup> child that was Arlene

**Evelyn speaks:**

Who was the midwife?

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Mrs. Martha (non transcribed noun)

**Evelyn speaks:**

Oh my grandmother!

**Rev. James speaks:**

Yea, that's right

**Evelyn speaks:**

Ooooh!

**Mrs. James speaks:**

And then when Albert (non transcribed noun) was born to Mrs. Martha came, but we had to go get a doctor, then after that we had doctors

**Evelyn speaks:**

Mmm-Hmm

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Until the last one, she was born in (non transcribed Pronoun) hospital

**Evelyn speaks:**

Alright, so now just tell me briefly, well not briefly, if you could tell me how your, your life here on the farm and some of the things that you have achieved, and then we'll come back to the achievements of the children. Uh, in the meantime let me ask you what have you done in uh, in life what sort of work life did you stay home?

**Mrs. James speaks:**

I-I stayed home I was a-

**Evelyn speaks:**

Stay at home and took care of the children

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Right

**Evelyn speaks:**

Ahight, tell us about the farm, the success with the farm

**Rev. James speaks:**

Well, um one thing we actu- we got started when we was grown, I had a lot of things in mind that I wanted to do, so I um so I-1 began to work you know to uh have what I wanted to. Uh, make a living on farms here, so we started uh raising chickens, Vinson, had cows, raised the pigs -an, and uh, uh doing that then of course we got into a bigger business um, we ah went to well uh the way it happened. Th- that Elder Hatcher came over here and asked me to take him to Dobson, over to the FHA building he was, he was, he was already had a loan, and then on low income and made a report and while I was there, I decided that I'll just put in a application cause I didn't, well at that time I wasn't pressure to do that but I decided I would. So I made the application in, and the very next week-uh the loan manager came over here with three other people and he-he took my application and they-they just approved it right off. We got into that and that's how I got into-to the, well I was already in the chicken business, but then I buih a larger bigger chicken house. And buih a tool shed, built a uh cattle barn, and uh instilled a pond, fenced in for my cattle and cleaned off al the land on the backside of the farm, and ah we ah bought the first-

**Mrs. James speaks:**

The first tractor

**Rev. James speaks:**

No, the second, the first tractor I bought (non transcribed noun) which was a 1950 model and (non transcribed adjective) but then 6-in 56 that's the year it was and it didn't (non transcribed statement) ah FHA and I bought a new Ford tractor all the equipment with that and uh so we just; everything just worked out just seemed like (non transcribed mutter) blessed.

**Evelyn speaks:**

(Non transcribed statement) Yes

**Rev. James speaks:**

So, so we got that and started raising tobacco and uh with th-the kids here we done pretty good and so then when the kids got out of school and were going to college then of course that threw me in a, ab different position. I bad to start hiring other people to help me

**Evelyn speaks:**

Mmm-Hmm

**Rev. James speaks:**

So that's what I did

**Evelyn speaks:**

Well let me ask you before you go into that, a couple of ah, uh- did you have chickens? What did you have all at one time at the same time on your farm?

**Rev. James speaks:**

O, I had oh I was raising chickens; I've raised hogs, and cattle and tobacco, hay, corn I don't that. All of that, I had a full time job

**Evelyn speaks:**

You sure did, Oh, ok, so the children helped up until the time they started to go away to -to college

**Rev. James speaks:**

College

**Evelyn speaks:**

College right, and then you started hiring, so what happened after that?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Well, we-we go out into the community we-we'd get em, and then it finally got to when we couldn't get the Jocal people we started hiring uh

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Mexicans

**Rev. James speaks:**

M-Mexicans to help us. And w-w then after that you know labor wasn't a problem to them then, because they was coming in by (non transcribed adjective) wanting to hire them

**Evelyn speaks:**

About bow long ago was that?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Oooh. Uh-back in bout 70's yeah that might, yea they started hiring them in the 70's

**Mrs. James speaks:**

It wasn't until the end of the 50's the children started going to college (non transcribed statement)

**Evelyn speaks:**

Um- (non transcribed mutter) Uh, ok that takes me back to the children uh-uh so tell us about the children they got out of high school or one by one, and what did they do? Which one

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Uh-bub, they went to college, well the oldest daughter, sh-she graduated from Jones high school in 1959 and she went to s went to -A and T college that fall and then from that ECU, when they would graduate out of school they all went to college. The next one our son, our oldest son, he went to barber school down in um, um Raleigh, the next daughter when she got out of schooi she went to UNC-G and from there as they come out of school they all went to college.

**Evelyn speaks:**

So, go on to the other 10

**Mrs. James:**

And that was um (non transcribed noun) the 3<sup>rd</sup>, and Lawrence when he fmished school be went to Winston Salem State, and after that he leaving there and going to New York to-to the school of uh-uh mortuary, and Arlene when she graduated she went to A and T college and she graduated from there

**Evelyn speaks:**

For?

**Mrs. James speaks:**

And then Miranda went to Winston Salem State and she-she majored in ah-in ah sociology. Miranda, then Marsha when she finished high school she went to Winston Salem State.

**Evelyn speaks:**

And what did she major in?

**Mrs. James speaks:**

E-, child, ah, early childhood education, and Phyllis she went to A and T college and she majored in um-chemistry and (non transcribed noun) she went to A and T college and she majored in (tape breaks) and then we only promised them a BS degree the 1<sup>st</sup> degree that they would have and from that Arlene she got married and went in the army with her husband, and th-when they came out of the army she sought to finish her education, so by that time she was living in ah California, and she went to o-she took up corporate law and she finished her education and (non transcribed noun) She went to Boston and got her masters, Arlene after she got her Masters' she came back to UNC-G and got her doctorate-and she , she was a nurse

**Evelyn speaks:**

Uh-huh, so all of them

**Mrs. James speaks:**

And Miranda she goes to Philadelphia and she got her Masters in uh-sociology and from that Marsha she didn't get any higher education. Lawrence he went to- to the school of Mortuary, Eric, he went to High Point college when he finished and he and he went there for two years then he went to the school of mortuary in New York City. So that's bout the- the

**Evelyn speaks:**

And from where all of this started it was up to them to go to the next level wasn't it, very good

**Rev. James speaks:**

(Slight mutter)

**Evelyn speaks:**

Did you have any businesses or have you had business in the family, particularly local that we are interested in?

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Well we had thi- well we had the funeral home in Mt. Airy

SO

**Evelyn speaks:**

Where was it located?

**Rev. James speaks:**

On South Street

**Evelyn speaks:**

Where on South Street?

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Out there,just across from where the kindergarten is now. You know the road close up, up Rockford Street

**Evelyn speaks:**

Oh yeah that,uh yea that um where that early childhood place is?

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Uh-hub

**Evelyn speaks:**

On the same side?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Yea, left going South

**Evelyn speaks:**

It was a pink store, something els-business now

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Yea, we built that building

**Evelyn speaks:**

Is that right? I need to ta-take a picture of that-ah, now then South Street Ok

**Mrs. James speaks:**

So, now that's the only local one we had

**Evelyn speaks:**

Ok

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Mmm-Hmm, right now Eric is located in Maryland

**Evelyn speaks:**

So that, that was who started that business in Mt. Airy

**Rev. James speaks:**

That was Lawrence

**Evelyn speaks:**

Lawrence..

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Yo-you got a picture of it somewhere

**Evelyn speaks:**

Alright, Lawrence ok, ab now just to say did I miss anything that you want to add, about anywhere along the historic? We like the stories I mean I love the story you tell about your father like any other good uh lessons that we can learn?

**Mrs. James speaks:**

I don't know any of them, the only real thing I can say is all of the children when they got out of college, they had to seek employment out of North Carolina

**Evelyn speaks:**

Yeah, very important, none of them came back to get a job, or could not get a job in North Carolina, especially in their hometown so all of your children were out of the area?

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Out of stated, except we had one son in Winston Salem and a girl in Greensboro, then another girl she married well she's the one who took up early childhood at Winston Salem State but she lives in Fayetteville now

**Evelyn speaks:**

And did she go into ah the early childhood?

**Mrs. James speaks:**

She (chuckle) went to school and got her praxis to teach and she went to, went to ah Wachovia and got hired at Wachovia, and never did teach. She worked through Wachovia and till after she married, when she got married he didn't let her work anymore. So now she's widowed and she's going back to Fayetteville State to get her doctorate or something in early childhood

**Evelyn speaks:**

Uh-Mm-Hmm

**Rev. James speaks:**

You had mentioned earlier that you like, you like stories-uh it just come to my mind ca-cause it might actually been mentioned that ah when all the children, which we had all 10 children, -uh I bought a 9-passenger county square, uh 19 and 57 station wagon Ford, and then we carried all those children to the world's fair in NY.

**Mrs. James speaks:**

(Laughter)

**Rev. James speaks:**

And, uh I mean we ju-we done a lot of traveling back then

**Evelyn speaks:**

Oh!

**Rev. James speaks:**

Carried them to NY, and carried them to Disney World and uh just

**Mrs. James speaks:**

(non transcribed Pronoun)

**Rev. James speaks:**

And all of that

**Evelyn speaks:**

That's important to know

**Rev. James speaks:**

I had and that was m-my pleasure

**Evelyn speaks:**

Mmm-Hmm

**Rev. James speaks:**

Seeing that they enjoyed it just tickled me to death

**Evelyn speaks:**

Oh, all of them?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Yea, all 12 all 10 children

**Evelyn speaks:**

10 chil-, 12 of you going?

**Rev. James speaks:**

All us going yea

**Evelyo speaks:**

That is wonderful!

**Mrs. James speaks:**

And then in providing he provided well for the family, because he would always row plenty of gardens, and I had to can 500 cans of vegetables, and fruit each year

**Evelyn speaks:**

He was some help that you had

**Mrs. James speaks:**

He would help, but he would provide well for the family for the fall. About every other year he would kill a cow, and we would have we, and right now the children said they ate better when they were at home- the best they had ever eaten because we had plenty of food

**Evelyn speaks:**

Isn't that something?

**Rev. James speaks:**

So did I

**Evelyn speaks:**

Yea (laughter)

**Rev. James speaks:**

Ate good while they were here

**Evelyn speaks:**

Exactly (laughter)

**Evelyn speaks:**

Ah- that's something now just tell me about another incident that I didn't know about that I don't have the article on you-your were ah cited as a top farm or something, you were recognized?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Yea, I won farmer of the year in 1940 68 farmer of the year-of-of 14 counties. I w-won, farmer of the year.

**Evelyn speaks:**

Yeah, that was after your children were out too, y-your house

**Rev. James speaks:**

No, they were here

**Evelyn speaks:**

They were here

**Rev. James speaks:**

They were here, yea

**Evelyn speaks:**

Ok

**Evelyn speaks:**

Alright, 1, 2, more questions these are the onJy questions I have ah what would you like in change in Surry County and the state with ch-with children

**Rev. James speaks:**

(Non-transcnbed mutter)

**Evelyn speaks:**

Laughter, no oh you can talk about it, we'll cut it off you do- everybody is just telling the truth, what changes would you like to see in Surry County? And in thinking about that regarding the children, it would you ah Mrs. Strickland to tell us wh-did you have any children who came back to apply for jobs and what was the response -uh,what was the experience?

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Well, the experience is we met and was forced with when our children went away to college come back to Surry County here in North Carolina and applied for jobs they gave them low paying jobs and the minimum of jobs as if they hadn't been away and gotten a degree and education.

**Evelyn speaks:**

Mmm-Hmm, did you have any speci-speci:fic experience? Did one of them have a specific experience?

**Mrs. James speaks:**

One of the daughters that went away, she got her BS degree in A and T in Greensboro, she went to Boston University, and got her Masters came back to UNC-G and got her doctorate in nursing, came and applied for a job at Northern Surry Hospital and they offered her a nurse aid job, and so she had to seek employment out of the state.

**Evelyn speaks:**

Mm-Hmm, now let's go back to the question of what changes you would like to see in Surry County for our youth? Rev. Strickland.

**Rev. James speaks:**

Well, uh number one I-I-I I'd like to see the parents uh start raising their children as it was when our children were growing up. You know-uh since we have, we have raised our children and I find it to be true, in my children uh, that they are saying that they don't want their children to have to come go through with what they had to go through, and they have to experience some things, they have to experience but I find that the things that my children was brought up and did that it is a help to them and since they been married, and then they come in at times a lot and they thank us for uh how we brought them up. And the things that we taught them and the things that we -uh wouldn't allow them to do. And the things that we would allow them to do, so I-I think that would be a help if we-the parents, would just start raising their children, without letting the children raise them. Because it's today it requires more time, and more things that the world has to offer today. Parents are going to have to start -uh as, as Christ said on one occasion getting up out of thy Father's business.

**Evelyn speaks:**

That's right

**Rev. James speaks:**

And that is to train up a child in a way that they should grow that way when he's old he would have acquired from it. Don't you think that ought to be, we ought to do that and-and until we well, get uh-parents start raising their children, I think we going to have lesser crimes Af-African Americans in prison, and in jail, jailhouse full of them, it's just pathetic, pathetic about we are letting them down as parents were not determined enough to hold the fault we are the fault. I think we need to raise our children, raise them up in the way that they should be, and to then I think that would be great. I'd like to see our, and our community, I'd like to see things, uh, uh, uh more, uh freedom for our for the black Americans. Yo-you know to get on jobs, the high paying jobs, to be like the other folk, because ah-ah, I-I know I been the one that has uh-uh-uh, we had the knowledge to do various things and they just can't do it not here in Mt. Airy. And so we'd like to see that, I'd like to see that happen so that you know you won't have to leave Mt. Airy, to go and get a job that's decent and that was paying money.

**Evelyn speaks:**

Oh, yeah great! Uh Mrs. Strickland then-uh, are there any thoughts for changes that you would like for Sur-Surry County or Mt. Airy?

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Well, I th.ink like Elder said we need to raise our children to be more responsible for themselves, and for th-there way of life. Seek employment and jobs that will pay them as they work instead of being drug pushers, and drug addicts and if they go out and hold a responsible job then they can raise their families and won't be depending on the welfare to supply the needs of what they need for the support and the building of the family to want to do these things and if you do God will help you do it.

**Evelyn speaks:**

That's right, well alright. Thank you one last question on that, tell me about what has sustained you. You've given me this wonderful chronological history of a large family, and raising a large family, but your still here in a beautiful home looking well, doing well, what sustains you today?

**Rev. James speaks:**

What sustains me?

**Evelyn speaks:**

What sustains you, what keeps you?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Well (laughter) #1, that's I-I think the Lord hes our keeper hes the one keeping us I'll, theres many things many things that I've done in life as far as ah being a pastor of 1 church-um , well for 45 years and then I was a pastor o-of ah another church which was across the street, and then in Virginia I was the pastor there for 36 years, and a half for 18 years. And then I was the pastor at Freedom for 9 years and then of course, then been an (non transcnbed noun) for about 33 years. I been, I had a busy schedule. I don't have time to get old (laughter)

**Evelyn speaks:**

Wonderful (laughter) Alright!

**Rev. James speaks:**

So,so but and the Lord just kept me able he's the one who gave me strength who gives us strength ah- and then, then my wife she my better half, been by my side the whole time and she have encouraged he and supported me and when you see me you see her up in church you see me lost lonesome and all that but we feel

**Evelyn speaks:**

(Laughter)

**Rev. James speaks:**

However, -uh the Lord is the one who has give us strength give us the mind, give us determination to keep on living you know what -uh, -uh, -uh living a life is m-more so in the individual you know that and if they give, and if your determined to do what God would have yea, to do then God is determined to bless you and do it. You got to have a-a mind to want to do these things and if you do. God will help you do it.

**Evelyn speaks:**

Right there with you

**Rev. James speaks:**

That's his promise that he made us, and I'm grateful and I know this and ah, ah, 1-1- know that I'm not doing everything that he wants me to do at all times, but I try to do most of the time. What he would have us to do and I think God is going to bless me for it, and have already done it, and he's going to continue to bless me.

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Uh-I know you think its easy to (non transcribed statement) seems like he said it all Only thing that I have to add in is who our Christian experiences in life it has taught us how to do the right thing as near as we know how to do it and most of all it starts to depend on th-, on th-, on the working and the blessings of the lord cause we couldn't have done what weve done, but yes the Lord blessed us and I do know he blessed us to raise this family of children, and send everyone of them to college, 10 children to college, then we have farmed this whole, well we farmed sixty years been married sixty-two years, and weve been on the farm sixty years before we retired and quit.

**Evelyn speaks:**

I didn't ask you the date you were married

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Married June 26, 1940

**Evelyn speaks:**

Very good

**Mrs. James speaks:**

Mmm-Hmm

**Evelyn speaks:**

Alright, is there any other because we keep going back to something is there anything that you want to add that you can think about, can you think of anything else, or one more thing?

**Rev. James speaks:**

Ah, I can't, I can't think of none for now

**Evelyn speaks:**

Well if you might think of something later we ask you have an open door policy and (non transcribed statement) If we need to come back and ask you questions or round out things we'd appreciate it. Thank you so very much Elder Strickland and Mrs. Strickland

**Mrs. James speaks:**

It's been a joy

**Evelyn speaks:**

It's been a pleasure, thank you for helping us out with this project. Thank you John Robert Smith for your part in this, you've just been a wonderful support bless you all

**Rev. James speaks:**

Amen.