

MRS. OSSIE THOMPSON
Interview 37a
September 8, 1978
Ellen Temple, Interviewer
Retyped by Courtney Lawrence

ABSTRACT: In this interview with Ellen Temple, Ossie Thompson, wife of longtime Southern Pine Lumber Company executive and Diboll Mayor Clyde Thompson, recalls her early childhood in Diboll and Huntsville and her time as a teacher in Fuller Springs and Diboll. Mrs. Thompson also reminisces about courting practices in Diboll, recreational activities and card playing. She also talks about her involvement with her church, the housing situation in Diboll, and raising her children.

Ellen Temple interviewing Mrs. Ossie Thompson, September 8, 1978. Brenda Russell was also present.

Ellen Temple (hereafter ET): You said you were born here. Would you tell us a little of what Diboll was like when you were a child?

Mrs. Ossie Thompson (hereafter OT): Well, I was born here and I lived here until I was eight years old.

ET: When were you born?

OT: October 19, 1900. I was the oldest child of four. I had a brother and two sisters. We were born to Minnie Arrington and Issac M. Green. He was from Alabama. We lived in Alabama for a year and the panic came and we panicked back to Diboll. They went into the furniture business and all that I remember of that is some beautiful furniture that I still have, the dresser. There was a great big dresser that I dressed before from the time I was eight until I married. After my mother's death, it is in my cherished home now.

ET: What was in Diboll then back in the early 1900's?

OT: The big thing that I remember mostly was the church and a lot of the people. It was small, but the church was the center of activities in this town. That is the way it was through the years until Diboll began to grow, about, oh, I would say until the forties when they began to bring in new people and the older people began to die, the old settlers. Then we began to have other churches. We just had one store, called the commissary in the beginning. Finally, Mr. and Mrs. Hollaway put in a store up from Diboll that was a big hassle. When I came back here from college one summer, she asked me if I would like to work. Half of the time she was chasing off down to the Diboll office with a sack full of checks. That was paper money. They were not supposed to cash them. She could buy things with them. She bought feed. She was always on a high horse about those checks. She would wag that great big bag, you know. People like to trade with her. The

things would be marked one price. To those of us who tried to help wait on customers, they would say, "No, we will wait and let Mrs. Holloway wait on us." We always knew why, because she always knocked down on the price. She never would sell it for what it was marked. Therefore, we felt a little bit insignificant because it wasn't much we could do. She thought nothing of asking a woman to pick up a sack of feed and put it on a truck. She was a cousin of my mother's. My father knew that when she asked me to work, but I needed the money. I was still going to college and it was between semesters. He said, "Well, I would rather you didn't work there. The first time she asks you to pick up a sack of feed to put on a wagon, you tell her that I said you couldn't do that. She may want to send you home." I told her and she said, "Well, I should have known that is the way Ike Green would feel." I never lifted anything heavy, and I never lifted anything for anybody's wagon, and I worked there six weeks, I believe. I had to go back to college.

ET: Did you go to school here in Diboll?

OT: I started in Alabama. My birthday being the 19th of October and you had to be seven then on or before the first day of September, I was not eligible to enter the public schools. School started the last week of September, and I lacked just a week of being eight years old when I started to school in Alabama. We came back here and went here one year in school. Miss Asenath Massingill, who is Mrs. Barclay now and who is in the nursing home, was my teacher in the second grade. She is still living. I have a beautiful letter that she wrote me not too long ago. When she moved in a little house, I bought some things for her to go into her home here. She is a real Christian woman. I can remember that I had some of the lessons when we lived in Birmingham. I had a little more advantage. She would have me standing in the back of the room singing some of the little songs and saying some poetry that I learned in Birmingham school. I went to school here and later taught here. We moved to Huntsville. I entered the fourth grade in Huntsville. I came back here after the World War I, and I taught here two years. I taught in Bryan first in 1919. I taught here in 1920-21 and 1921-22 and I married that summer. I married after the end of two years. I married in 1922.

ET: Can you tell us about your courtship and marriage to Clyde Thompson?

OT: Yes. It was quite different. The morals were quite different here among the young people. A lot of them, on Sundays, would meet the train and watch the train go through. I never wanted to do that, but I had one sister that would have like to have done that, but my father would not allow that. There was not anything the first week that I was home but a picnic. I went to the picnic and I met Clyde there. I had already met him in a way, because I would go to the post office. By the time I would pass the office, Clyde was right by my side. In those days, he was jerking up his pants every minute, fixing his pants. He was very flirtified. I wasn't used to that kind of thing. I was used to college boys. Anyway, I went to this picnic. We had chaperones and we sat around and talked. After a while they wanted to play. Eck Prudhomme was there. I don't know if you knew Eck. He was manager of Pineland at one time. He lives in Austin now. Eck is a real good friend of ours. Bernice Hines was there and Eck – there was quite a few young men, and Clyde. We lived in the country at that time, and right now it is a part of Diboll. I told

Mama that I just would not come home that night. I did not want to walk through the woods. I knew that some boy would want to bring me home, and I didn't want to walk through the woods with a boy. I stayed at my uncle's house. He was Moore Arrington, and he was a druggist in Southern Pine's drug store. This aunt said, "I know who will bring you home. It will be Clyde Thompson." And I said, "Well, that is not the one that I want to bring me home." At this picnic they had a bonfire and they began to play games. One of the games they played was "Going out West." Of course, I had played "Going out West" in our living room in Huntsville with a mixed group. I had played "Fruit Basket Turn Over."

ET: What kind of game was "Going out West"?

OT: Well, you would say, "What are you going to carry with you?" Everybody would tell something they would carry, then they would say "What are you going to do with it?" And I learned for the first time that it was not safe to play every game in a mixed group. I got a little bit embarrassed and got up and left the group and walked out to the bonfire because that is the way I had been taught – you just didn't make an issue of things, but you just didn't participate. While I was out there, one of the boys came out. I thought the reason he came out there was that he didn't like the way the game was going – the things they were going to carry with them and what they were going to do. Clyde did take me home. He carried me to my aunt's as I didn't go home. I spent the night at my aunt's, Mr. and Mrs. Moore Arrington.

ET: You said you dated him every night for two years. What did you do on dates?

OT: Just sit. There wasn't anything to do. They had the theatre. I dated him when I was home about a month, and I went back to school. I wrote to him all that year and then I came home. I came home for Christmas. I came home the next year, and I didn't take a place at the school in Bryan. I wanted to come home. You had to have a year's experience before they would take you here. About the first week I was here, before I had time to make application, I was asked by the president of the board, Mr. E. C. Durham, and Mr. Will Agee, if I would take a place here. So I became the second grade teacher under Mr. Gaines and Mr. H. B. Stegall, principal and superintendent of this school. All during those two years that I was teaching here I was dating every night unless Clyde would go to the lodge or something like that. Many times we would have a date and he would send a note down as there were no telephones. He would be a little bit late because the telephone wires were down, and he was going to have to run the lines to see what the matter was. They called him a stenographer then. Mr. Walker was the superintendent then and a good friend of Clyde's. We dated every night. There were not many boys here. The only couple left when I started teaching here were Gloyce and Bernice Hines. They married at the end of the first year I was here and that left Clyde and me by ourselves. All we had to do for entertainment in those years before I married was to go to the airdome picture show. That didn't last long because they sold it and later made it into a restaurant, I think. Anyway, there was no entertainment like a picture show for a year. But we would walk up and down the railroad track, but I got tired of that. We would just go to Sunday school, church, and prayer meeting on Wednesday nights. We would come home and sit

and talk. But I remember to touch a card in my background was just like touching your hand out to the Devil, saying "Come get me." When I went on that first party or picnic out at the lake, I got there late because my mother had broken her leg and she was ill. When I walked up, they were sitting in their groups playing cards, "Old Maid" or something like that, very mild. But to me it was not mild because I was taught that even touching cards or looking at them was sinful. My grandmother was awfully strict. I never played basketball. I loved to play ball. We had a little tennis ball and would play at school. The teachers just could not understand why I would not play basketball. But the reason was that I would have to wear bloomers. My grandmother didn't believe in bloomers. I never had a pair in my while life. I didn't play basketball and I didn't tell them why. I did not resent it because I thought what she thought and wanted was just right and good.

ET: Would she let you go swimming?

OT: Oh no! I never had on a bathing suit until after I was married and I was embarrassed to death. I found me a dark place to get in and they all filled in there and that was at Sylvan Beach. Everybody was around there and I thought they would go on after a while and I could get out. I would like to tell this though, I had a bathing suit. Clyde wasn't too proficient about swimming. He could swim, but I couldn't. He could not swim enough that you felt that he could save you if something happened to you. He hadn't had opportunities because there were no swimming pools. He started working here when he was sixteen, so he didn't participate in those things too much. But anyway, we had on our bathing suits and we were in the water early. He had bought some water wings and he had two pair. He had those with him, and we were sitting on the steps that went down into the water at Sylvan Beach. The waves were shallow at first. We were sitting there talking, and Clyde took a pair of the water wings and tied one of them on his big toe. And here came a great big wave and Clyde was gone. All I saw was a water wing with a toe hanging on to it. I reached out and Clyde caught hold of the water wings and pulled him over to the steps. I saved his life. Many years after that I told him that I wished I had not reached out and pulled him in.

ET: Where was Sylvan Beach?

OT: That was the big playground at Houston, out from Houston. That is where we spent our honeymoon. They had little cottages. That is all disbanded now, but they do have a Sylvan Beach again. We went by there one time when they first opened it. Sylvan Beach was a big thing in those days.

ET: Can you tell us about your wedding, your actual wedding?

OT: I believe it was Mr. Farrington's niece that had married in this Methodist Church. Not many people had church weddings in those days. But all my life I had planned to marry in the church because my mother and father had married in the Burke Church. So that was a big event in Diboll. We married on the 25th of June, 1922. Since then we had our Golden Anniversary celebration at Fair Acres. It was a big day in our lives. I think we

had six boys and six girls in addition to my brother who gave me away instead of my father. He didn't want to participate. It wasn't that he had any objections, but he just didn't want to participate. My sister was maid of honor. Lucille Weise and Dot O'Hara were the flower girls. A little cousin of mine was ring bearer. Quite a few of them have passed on since then. It was a very pretty wedding. Our minister wanted us to know the service by heart. He said so many got excited. So Clyde and I sat down for a week or two saying that ceremony between us and memorizing all of that, you know.

There were no highways. They were just building the highway between here and Livingston. We rented a Jitney, a Ford, from my uncle and we used that on our honeymoon. We left after the service, about three hours after, and went as far as Livingston. It took us all day to get from Livingston to Houston. All day – we had to go ride a ferry and it was hot. I had bought a beautiful suit and coat. That was my going away dress. And I wore it. Hot. So we got into Sylvan Beach that night about one or two o'clock. We had sent our luggage on. You had to furnish your own sheets and linens. It had not gotten there. So we went to bed on the mattress with nothing on it. We were gone a month, I believe.

I often think about communication. Young people today go and they are in the middle of doing something all the time. They have to be entertained. But after they marry, they are just as stable, maybe more than we were. They make good wives and they make good husbands. We had plenty of time to tell everything we knew and everything we thought. I am not sure if you don't start from scratch just like everybody else. It is up to the individual to make adjustments and if you have had ideals and things, you hang on to them and you fight for them.

We came back and school had been going on two weeks here, some boy did something wrong and the principal of the elementary school started down the aisle to reprimand him and he jumped out the window. Mr. Davis jumped out the window after him and broke his leg. In those days when you had a broken leg, you went to bed and you stayed at home. For seven months I was elected principal of the elementary school. That took care of the furniture bills. I made twenty-five dollars more than Clyde was making at that time. So when I would get my paycheck, I would walk over and pay on the furniture. In fact, that whole year, I didn't spend one penny on my wardrobe except a pair of silk hose, \$3.50 to go to a wedding.

I do want to go back to the cards. One Wednesday afternoon Clyde sent me a note and we had new family that had moved here. They were older than us, and had one child, just a young child. He sent me a note saying that they were having a party that night at such and such a time. But he told them that he knew I would not miss prayer meeting, that we would have to come after prayer meeting. (That was just like in Huntsville after we moved back here and I stayed on and went to high school. One morning it was just pouring down rain and the water was just pouring down that saw Houston Hill. I was getting ready to go to Sunday school. My roommate never went to church or Sunday school. She said "Ossie, you are not going out in this weather, are you?" I remember to this day how shocked I was that she thought that because it was raining that you just

stayed at home and you didn't go to church or Sunday school. I said, "Yes, I am going, I always go.") We went to prayer meeting and then we went on to the party. We walked in and they were playing poker. That was my second introduction to a deck of cards. They were so engrossed in that game they hardly knew when we came in. I sat down against the wall. I don't remember if Clyde sat down with me or what. I can't remember. I had to get my bearings. As I was sitting against the wall, I was seeing one of the best poker players. I was looking over his shoulder. After a while I got so enthused over the game that I got over there and got me a chair, with a lot of persuasion from him. I got over there pretty close to him. I was just playing. I never touched a card before in my life. But I was just winning. It was so fascinating. The next night when Clyde came down he brought a deck of cards with him. We didn't possess a card table in our home. I was president of the young people's organization in our church. It was just about time to make a report. We were sitting on the floor playing "Old Maid" – no, we were not playing "Old Maid" we were playing "Poker." We had some matches, I remember. We had a gate with an old fashioned lock on it and I heard the gate when he opened it. I said "Oh, my goodness, Clyde, that is the preacher. He told me he was coming by here to get my report." Well, we grabbed those cards and we began sticking them under the rug, hiding them. That all happened within a few months that we were to be married. We were sitting there and there were two cards sticking out from under the rug. I couldn't think of what to talk about or anything. When he left, I went over and picked up the cards and gave them to Clyde and told him to never bring them down there again. Anything that is wrong for a preacher to see is wrong for us to do. I never want to see another card. When we were on our honeymoon Clyde had some cards in the bag, but he never took them out. We never touched them. I can think of a lot of things. I am not sorry, I am proud of the way I was reared. I realize that I missed a lot of good times by not doing things that the others were doing and I still wouldn't be doing anything wrong, I don't think. It wouldn't be doing anything wrong to have played poker with the matches.

Later after I was married and Donald was born, there were not even bridge games in Diboll. One was being organized. I was invited to come down that day that it was organized. But I explained that I didn't believe in that. It was right for other people, but it wasn't for me. I was too tied up with my children, my home, and the activities at the church, and I just didn't have time. Therefore I really never in all my life learned just how to play. I have always been a part of presenting studies in our church and teaching. I taught those two years before I married and I was supposed to have taught the next year. We went down and bought our furniture and I was going to help pay for the furniture. But they had a rule that a married woman could not teach. They told Clyde about it. Clyde told me about it while we were on our honeymoon. Well, there was all that furniture we had bought. So I went to Fuller Springs. Mr. Creager said he had made application for Fuller Springs, they told him they had given the school to Mrs. Clyde Thompson; I said I never heard of Fuller Springs and I never heard of the school. He said "They said one of the best principals they had ever had recommended you, Mr. Ellis." I said, "Well, I don't know anything about it, but they have given it to me, I want it." I said, "How would I get out there?" He said that I would have to have a car. I said, "Well, let me talk to Clyde when he comes home for lunch." When Clyde came home for lunch we talked about it. In the meantime, Mr. Creager said "You let me know, I sell cars and I would be glad to take

you out there and let you see it.” So the next morning, he came and got me. He came in an “Overland.” He was working for Mr. Sam Kerr, selling cars. So we went out. I went out in the fields to find the members of the board of education. I talked to the board and they said “Well, we have already hired you.” This was a oneteacher school and I had seven grades, I don’t remember exactly how many children I had. I had first grade through seventh grade. I learned that the girls in the seventh grade had never been taught to make an outline. I taught them how to make outlines. It was a very happy year. I drove from Diboll. They had no highways. They were building a highway from here to Lufkin. I would have to stop the car for them to throw gravel over the tar so I wouldn’t bog down in that on my new Redbird Overland. There were not very many women who drove cars in those days. I had more tales told about how fast I was driving, and you couldn’t go more than twenty five miles an hour or you would hit a stump. You could come to a big stump in the road. They told more tales. In fact, one time there was a traveling man in the office and he was talking to Mr. Walker. He told Mr. Walker, “Well, who is this little school teacher from Diboll who runs up and down this road in a Redbird Overland? If you don’t get out of her way, she will just knock you out of the way.” My grandmother had a big laugh about it. That is what happened. Finally, when I would get to Fuller Springs and leave the highway, they had this kind of sand that you bogged down in. In those days you had to put chains on your car. We bought some chains. I learned to put the chains on and get out of the sand. But I had something else to learn. When wintertime came I bogged down in that same sand, but now it was mud. I bogged down and could not get out. But the men got to where they would be waiting for me at this place with their shovels. I would get out and help them by breaking off some pine branches. I think all the pines in that neighborhood were all broken off by the time that school year was out.

Finally, for my birthday, Clyde bought me a dog. I took my dog to school with me. I gave him his first bath in the lavatory in the bathroom. He was a beautiful thing from the kennels in West Virginia. It has slipped my mind the kind of dog it was. He would go to school with me and the children all loved him. He would sit out on the porch. But when it got cold, there was a windo pane out, and I was just teaching away and he stuck his nose in the window and began to howl. So we brought him in. But I will have to tell you this – I got so interested one day teaching these girls how to make an outline that I forgot all about time. We were just working away. The children were just precious children, they were good children. You know country children never learned to say, “I don’t want to.” It was a pleasant year all the year round. But all of a sudden, I was aware that it was getting dark. I said, “We better get our things put away, I think it is fixing to rain.” And they didn’t say a word. They knew it was not fixing to rain. They knew it was late. We hurried out. I always waited until the children got out of sight. I always did that even in my days of being principal of Houston. I waited until every child was gone away before I left. When I left, I met the parents coming to see what had happened. I didn’t realize that it was as late as it was. I was not a clock-watcher. The parents said, “Oh, my goodness, Miss Ossie, what in the world has happened?” But then I realized what it was all about and we had a big joke about it. It was a wonderful experience. But at the end of that year, the ban on married teachers was done away with and I went back to Diboll and taught there. At the end of that one year, I became ill. The doctor wanted me to rest. I didn’t

teach school that year. I thought I was going to have a good time resting. I had made arrangements to buy me a beautiful horse and a riding habit. Dr. Dale heard it. He came down and he said, "Ossie, do you think you can ride a horse?" I said, "Well, I can learn." He said, "I don't know what you think you are doing." He said, "You can't teach school because you must rest. You just get rid of the horse and the riding habit and you just get you a good warm spot in the bed." That was the end of my horse riding and before the year was over, I was looking for my first baby.

In the meantime, Mr. Walker had wanted- the Nelsons to come back to Diboll. Houses here were so scarce, they just didn't have anyplace for Mr. Nelson to move to. They had been here before; they had moved away and he wanted them to come back. Clyde came in at noon one day and said Mr. Walker called him in and said that he wanted Fred Nelson to come back but they didn't have a house for him. Mr. Walker said, "I just got to thinking that with his family he needs a big house." There were three children, Mrs. Nelson's mother and a grandchild. Mr. Walker said, "Miss Ossie doesn't need that big house and teaching school, too. I see her out there on weekends mopping and she doesn't need to work like that. I just thought if you all would let the Nelson's have the house, I will build you a bathroom on the bedroom across the hall. That is all she needs for a while. I don't want to put any pressure on you, but I will say this – if you let him have it and Miss Ossie is not satisfied and she wants a house and if there is no house available, I will build you one. I will build it across the track from where you are in that vacant spot." We had bought several pieces of mahogany furniture. Nothing here was paved, not even the oiled hard surface that they did do later. You could stick your hand outside the window and get you a handful of sand. We kept everything in the house closed up, but on the weekend everything in the place had to be cleaned. Of course, a woman would not be caught dead in a pair of pants of any kind, but Clyde had a pair of overalls that were too little for him. I put them on, but I didn't get out of the house. The floors had splinters in them. They were varnished a real dark color and the mop would get hung up on them. When Clyde told me what Mr. Walker said, I said, "Well, I am ready to do it." Mr. Nelson said that if we would let him have the house, he would pay us exactly what we had paid for our furniture. The next day we took all our personal things, dishes, etc, and moved across the hall in this one room. A bath was added and a big walk-in closet, for that length of time we stayed there. But then when I was expecting a baby, I wanted a house.

In the meantime though there was not a house available and Mrs. Farrington's place was vacant. She had been talking that she would like to have us and we would be happy to be with her. In those days no matter how happy you were in anticipating your baby, you didn't talk about it. We didn't tell people about it. You just kept it to yourself. They had to observe and find out.

ET: Did you have special maternity clothes?

OT: Yes. That was the year that I took the leave. I guess that it was in May that the move was made. This was when I was expecting the baby and we moved in with Mrs. Farrington. I went down and told Mrs. Farrington. I was always close to Mrs. Farrington;

she was kind of like a mother. I asked her not to tell anyone, but the first time she heard anyone saying that I was expecting a baby that I wanted to know it. Alice Dale was expecting her baby. Dickie was born three weeks before Donald. I did the cooking. We had a woman come in once a week and clean the whole house just like she did for Mrs. Farrington. I don't know how to sew, but I embroider and I was fixing things for the baby. When he was born in July, I wanted a house.

ET: Who helped with the birth, Mrs. Farrington? Or did you have a doctor?

OT: No, Mrs. Farrington didn't help. Dr. Dale was here.

ET: Did he come to the Farrington house?

OT: Yes. Now Alice started to have her baby at home, but they decided she had to go to the hospital. Mrs. Farrington went up with Alice to the hospital. I always had a strong constitution and could stand anything I had to. There was never any talk about going to the hospital. I can't remember at that time anybody going to the hospital. I said anybody who had their baby at home was fortunate. When Alice was up there, her baby was way down in the nursery. Dr. Dale had to be here so much of the time and she could hear her baby crying and she couldn't do anything about it. I had his bed pulled up to mine and I saw the first little move. He was born with hair, but not a whole lot of hair. He was born on Wednesday night and the first Sunday that he was born, he was really dressed up. Mama parted his hair and he looked so cute all dressed up in the little dress I had made for him.

I had sent to the state for a little booklet called "What Every Woman Should Know" and I had studied it, but I was not prepared for colic. Babies had colic then, but mine was not supposed to have colic. Mrs. Farrington came in one day and I was just frantic. "Well," she said, "How is everything going?" I said, "Mrs. Farrington, do you know where that book is?" "It is over there in the trash basket. I don't want to ever hear of that book, I don't want to ever see it." Everybody gave their babies "Deweese" but I was not going to buy any "Deweese." I wound up buying bottle after bottle. That is what they gave babies then.

ET: What was it?

OT: Oh, I don't know. It might have had a little narcotic in it.

ET: When did you start feeding the baby baby food?

OT: I nursed my baby.

ET: You didn't have to feed him any pablum?

OT: No, they didn't have pablum in those days. Mama said that Donald didn't have colic, that he was hungry. My sister said that I never got it out of my head, that my children were perfect. If they cried or anything, they were hungry or they were sick. I said

that was the truth because they were good children, good boys and good men. I think I started feeding Donald at three months old. Mrs. Ashford came out one day and said, "Ossie, Louis started out that way, and I just mashed up a little banana and gave him and that was the end of it." Everybody that I would mention that to said, "Don't you dare do that." I said if I had followed Mrs. Ashford's suggestion, I would have saved myself a lot of misery. There was no baby food in those years. At three months, I cooked some oatmeal, put it through a sieve, fed it to him and he just gobbled it up. I did that every morning. It got to where when he would hear me hitting the side of that cup, he would "coo." Then I bought Campbell's vegetable soup, mashed it up and strained it.

ET: What year was he born?

OT: 1926. Donald could talk before he could really walk. My sister said, "You talk to him all the time; you don't even know you are talking?" I said, "Oh yes, I do."

ET: Did you ever leave him with a babysitter?

OT: Never. Oh, well, Mama lived just a house between us and when I went to Lufkin to shop, she went with me and took care of the baby. I bought milk from mama every night. She had a cow that had wonderful milk. Papa was there and Grandpa was living with mama then, so we would go down to get the milk. As he learned to walk, Mama would put him up on her machine and he would dance around. All little boys wore aprons then. He knew all the nursery rhymes.

On Sunday mornings you usually cooked your meal before you went to church. There were no cans to open or you couldn't send out and get chicken. Much of the time I was substituting for Mr. Strauss in the Bible class. That meant that I had to have that Bible class prepared because he was a wonderful teacher, he knew the Bible. Then I worked up all the programs for the church. Of course, Mama was a big help. I would take the children to her. He has hepatitis now. And he said I sure could have used my Grandmamma when I first got sick. I wrote to him that, "You don't remember, you wouldn't even let your grandmamma pull the grass burrs out of your feet."

But it wasn't difficult. There wasn't too much to do. People didn't visit much. We saw each other at the store, post office or church. I kept our yard and even had a little garden in the corner of the yard. Donald had a little portable bathtub and I took that outside and put him in the shade while I worked in the garden. But I always enjoyed everything. I loved keeping house, I loved teaching school, I loved rearing my children. This year we are in the middle of re-doing the house we bought four years ago. It was built for Mr. and Mrs. Walker when she was a bride and he was superintendent of Southern Pine Lumber Company.

ET: About when was it built?

OT: I don't know. People are guessing and Clyde said about 1905 or 06. I think it was the year Mrs. Walker married because it was built for her. In Diboll we had never heard

of a breakfast room. We had never heard of a morning room. One day I was teaching here and Mary Wall, a home girl, and I were walking home to lunch. Everything was serious about Mrs. Walker. We thought she had everything under the sun. My goodness, when we moved into the house there was not a single clothes closet. In the kitchen, there was a little tiny pantry and one cabinet on each side of the sink. People used to not have closets. They had wardrobes. I didn't want a new home. I wanted this one, it was sentimental to me. We moved here in 1938. The children were little and they loved it. We did some building upstairs. My parents and my brother and sister had gone; people who were dear to me had gone on. When I get inside, I don't realize it. This year, I said the Lord had been awfully good to me. I started on the yard. I had a pretty yard one time, but I was in Houston for a good many years as a teacher for four years and for about thirty years I was a principal of elementary school. I came home every holiday and worked in the yard.

END OF INTERVIEW