

NANNIE BREAZEALE

Interview 150A

July 25, 1999

Clara Breazeale, Interviewer

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ABSTRACT: In this interview with Clara Breazeale, Nanny Breazeale reminisces about life in Alcedo, a Southern Pine Lumber Company logging camp. She remembers the boxcar houses, the outhouses, church, school, commissary, Dr. Evans, and Mrs. Bonner's boarding house.

Clara Breazeale (hereafter CB): Today is Sunday July 25, 1999. I'm Clara Breazeale and I will be interviewing Mrs. Nannie Breazeale about her early years at Alceda Camp. Mrs. Breazeale will you please state your birth date?

Nannie Breazeale (hereafter NB): My birthday is August 28, 1916.

CB: Ok. And your father and mother's name please.

NB: My fathers name was William M. Stanaland. My mothers name was Katie Smith Stanaland.

CB: Do you remember what year your family moved to Alceda Camp or somewhere around the time that they moved there?

NB: In '25.

CB: Ok. And do you remember where your family moved from before coming to Alceda camp?

NB: We moved from Kent County, Jayden Texas, Kent County, to Diboll and then to Alceda Camp.

CB: Just in your words could you tell us what you remember about the early years in the camp and just go back and reminisce back...to the time you came there as a little girl through the years?

NB: When we first moved to Alceda camp we lived in a boarding house. A Mrs. Bonner run the boarding house. They had just built the boarding house and there was no tenants in the boarding house at all because no one without families had come in and gone to work there. So they let us live in the boarding house and use as many rooms of it as...we usually used about 4 or 5 rooms because there was such a big family of us. And we lived there until the men that didn't have families started coming in and going to work there. They have to have the rooms for the men. And then we moved into the boxcars that was

set up on the siding there for people to live in. We used 2 boxcars. And we slept in one and we eat and everything in the other.

CB: Ok. Do you remember what the racial make-up was back in those days?

NB: There was uh....I would say there was a dozen or more families of colored people there but the rest of them were white. I mean there weren't any Hispanics or anything that I can remember there. Of course I didn't know there was such a thing as a Hispanic at that time. (laughing) But there were no Hispanics there at all.

CB: Just the white...

NB: Just the white and the colored families.

CB: Ok. Where did the children go to school, or did they attend school there at the camp?

NB: Yes they had a schoolhouse. I would say it was about a 30x40. I think that is what I told you awhile ago. But we all went to school in the same house. Had the same teacher and everything and she taught all the classes for each grade. Of course there weren't but a few of each one. And she taught us all, a Mrs. Russell I believe, Wood Russell taught there one or two years. But she is the only one I can remember the name of.

CB: Uh huh. What about church? Do you remember anything about church there?

NB: We didn't...there wasn't a church house there. When we had church we had it in the schoolhouse. And that was only when a preacher came through to hold a revival or something. We would have church in the schoolhouse. And if it was too cold to have it outside or if we had it outside they built a arbor if it was warm enough. But we usually had it in the church because it was usually wintertime when they came through.

CB: What was your father's occupation there at the camp?

NB: He was a log cutter. He cut logs with a crosscut saw at that time. Why that was the only saws they had. There was nothing like a chain saw at that time. They cut them with a cross cut saw. Each one had to have a partner of course. That is the way they cut the logs at that time.

CB: And the hours? Do you remember anything about the hours that was spent in a days work? Was it daylight to dark thirty? Or basically do you remember anything about that?

NB: He would leave before daylight every morning. And most of the time it was after dark, after the children were already in bed before he would get home. So some days, why, some weeks maybe we would see him two or three times if he happened to get in a little bit early or something. Otherwise why, he was in the woods working most of the time.

CB: Do you remember about the size of the camp back then? About how many people approximately made up the camp?

NB: Well at that time I would say to begin with between 150 to 200 people maybe at that time. Of course I never counted them and I didn't know for sure. But at that time it seemed to be about maybe 150 to 200 between that.

CB: Do you remember some of the names of the families that lived there at that time?

NB: Yes uh, Bennie Brown and his wife. Jeb Brown and his wife. Arthur Breazeale and his wife Hazel. And Seth Parker and his family and Mrs. Sean Bishop's family lived there. And the paymaster was...his last name was Campbell. I don't remember his first name but it was Campbell because I went there to pick up the check a lot of the times for my father. And then it was Stovall run the commissary at that time. And the doctor there's name...his name was, last name was Evans. I never knew his first name 'cause we always just called him Dr. Evans. And we was all sick with Malaria and such as that 'cause so many mosquito's and things. And we had quite a bit of illness on account of that. And then...did I get Hazel and Arthur Breazeale? I think I did.

CB: Uh huh, I think you did.

NB: Then there was a Taylor, Bill Taylor and his wife lived there for a few years. And of course there were families moving in and out all the time. And we lived in the boxcar for 2 or 3 years until they built some little houses. One of them was...they were about...two kinda large rooms, they weren't large maybe they were 12x12 or something like that. And then there was little shed rooms built on the back which the children used for a bedrooms.

CB: The doctor's office it was...the location of it, was it inside the commissary at that time or...?

NB: No it was to the right of the commissary. It was a passenger car 'cause he was one of the high society ones you know. (Laughing) It was a passenger car and used one end of the car for the doctor's office and the other end was the pharmacy. He sold candy and stuff in there too. But it was in there that he had the pharmacy. And on the left side there was a little icehouse, maybe in...I'd say about 6x6 icehouse on the left side of the commissary.

CB: And this is where everybody was able to purchase their ice then to use there at the camp, right?

NB: Yes that's where they purchased their ice if they were able. (laughing) We purchased it once in a while on the Fourth of July to cool a case of Nehi soda water for our celebration. And once in a while we would have a watermelon to put in if people had some that raised some around there.

CB: So ice was really a luxury in those days.

NB: It sure was. I mean it was a luxury.

CB: And how did you all get your food? Did people come through there selling vegetables and things that you had to eat or how did you go about getting your food there?

NB: Well just the staple foods we got at the commissary. But the fresh foods came from little places around the camp there that raised such as corn and peas and watermelons and sugar cane and things like that. We bought that from them. And sometimes they would deliver them down to the camp in a buggy and sometimes we would go out to the places where they raised them and got 'em ourselves. And fresh eggs too. You could go out there and buy fresh eggs from those people outside the camp.

CB: So youwhat year do you...can you remember what year that you actually, your family moved from the camp?

NB: Well I was...let's see...I was 13 years old when we moved from there and I was about 8 when we moved there. So that would make it...

CB: Anywhere from '30 to '31 possibly...

NB: Possibly then.

CB: ...when your family actually left Alceda camp. Do you have any other stories or maybe funny things that happened there that you would like to share with us?

NB: (laughing) I have one that is very funny I think. We didn't have inside plumbing of course. And we lived on a knoll, the train by the tracks where we lived was kinda up on a knoll and they built our outhouses down below there on a slanting place. And one of our neighbors which was quite heavy went one morning to the outhouse and the outhouse turned over with her. So she had to call for help (laughing) to get out, get her out and some of the people that lived around her heard her hollering and we went out and helped her straighten up the outhouse so she could get out.

CB: So her voice of distress was heard and she was rescued.

(unintelligible, man speaking in background)

CB: Is there anything else that you can possibly remember that we haven't gone over that you might could just think of that you would like to get in the interview?

NB: Well when we moved from Alceda camp, my mother had just about taken all of it she could. So she got her kids and what little groceries she could carry and we walked from Alceda camp to Diboll, nine miles with all those little kids while Papa was in the woods working. And she wouldn't come back to Alceda camp so he had to come to

Diboll and start to work. And he found a house in Diboll and moved our stuff back to Diboll and he went to work for Southern Pine and different jobs that he did there before he went to the box factory where he worked 'til he died, was at the box factory that Southern Pine had built.

CB: So your life as a child up has always been connected with the logging profession and onto the old box factory, the first box factory that was built. And up until you married and through the years you've always been associated some way with the Southern Pine and the Temples.

NB: Absolutely. My husband was a logger for all the years that we've have been married. And now my two sons have taken over the business and they are loggers. And have been loggers ever since they got out of school. So we pretty well been in Southern Pine most of our lives.

END OF INTERVIEW