

11615

audited

Buxton Project: 424-2104
 Narrator's Name: Charles Taylor
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 Interviewer's Name: Elmer Schwieder & Joseph Hraba (?)

- Q. So do you remember when you came to Buxton?
- A. Ah, I don't exactly remember when I came to Buxton cause I was too young. Do you remember where we came from. Where my folks came from.
- Q. Alright, where did they come from?
- A. Mobley, Missouri.
- Q. Mobely, Missouri.
- A. Uh huh.
- Q. Now, was he a miner, before he came to Buxton, your dad?
- A. Yes, he was.
- Q. Where did he mine before?
- A. Oh he mined around Huntsville, I'm sure. Huntsville.
- Q. Huntsville, Alabama?
- A. No, Huntsville, Missouri.
- Q. Huntsville, Missouri.
- A. And he came from there to Hawkeye, which would be three miles from Knoxville.
- Q. He came to the Hawkeye mine first?
- A. Ramsey Coal Company.
- Q. Ramsey Coal.
- A. Then he worked there. Then we moved to Buxton, ^{oh} ~~to~~ it must have been. We lived in Buxton before. But went to Knoxville about two years, then came back to Buxton. And I must have been, ah, five or six years old. I went to school at Fifth Street School. Fifth Street School was just _____ school there. Lot of people I knew went to Buxton High School, too. And we, ah. So I finished school through the eight grade. But after you were fourteen years old, they let you work in the mines in the summer, and you'd have to go to school when the school started.
- Q. *At fourteen you could work in the summer?
- A. Yeah. You'd go with your dad. You worked with your dad on the roof. ^m So we done that.

family

school

mining

1616

Q. Did you load a car of your own, or did you load a car for your dad then, at 14?

A. Oh, I'd have a, I would load up his car.

Q. His load.

A. His ~~load~~ (Can't understand). But I loaded with him until I was 16. When I was 16 I started the mines, permanent.

Q. Permanent?

mining A. Then we had two turns. We had two turns. And it was checked off. We had ^{two} those checks. *My part was mine & his was his*

Q. Do you remember your dad, was it better mining conditions in Buxton than it was in Missouri?

A. Oh, Buxton had the best mining conditions in the country at that time. Because Buxton had a big union. In this state, it was the biggest coal mine. When I worked there, I started at 18, at 18 it was the biggest coal mine, I think there was one mine in the United States bigger than Buxton. I think that was in _____, I think.

Q. This was Consolidated Coal Company, mine #18, then?

A. Ah, yes. Consolidated Coal Company, mine #18. See the mines weren't in Buxton.

Q. Yeah. How far out of Buxton was mine #18?

A. Eighteen was 22 miles.

Q. And you still lived in Buxton and then you took a coal train?

A. Miner's train, coaches, everything, we rode out there. We got on the miner's train every morning and come back every evening.

Q. What time did you have to be on the miner's train every morning?

A. Oh, we would get on the miner's train around, if I can recall correctly, we'd be on the miner's train by 6:00, 'tween 6 and 6:30. Cause it was pulling two trains. It was pulling the one for 19, too you see. Eighteen was the biggest mine. We had 14 coaches, I think. And I think 19 had 6 or 7.

Q. So it was a 20 coach train that pulled you out at 6:00 in the morning?

A. A 20 coach train.

Q. Now, was that an 8 hour day, or, and then they?

A. It was a 8 hour day. The union was going in use. It was a 8 hour.

Q. So, for a train to make 42 miles, about an hour. You got in the mine about 7, or 8?

A. We had some speedy engines, rolling out. (Laughs)

Q. He moved?

A. Yeah, when they got out around Maple Block and Rex 4 and Rex 5, they were really moving.

1617

Q. Did they drop anybody off at Rex 4 and Rex 5?

A. No.

Q. They both were camps?

A. Them were camps. Coal camps, too.

Q. So they'd have company housing right there? So when they took you out to 18 or 19, they picked you up at Buxton?

A. Yeah. We went through Rex 4 and Rex 5, and Maple Block, Just the train went through those towns. We didn't stop. They had they own mines.

Q. Was 18 the farthest coal train that they ran from Buxton itself? Were there any mines farther away than 18 or 19 or is that the longest?

A. That was the longest. That was the furthest mine. Course the railroad picked up the coal from all the rest of the small mines. But ours was big. See we couldn't start to work. We would have to have, at least 35 flats at 18 to start.

Q. Thirty five flat cars?

A. Flat cars. The big flat coal cars, to haul it in. But you also had ^{a camp} ~~to carry~~ for 18 and 19. See, people lived out there, too. We'd have a small coal. I was working in the mines then. They hoist more coal during World War I than any _____ in the United States, 18.

Q. Is that right?

A. That's right. Eighteen hoist more coal.

Q. Now you mentioned, we're finding out some things that. This is why oral history is.

A. I was there. I'll tell you what I know.

Q. But you see, we don't read this. This is why, now I suspicioned that they came out. About how many, if you took a look at the miners that were living at 18, and the number coming in by coach from Buxton, would it be half and half or do you think most of the miners were trucked in?

A. Oh, most of them miners came from Buxton. By far, came from Buxton.

Q. Now if you started off and you lived in Buxton, and they opened Rex 1 or Rex 4 or 5, then they kept going out, as they opened a more distant mine

A. But Buxton ^{didn't own} ~~lived longer than~~ these mines. Rex 4 and 5 and Maple Block. They didn't own these. They were small.

Q. Oh, they were somebody else's mines.

A. Yeah. Them were smaller mines. We just went through the towns. We just went through there. They had mines like they have up here in the upper district. We were in the lower district, see. _____. Them were the first ones I worked in, didn't look like nothing. Maybe the biggest mines up here was #4 at Madrid, which I worked in #4, too. That was the one #4 at Madrid. It wasn't

16/8

A. nothing like Buxton. You see, we had two main lines, motors running. Our motors pulled around a hundred 2-ton cars into the mines. We had two cages? all the time to take the coal up.

Q. *How many men were working at its peak?

mine
A. I'd say 18 must have had pretty close to 2,000 men. We were, _____ underground, when we got in, when we got ~~out~~ down, we'd all get in these cars _____. The way a mine runs, this would be a cage coming down here. This would be the bottom. We'd come down from the top, down here. There'd be cars all around just like a railroad yard down there _____ railroad.

Q. *In sort of a circle?

A. Oh yeah. When the coal, we'd get down here, these would be entries, east, west, north, _____ coal was coming. They called this the bottom. These would be cars where they made up their trains. They made them up you see. They'd make up a hundred ~~tons~~ ^{cars} back in there _____ Mule drivers. Then they'd make _____ come up here and bring it in to the bottom. The _____ in to the bottom, he'd come up here and kick the switch and drop the cars in toward the cage this way.

Q. That was all electrified down there?

motor men loader
A. This was all men but it was electric motor ^{big Jefferson} You had to be a hell of a to do this. All your motormen and mule drivers were Blacks. See they came up there to work with the young #4, old those were too slow they couldn't. Didn't have no coordination. They'd get killed in Buxton. They did, cause some people got killed in Buxton. One of my best friends got killed on the bottom you see. But when you drop these cars in here on the bottom, that steel sprang, that sprang _____. I remember Eddie Bell slipped and fell down between the cars. He was coupling He slipped and fell and when he fell trick _____ that was Eddie Bell. So this was operation of the mine, I operated. I was coal digger during the day _____ the rooms, 44 foot square.

Q. They _____ didn't they?

A. Oh yeah. You had rooms, this is your entry, they drive the entry. Alright now, your rooms were on this side and that side of the entry. My dad was an entry driver. He drove entry, I done the loading He done the cutting. Then I started driving mules, ^{kind of working} especially during the day. He never figured you got tired. He'd tell you when to stop. But he would though, cause he was driving entries, driving entries, he got so much a foot for driving entries you see. He got lower for the coal that he got out of the entry than the diggers got cause they was cutting and _____ see. See you got a certain pick in the mine go into that wall. You'd cut just with a pick. Buxton had 6, 7 and 8 foot coal.

Q. They did have that big ^{Scam} scene?

A. Buxton did, 18 did, 19.

Q. 8 foot's a pretty good coal ^{Scam} scene.

A. Yeah, we had some 6 and 8 foot coal down there at 18 and 19 and it was clean too. You'd start cutting with a pick pick. He could cut like a gopher in the He'd cut oh 4 or 5 or 6 of them solid everyday, see cut them right down the

1619

mining

A. middle and he'd drill a hole, like his cut was here. His cut's here, this would be his cut and go back here and drill a hole. I would do the drilling he just _____. I'd drill 10 or 12 foot hole. _____ in this place and crawling out right in the center of this cut see. The next hole would be on this side. It would be about 4 or 5 foot and this cut _____ too and knock this block out and this other one here You had to know how to shoot

Q. *Now you started working in the mines when you were 14 in the summertimes?

A. That's right.

Q. *How long did you work in the mines?

A. I worked in the mines until 16 or 17. Not in Buxton. I come up, I was at Mavrick 4 or 5 years. When Buxton shut down, I wanted City life so I went to Omaha liked to starved to death, went to Chicago and liked to starved to death. I went to Salt Lake City, Cheyenne, hoboing. Hoboing around. Then I came back when my dad ~~leaved~~ moved

Q. *How old were you when Buxton shut down?

A. Huh

Q. *How old were you when Buxton shut down?

A. Me, I must have been 18. I left about a year before they moved Buxton out to Haydah, the houses.

Q. *About 1926 thereabouts?

A. I left around 24.

Q. *24?

A. Uh huh. I left around 24.

Q. *How old were you then?

A. Let's see, about 1906.

Q. About 27 or 28?

A. Uh huh something like that. But I was working over at the mine in _____ then. When I come back from Omaha I was downtown here in Des MOines and I met Cornie out there. That's the guy run Cornie.

Q. ~~Cornie~~ *Cornie* Coal Camp.

A. I met Cornie. Of course Cornie _____ a little town _____ called _____. And I was talking to him down there. He said ~~big mine~~ big mine. They had #3 running and #4 _____ drivers _____. Wanted to know if I can get him some. I told him yeah I can get you some and so well he said I'd like to have them work in #3 shoot #4. I had some drivers at least 4 or 5 drivers _____
that *mighty good*

A. You know. When I got back I got him some good drivers. I got Billy _____ Georgie Jones, Eddie Carter and myself. _____ These guys were switching threes, fours. When they switch fours they would raise _____. That's some good coal mines out there _____ shoot a lot of coal. And they had Carl _____ Saffold and Bill Pierce. We know they were coal diggers Jack Daban. We went in the first day and looked the mines over and looked at the rooms and talked to the diggers _____. Bill Dine was underground superintendent. Johnny White was the mule boss. So Johnny says well one of you fellows can switch a day. How many of you think you can switch a day _____. That's the only kind of mules they got out here. We were driving them big Kentucky, the big old Kentucky mule, big brown mouth Kentucky mules. They'd pull two of them 2-ton cars right off see. We looked the mules over. They had a bunch of jack rabbits _____. So we looked to the mules, what kind of mules. _____ Jim Pearson. He's the best driver in the state for the company. So he told us about the mules, break our own mule. Get them and put them down there. And we'd break our own mules. So they did. Jim Pearson, he started out _____ Them guys switching 45 to 50 sometimes. They didn't have no runs at all. They were driving along with a mule walking. Look like to me, the mule was so slow till a old man could drive him _____. So we went in and started to driving and we started to switching 70, 85, 100 _____. All they could load you know, they guy that's _____ load 6, 7, 8 cars a day. Some of them was haul 10. So that's why we got up at Mavrick. It was pure lily white mines you know _____. And that's how we got in there. And then finally the Italians made up with the Swedes. They got along all right. Couldn't drive no mule noway. A matter of fact they couldnt dig no coal. But see that's all these people knew in Buxton see and they were experts at it.

Q. WERE really good miners?

A. Oh yes.

Q. How many more from Buxton ended up in _____ and all that?

A. How many more?

Q. Yeah. Were there a lot of Buxton miners that ended up?

A. Oh we had quite a few miners that wind up in a zookeeper, quite a few at Moran, quite a few at Dallas coal mine. What was down in here, these mines, I don't know. There was quite a few of them in here I know because I saw them out there. But they were _____ you couldn't _____. Had poor drivers, poor timber, entries were bad and all that stuff. See our entries, we had timber _____ Get the entries drove in you see. The bottom was all concrete you know _____. But wouldn't no way entry _____ motor jump track and knock the timbers out. See that timber, the entries crossed timbered it see about 2 or 3 foot cross you know, corss timber _____. Course if you walked out from the other side you'd have to come down there cause you couldn't walk on the main line. you had to come out over there. Had a fan push and pull

Q. Did the coal actually peter out at Buxton, is that what happened?

A. No.

Q. There's still coal there, it's still there?

1621

Dubin

A. Oh yeah. The biggest thing in Buxton I think was the strike. I wasn't there. They way I got it, they left coal sitting on the bottom at 19 and 20. I never saw 20. I saw 19.

Q. Now was that 1919 or mine number 20?

mine
in Buxton

A. Mine number 19 and mine number 20. But the closest mine to Buxton was #10. It was moved out before I was born see. My brother was born in Buxton in 1908. He got drowned there in the lake there _____ Buxton. It was a lake downtown. _____ say anything about that. Did you ever say anything about the miner's train or how we got to work. They talked as though all the mines were right in Buxton _____ Well they were out from town you see. Number 10 was, well where they showed me about #10, it was the closest mine to Buxton. But they had some little mines down on the other side of Coopertown. They had Eland and Cricket, them were little biddy mines which Ben Buxton had _____

Q. But the mines really didn't peter out cause the coal ran out?

A. No, there's a lot of coal down there.

Q. A lot of coal down there yea?

A. Oh yeah.

Q. They didn't flood or didn't get gasey or anything?

A. There was no gas in there. We all get by with black damp and white damp.

Q. You get black lung?

A. Black damp, and white damp. That's, back in the old works before they worked it out and run it up you know. They worked the mines out _____ it comes out of there if the gas system was, we never got into, you'd have to go back in there to run engines.

Q. Run engines?

A. But your air system, we had a terrific air system. We got trapped in 18 jump the track or cave a entry. The entry and the air course, oh it must have been an entry to mine. I forgot how long we were in there. Of course I didn't care _____. And they start pushing air in there and when they got through it was ice sickles hanging down. Wee in the winter was getting air you know. Didn't know whether it was getting air. Every morning was freezing back there. It was pushing that air there. The older men were working, the kids was not

Q. Now when you say they jumped the track, then your mule and electric thing came along and knocked all the props down?

A. No, the motor itself knocked them down, that big motor knocked them down. See it jumped the track, went down the rear where the timber was and knocked the timber off. _____ driving motor see. He was jumping He was pulling anywhere from 45 to 50 2-ton trucks It was probably 45 or 50, 55 miles an hour.

1622

Q. Down in the hole?

A. Main line motor run ^{that fast all} long time. Pull the man in that way. Then your lights were lit when you left the bottom going inside, it'd be out when you got back there. Cause he'd really truck in there.

Q. If you lifted your head up you got a cross timber and got it knocked off?

A. The timber it was plenty high in Buxton. You could walk in Buxton. We didn't have to stoop over. But our entries stoop over and dig coal. I just up here

Q. The four seams ~~scenes~~ up here?

A. Huh?

Q. The four foot scenes up here?

A. Oh yeah, 2½ foot and 3 foot. It turns out big but you have to work in such a cramp out here, this district up here. I worked in #4 and #3. That's a pretty good rooms. That's some four foot coal. I dug coal up there. Make more money up there digging coal than you would driving you see because shortly after they got some good drivers in I took _____ after they got some good drivers in _____ and drill my own too.

Q. *How long were you in coal mining?

A. I was in coal mining 12 or 13 years.

Q. *What did you do after you left the mines?

A. I went to general motors school.

Q. *Where at?

A. Huh?

Q. *Where at?

A. Started at Faremount, Minnesota and finished up in Lansing, Michigan. We started up there. It was hard to get money then and quite a few could afford it but the people I was working for they sent me to school. I had a family then, 2 kids and they paid my wages while I was going and I graduated in body shop I come back to Perry. You know Da., my wife's home and I was in the body shop 31 years after that. I was a shot fireman for 21 years. I went to school with Jim Anderson. You know Hamilton Body

Q. Out here on 6th Street?

A. Yeah. _____

Q. You remember the body business when they used lead?

A. I remember the body business.

Q. _____ when you did the whole thing?

A. I remember. I haven't been out of the body business too long. After I got out of the body business that's when I started to working for the city here which I retired from there. I was in the body business for 31 years. I remember all the big, when I first started the body business we had built automobiles then. Them automobiles were built, crash bars on top of all, then when they started to molding them big wedges over the top of your head and nothing in between you and them but that darn head, I don't see why. Now when I first started body business back then they made automobiles out of #8 steel. I was working at 14 _____ got steel casket _____ going out there. I wouldn't want to turn over in one of them things. Them ain't nothing but wrecks and I do mean wrecks and I know automobiles. When they started putting their own big tops, I could cut a top or install a new one quicker than anybody in the state _____. I put in over 2,000 of them big wedge hills back on a truck and never broke a one of them in my life. winch

Q. How did you _____ that?

A. _____ See when I was a shop foreman and I told a guy to do something you see, he couldn't _____ with me cause I could do it myself see. I'd show him it could be done. I didn't tell somebody to do something if I couldn't do it myself. You see I wouldn't tell anybody. If I told him that the wreck could be fixed you see, I could fix it. _____ cause I was there all the time, if he got in trouble I was there to get him out of it.

Q. Do you remember coal mining as a good experience or a bad one?

A. It was a good experience to me. My dad was a good coal miner. My dad always had nice good jobs. The entry driver _____ had things and always made a lot of money. It was a thing. It was a good life and when them people started Mutchakinok see. That's where Buxton first started. It was another big camp around Oskaloosa and the average guy working in the mine, my dad and all of them they didn't have much more than a second or third grade education. Most of them had no education.

Q. *Where was your father from?

A. Missouri.

Q. *Missouri? He came from Missouri?

A. Yep. My dad fight in Span. Am. War

Q. *Was he born in Missouri, born and raised in Missouri?

A. Yeah.

Q. *Where about in Missouri?

A. He was born in Hickby, Missouri.

Q. *Hickby?

A. Right. My mother was born in Mobley, Missouri.

Q. *I know where Mobley is.

A. Huh?

- Q. *I know where Mobley is.
- A. You don't know where Hickby?
- Q. No, I don't know where that is.
- A. Hickby, Mobley, Huntsville, _____ and all them right down there together.
- Q. *That was coal country too wasn't it?
- A. Oh yeah. Huntsville, see Huntsville was the county seat.
- Q. *What brought him up to Buxton or Mutchakinok first?
- A. He didn't come to Mutchakinok he come to Buxton.
- Q. *What brought him up?
- A. Trying to get some work. Trying to get you know where they could make a decent living. See it was just farm hands down there. That's why they didn't have too much education. _____ myself. See Lakon treat blacks no conditions whatsoever you know. See they was under slavery 200 years there and they turn them aloose. See blacks built this country. They killed all the rattlesnakes and cut down the trees and made the roads for nothing, in slavery. That's why it's so unfair to blacks. Like bringing these Japanese and Chinese in here. The jobs that they'll take be for the blacks _____ the whites. Black unemployment now is about 44%. White unemployment is only 7%. See you're up against things like that you see.
- Q. *Did you dad have ties to people in Buxton who told him about come up to work in Buxton? Was he married at that time?
- A. Yeah he was married.
- Q. *He was married?
- A. Yeah.
- Q. *How did he hear about jobs in Buxton, do you know?
- A. Buxton ain't too far from Missouri. _____ Iowa you see. He was coming to Iowa. After he got out of the Spanish/American, he was in the Spanish/American War in 1901. He was in there 1901, he served 2 years, 2 years and 9 months. Then when he got out in 1903, married my mother and right shortly after he married then they come on to Iowa. A lot of Blacks were coming to Iowa you know, down on the coal gang Wouldn't too many in Des Moines. Des Moines never had many blacks as Buxton.
- Q. But he didn't have any relatives in Buxton, he came up?
- A. Oh yes.
- Q. Oh he had a lot of them?
- A. He had aunts and uncles.
- Q. They were there ahead of him?

1625

A. Oh yeah.

Q. Have a picnic and he hear about better conditions in Iowa and so up they came?

A. Oh yeah, uh huh.

Q. Was he a union miner?

A. Oh yeah, Buxton was a union.

Q. But it wasn't in Missouri where he was mining before?

A. I wasn't down there no. Very few mines in Iowa was union_____.

Q. *Your dad went to Buxton in 1901?

A. No, my dad went to Buxton, it had to be 1903. He was in the Philippine Islands in 1901.

Q. *How long did he stay in Buxton?

A. Until it went out. He stayed right with it.

Q. Stayed right with it.

A. I didn't but he did. But my dad didn't have as much education as I had and a lot of things. See that's what hurt Buxton. If they had had enough education to where they could, went out and tried to get some kind of industry to come in there, cause they had enough farms, small farms there that the blacks actually owned you see.

Q. Some farmed huh?

A. Oh yeah. Well the richest man down there was a black man, Hope Armstrong. He married a white woman but he. His sons which were good friends of mine, Charlie Armstrong had the market in Buxton. Toughey was at 18. Emory stated out on the farm most of the time and young Hope he left there. Him and his dad couldn't get along too good. And I think he's the only one living now. I know the rest of them lead because my wife was there during the duration, naturally took all mechanics right away you see right after the war broke up for the duration. Which I bought a taxin. Charlie Armstrong's wife was from Rock Is. Charlie come up and stayed with me a couple of days while they went _____. The bank over there that was Hope Armstrong's daughter, Lottie Baxter. She married Johnny Baxter, a white guy. The post master was black, everybody was black. See when the old store burn down.

Q. This is not the company store, this is a private store?

A. No, this is the company store,

Q. Oh the company store?

A. Yeah, but they had all black run everything.

Q. *Charlie Armstrong ran the company store?

A. Charlie Armstrong run all meat markets. See the company didn't run the meat markets.

Armstrong

RR

1626

Q. *He ran the meat markets?

A. Yeah.

Q. *He supplied the meat from his own farms?

A. Not necessarily, he couldn't. He ran wholesale houses. He couldn't do that. But Charlie and Hope must have had 6 or 700 acres out there. You take Hope had a huge farm and the Tates had a huge farm, the Stovalls. Let's see how many people out, the Richardsons, the Stovalls. They had farms 20- acres acres out there all around Buxton, all around over the _____. And the Gaines, Ruben Gaines he had a huge farm, which Ruben's yet living down there. Of course you know that _____. Ruben's got to be 91 or 92 years old cause I _____. But they had a town _____. That was Gainestown. Which A Street was the main Street in Buxton on the map A Street was the main street of Buxton and it run through Buxton clean down the main street in Gainestown and by Coopertown, which was an all black town too.

Q. Now when you say the map is crazy, which map are you talking about?

A. That big one that they showed us out there cause they got 1st Street and got the store on 1st Street. The store wouldn't on First Street. All the businesses downtown was on A Street.

Q. A Street?

A. Yeah.

Q. Was the Y on A Street?

A. The Y was sitting across the street from the store on A Street, right behind. The little Y was on 1st Street. The girl's YWCA was on 1st Street. Then the big store burn down and they built a new store. They built it just like this mall out there. Everything was under one roof.

Q. That's the company store?

A. That was the company store. _____ In the colored towns they had their own stores, you know like Gainestown and Coopertown, Wells Hill. All them had their own stores. But the company had the big store. They built a big new store, which housed the post office, clothing store, grocery store, bank. Just like the malls they make today, just like the malls they have. That was a fabulous store, the new store.

Q. *What else was on A Street? They Y was across the street from the company store.

A. The hotel. They had a hotel in there and then they had the big company store, Armstrong Meat Market which was housed in there too and the old post office was on 1st Street, which they made a small hotel out of. Then you went on down into Coopertown. They had their drugstores and grocery stores and everything.

Q. *Where did your folks live, which street?

A. Which street? We lived on 2 streets. We lived on 2nd Street but when I when I was small. But I was raised on 6th Street.

Q. *In one of the company houses?

1627

A. Oh yeah, everything was company houses in Buxton.

Q. *It was a 2 bedroom house?

A. 3 bedroom house.

Q. 3 bedroom house. How big was the family, how many?

A. Oh it was

Q. Father, mother, how many kids?

A. 5 kids. I got one brother got drowned when he was 13 years old cause this lake it run across from 1st Street out to about 10th Street, the lake did.

Q. *Did you have a garden in the summer?

A. Oh yeah we had a garden.

Q. You had brothers and sisters, with the 5.

A. Huh?

Q. You say you lost a brother, what were the other 3? Did you have sisters or other brothers?

A. I had one brother and three sisters.

Q. Did he mine at all?

A. Oh no. He wouldn't work the mines anyway. He used to work down at the store and the ice cream parlor. See they had this lake. They called it the Buxton pond. The name of it was a Lake. That was where they made ice, you know that big ice house for ice all summer. They used to have some fancy skaters down there too, you know could really skate. Skate in the winter and swim in there in the summertime. Of course they had a pool too. They had a pool in Buxton.

Q. *Can you remember some of the cooking that your mother did when you were a boy?

A. I know how to do all the cooking my mother cooked. My mother taught boys, girls and everybody to cook we were treated just alike

Q. *Can you tell us a little bit about that, the affair that you would have at home?

A. In what way do you mean?

Q. *What were some of the dishes that you commonly had?

A. Oh we had soul food, _____

Q. What do you mean, what are some of the foods you're talking about?

1628

- Journal*
- A. Oh I'm talking about dandelion greens, mustard greens, green beans and you know things like that, bar-b-que, country fried chicken. Not too much on the southern fried chicken. Of course Iowa people don't know nothing about southern fried chicken cause they never had none. Southern fried chicken is always smothered with gravy you know with bell peppers and things. That's the way southern

Side two

A. _____

Q. *How about fishing, do any fishing?

A. Did a lot of fishing
lot smoke fish _____.

Q. *Were the lakes down there any good for fishing?

A. You darn right it was good It was full all the time.

Q. *What were special dishes at home? By special I mean like on holidays or special events?

A. On holidays we had everything. We'd have turkeys and geese and ducks and stuff like that. We raised turkeys I hate chicken and turkey too. Ate it all my life. I'd make fried chicken and eat it say once a month but if I was cooking, I'd never cook it. That damn turkey, what I think of a turkey ain't nothing. We had so damn many turkeys. My dad raised all them and we had to eat them wasn't

Q. *Sounds like you had meat each day?

A. We did, had all we wanted. There were no hard times in Buxton that I know of. Some people couldn't manage and didn't have. Course we got paid by the day but as I say I think they done a wonderful job with no more education. no market for itQ. Now, you made an interesting comment. You went to school? You ~~got~~ had a good education.

A. I went to school.

Q. So it was really the first generation that came from someplace else and then by the time they got to Buxton, they had schooling that was available.

A. That's when they got to go to school after they got to Buxton.

Q. *Did you go to high school there in Buxton?

A. No, I didn't go to high school. I went to work after I got 16. When I got out of grade school, I went to work.

Q. Was your dad in any of the lodges or fraternal organizations?

A. ~~In~~ all of them.

Q. *What were some of them, can you remember?

A. He was in the Knights of Pythias. He was in the Masonics I know. that was*School**Some
but*

Sox
cut
knuckles

Q. *Did he spend a lot of time at that? Did he enjoy himself?

A. Oh yeah that's all they could do. You know a lot of times. They really enjoyed their selves you know we had pretty good ball club, two of them.

Q. Two ball clubs?

A. Oh yeah, the White Socks and Buxton Wonders.

Q. Now, what's the other one?

A. White Socks.

Q. White Socks?

A. Uh huh.

Q. *We never heard of the White Socks.

Never heard about the White Socks. Everybody brags about the Buxton Wonders.

A. Well the Buxton Wonders was a big team but I've seen a lot of traveling teams come in and they played and they played, the Buxton Wonders was there and they played, they'd be the White Socks. I've seen the Buxton Wonders just like the Kansas Warriors playing three times the same day. _____ no way. I've seen the White Socks when they was playing over there at Albia. The Wonders was in Perry. As I said, the White Socks played in Albia. Albia couldn't beat them no way.

Q. Send the Wonders out to the better games?

A. Oh yeah, they'd send maybe one or two of the crack pitchers with the White Socks. They'd have maybe one and sometimes two of the Buxton Wonders' pitchers.

Q. *The White Socks was a Buxton team though?

A. Yeah, Buxton White Socks, sure.

Q. Were they mainly black players?

A. ^{Jim} Sure they were black. That's where their Wonders would come from. That was their foreign team. That was an understudy, the White Socks. Go from there to the Wonders. They had a pack of pitchers. Jim mascots were the Buxton Wonders. They had Sug Shelton pitcher. They had Cleve Drif pitcher. Sunny (Harkin) Carter, Ben Mayes, Skets. He was top pitcher, Skets and they had a whole lot of them. They had three or four guys that couldn't pitch considered top Buxton carried 7 or 8 pitchers all the time. You know they had _____. pitchers

Q. You ever remember them getting beat?

A. No..

Q. I've never talked to anybody that did either. The Wonders won every game they were ever in.

A. I've seen them play the Home State Barades. I've seen them play the Kansas City Monarchs, New York Black Yanks, Chicago Union Gaints, Minneapolis Gophers, Green Tollins

1630

them
loseBilly
Rodin

baseball

A. I was mascot for about two years there and I've never seen. The great them lose Billy Rodin they talk about from Chicago, a great black pitcher and John Donaldson for the Kansas City Monarchs and Bradford for Birmingham Black Bears. They never beat in them days. Nobody beat in them days. _____ put on the mound _____ Didn't nobody beat in them days. That was nobody. No pitcher could fan Charlie King. Charlie King could _____ anybody. Ran about 6 of them _____. And the home run man was they then. I'd say Zebo Lewis got more home runs than Babe Ruth. didn't keep records

Q. Is that right?

A. Long ones too. Zebo Lewis _____. They had a lot of blacks in the white leagues. This league here in Des Moines, we played them every year, right down here on 6th Avenue and that was a shut out. When we left home, that was it. Shut them out _____. One time they pulled _____ down there and they put in Skets then, had to put Skets in in the 7th ending I think it was _____. Then they brought Skets in. It was 7th ending, the next 6 men up were 1, 2, 3, strike outs. That's just what he done to them, strike outs.

Q. *You were a mascot for a while with the Buxton Wonders?

A. Uh huh.

Q. *What else did you do for fun as a boy?

A. In Buxton?

Q. *Uh huh.

A. Oh they YMCA, let's see I was

Q. *What did you do down at YMCA?

See out

A. I sang in my Glee Club for the YMCA. We had a big Glee Club. We sang all over. Around in small towns like Albia and Oskaloosa and like that. I sang in the Glee Club and I enjoyed myself in the big gym. I enjoyed myself in the pool room. They got big pool rooms for starting 12 years old up to 18 and then you could go to the men's pool hall you see. Then we had our Tuesday night Bible class. I was in that. I belonged to that. If you knew the Bible, which I do you know, children in Buxton when they got 18 years old they could tell you anything you wanted to know about the Bible, 9. And we had our Sunday School and church. who was who there

Q. *What church did you go to?

A. First Baptist.

Q. *First Baptist.

A. First Baptist on 6th Street, right up side the 5th Street School. I lived about a block and a half from 6th Street.

Q. *Your whole family go to church?

A. Oh yeah, I should say so. My folks went to church and that was unchanged on,

church

- A. catholic for 40 years. I was head usher of the cathedral _____ Knights of Columbus
- Q. *How did that happen?
- A. You get smarter. You get smarter you see. You don't know nothing but what your folks were you know back then. Back then they were all baptists and methodists and holiness and stuff like that. As I say I had a pretty good learning in the Bible and I think I got a better understanding you know. _____ average person **about** the Bible. You see the Bible is so misinterpreted, screwed up you know. Very few people believe in the Bible. _____ Americans talk about being religious but they're not. Americans are not religious.
- Q. *You remember the other churches there in Buxton?
- A. Oh yeah, I knew them all.
- Q. *Well what are they?
- A. Oh they had Second Methodist Church there, the Methodist Church, the Holiness Church and all kinds of churches _____.
- Q. Were they mixed churches or did you have black congregations and white congregations?
- A. Oh we had, white would come in. First Baptist Church was all white. That was a big church. They had pastor, assistant pastor, secretary, big choir you know _____.
- Q. We heard that there was Swedetown and where they stayed. They had their own church too.
- A. Two Swedetowns, East Swedetown and West Swedetown. West Swedetown was down by the stockyard. East Swedetown was up on the hill, right up from. Well let's see. You go down the Cinder Road and there's a big hill up there. The Swedes, it was mixed though. It was a lot of blacks up there. You know that Swedetown. It was none down by the stockyards. It was two Swedetowns, East and West Swedetowns.
- Q. *There was a stockyards in Buxton?
- A. Sure there was a stockyards. That's where them Swedes lived, down by the stockyards.
- Q. *I didn't know that.
- A. Well it was a stockyard in Buxton.
- Q. That must have been a pretty good size town then?
- A. It was.
- Q. How big you think it might have been?
- A. I'd say Buxton probably run between 8 to 9 thousand. Buxton and it's wings and everything could have been 14,000. See you had Wells Hills on one side. You had White City. You had Tates Corner. You had Gainestown. You had Coopertown and White City was all the houses was all black out there.
- Q. In White City it was all black?

church

shop

- A. The houses were all white. You come in from Lavilla on that road you come into Sharpe End and Coopertown. You hit White City first and then Sharpe End and Buxton. See that was about 14th St.
- Q. We've heard that Sharpe End and Coopertown was a pretty tough part of town.
- A. It was. It wasn't too much fights in Buxton. It was in Coopertown and Sharpe End where you find your sporting and your gambling houses and stuff like that, not in Buxton.
- Q. You remember anybody, that part of the time was prohibition, did anybody have their own still?
- A. Oh Lord yeah. Emmett Bell was the biggest runner in the state.
- Q. Who is that?
- A. Emmett Bell. He was in with the sheriff of Albia. It didn't make no difference, it was all in together. And they made a lot of home brew. They made good beer, not like this they got today. They made good beer. But see like Dago Red.
- Q. You say a few Italians. Were they mostly Swedes?
- A. Swedes.
- Q. Mostly Swedes, some Italians. You don't remember any English or Danes or very few?
*How about Polish, Were there any Polish?
- A. Maybe a few, Cedar Rapids. They got along good though.
- Q. That's what we hear.
- A. Oh they got along.
- Q. You mentioned once, earlier that you thought that maybe the mine broke down when they had a great big strike. Were there a lot of strikes?
- A. Well back in then it was quite a few strikes you see. If they had a strike in Iowa the coal miners would strike until they get Buxton _____. They had it made see.
- Q. Did they bring in a lot of scavengers, strike breakers?
- A. Not in Buxton. The only ^{bes} scavenger I know is they pulled them in is up there at Dugden and they brought them in on flat cars and 30/30 windchesters. I remember that. But a lot of mines in Fraizer up there, a lot of blacks there too at that time at Fraizer. Boone.
- Q. They'd bring them in just for strike breakers?
- A. They brought them in to break the strike yeah.
- Q. That's expecting a lot from them it sounds to me.
- A. Huh?

Albia

RR

- Q. That's expecting an awful lot from them. They probably didn't know that's why they.
- A. Well it was easy to do because in them days the white miners didn't want the blacks in the union no way but that's in the mines that didn't want to work in. But they just come with a bunch of blacks and give them 30/30 windchesters _____. They backed up then. That's how they had black miners in Ogen. Ogen was a big coal mining camp, _____ one time. That's what it was, a damn coal mine.
- Q. They had some pretty bad violence up at Ogen?
- A. Oh yeah, they got a little rough up there. We never had nobody to try to break the strike in Buxton too in Buxton.
many people
- Q. *You said earlier that you thought you got a good education there at the schools in Buxton.
- A. We did get a good education.
- Q. What was school like?
- A. It was great, a lot of fun I thought. You knew everybody, big school.
- Q. *Were the teachers really strick and hard with you?
- A. Damn strick, they'd beat you to death. We've got one living in Des Moines now, one of my old school teachers.
- Q. What's her name?
- A. Mrs. Hart.
- Q. Yeah, we've talked to her.
- A. We had one died in Waterloo about 3 months ago. We all went up to see her, Ms. Potter. Are you kidding. You knew you were in school in Buxton. You said yes ma'am, no ma'am, yes sir, no sir and I'm sorry and all that stuff, do your own work and study when you were in school. Sat there just like a bunch of damn zombies. No whispering, no playing and none of that stuff. Well the biggest thing that they taught was reading, writing and arithmetic and a lot of history, geography, a lot of religion and where you came that's about _____ my grandparents they'd sit down and tell us about how they were treated in slavery.
- Q. *You said your grandparents were there in Buxton or was the teacher talking about your grandparents?
- A. No, my grandparents were there.
- Q. *They talk about slavery times?
- A. Oh my God, yeah.
- Q. *What did they have to say?
- A. Huh?
- Q. *What did they talk about?

A. Just told the truth about it, what happened to them.

Q. *What did they say, give us some details?

A. You wouldn't want to know what they told us about white people?

Q. *I really would.

A. Would you? Okay. Well what slavery was, what the people went through in slavery, and I got it from both sides of my grandparents and my grandmother was half white on both sides black women. She hated him, she looked just like him.

Q. She hated him and looked like him?

A. Oh she had ^{red} great long hair you know and she was white as they were _____ and when she was 12 and 14 years old, no^f before that, she was 8 or 9 years old, she had to work in the house and this woman knew that she was her husband's daughter and she had to work from 6:00 till 10 or 11:00 at night. They had a big dinner, she'd have to work till 10 or 11:00. She'd be there everyday. She said and they raped them all the time. The white men raped them all the time _____ Just come in, just come on in them shacks go into bedroom, couldn't do nothing about it. When they were going to do a lot of raping they send the women in 2 hours early and make the men stay in the fields.

Q. *Your grandparents would sit around and talk about?

A. They'd sit around and tell us about it, so we know. You see they, they didn't know anything else to do and this is where your violence and stuff is at today. They were told that and the kids were taught what slavery was like, and how you couldn't trust them. My grandmother saw her mother and five of her brothers and sisters auctioned off, of course they wouldn't buy ^{any} white. She was half white. Mother had a little her mother aunt mary after she was about 2 years old, sold the _____, they wouldn't buy Aunt Mary. So she had to keep Aunt Mary because she never did see her folks any more _____ somewhere. She said when she took Aunt Mary, this Misses ^{Miss} told her if she ever let her cry in there she was gone come in there and kill her. She said sometimes she'd almost smother Aunt Mary to death to keep her from crying, cause she had to stay at the big house see she had to get up early _____.

Q. *What did your grandparents do in Buxton?

A. Huh?

Q. *What did your grandparents do in Buxton? Did your grandfather mine?

A. Oh no, they were just slaves.

Q. *No in Buxton, when they lived in Buxton?

A. No, when they came there the kids were taking care of. them

Q. *Did they live in one of the company houses too?

1635

my dad them

A. Oh yeah, ~~they had~~ rented a house.

Q. *They lived nearby?

A. Oh yeah.

Q. *Did your folks ever have people in their house to entertain?

A. All the time.

Q. *All the time.

A. Oh yeah.

Q. *Well then tell us about it. What were some of the entertaining they would do? How would they entertain?

A. They'd play cards, a lot of them, they'd have prayer meeting and they'd sing you know and things like that _____.

Q. *Were these white people that they would have in or were they all black people?

A. Mostly all black people.

Q. *Mostly all black people?

A. Around my house. My folks were were prejudice. They played croquette and things like that.

Q. *How about picnics in the summertime?

A. Oh there were some huge picnics. They had all the picnics _____ picnics all the time.

Q. You name it and you had one?

A. Uh huh,

Q. *What days would they have picnics on, like the fourth of July?

A. Oh hell no. Excuse me. You folks hungry, can I get you anything to drink?

Q. No.

A. We didn't celebrate the 4th of July, we celebrated the 4th of August.

Q. *Labor day, did you celebrate Labor Day?

A. Oh not too much.

Q. *Not too much?

A. Christmas, Thanksgiving.

Q. You got paid though when the mine would shut down for Christmas?

A. Oh yes.

you said

1636

Q. But that was more the union doing that?

A. Oh yes. But what we really celebrated was Christmas, the 4th of August. We would not work on the 4th. They shut the mines down on the 4th of August. We celebrated the 4th of July.

Q. Was there any drinking down in the mine?

A. Oh no.

Q. That's pretty dangerous stuff?

A. _____ oh they were well disciplined. Oh they never had to. This was the only job they had. The only one they could get. They could do nothing else but work there you know. See that started right after slavery. Slavery hadn't been over that long. _____ long slavery, too long.

Q. 65.

A. Huh?

Q. 1865 yeah.

A. I was 74 years old. Be 75 11th of March. I saw all my grandparents that were in slavery aunts more kids than. uncles

Q. *Then they would talk about it often?

A. Oh yeah. Well what they were trying, they were trying to warn us about not trusting the white people will do because they did a lot. You had to work for them like my grandmother said and go along with them but don't trust them.

Q. *Don't trust them

A. No. Don't trust them cause they'll stab you in the back. They don't mean what they say.

Q. *What other lessons about life would family talk about to the kids down in Buxton?

A. Mostly family talked about to the kids was religion.

Q. *Religion?

A. Yeah. Colored people were pretty religious, up until this last _____. They're just like white people. They kill and gamble and all that you know. It was rare for anybody to get killed. In Buxton it was awfully rare. Sharpe End was occasionally but them were hustlers and them kind of people there. But just to kill people, colored people wouldn't too much on killing

Q. So you felt pretty safe in Buxton then?

A. Oh it was always safe in Buxton, safe in Buxton. You go out to Sharpe End or Coopertown, right in there, the red light districts you'd get in trouble. They didn't allow kids in the red light district when I was a kid. You had to be 21 years old. You couldn't draw your own check until you were 21. Your parents had to get your checks in Buxton until you were 21 years old. You did not get your check when you was a kid until you were 21 years old in my folks' house.

400

cloud
mine

1637

A. That's what my old man said _____.

Q. How did you feel about the company store? Were they fair or were they unreasonable, did they mistreat you?

A. No, that's one thing in Buxton they treated. Ben Buxton ^e sat that up. He really had the people at heart. I don't know how he sat it up but you can tell he had the people. He wanted them to have the best of everything. He wanted them to have a real good living. He wanted them to live good.

Q. Do you suppose most of them made good money and spent it or did any of them save money?

A. Oh not too many of them did. They wouldn't use to it. See to save money, that's whats wrong with America now see, you first got to teach a kid the value of a dollar before he can. You take the kids today, they have no value of a dollar. That's whats happened to your country now. They have no value of a dollar _____ very few of them you see. They didn't teach the kids to save or anything. Well they were just getting on their feet They were trying to get things that they wanted. They didn't have time to teach kids how to save.

Q. *Did your parents teach you about that?

A. No, I learned myself. I taught my kids. My kids all graduated from college. My son, the state of Iowa, All State Insurance Company right now.

Q. *How many kids did you have?

A. 3.

Q. *3, what do they do now?

A. I got one son dead. My daughter, she works for the city of Chicago. My son is district manager down at Davenport for All State Insurance Company.

Q. *They're all college graduates you say?

A. Oh yeah.

Q. *Education was very important?

A. Oh yeah. See my boy was state champion in the state of Iowa in track and all-state football player _____. See our boys.

Q. *How long ago was that?

A. Huh?

Q. *How long ago was that?

A. In the 60s.

Q. *Where did they go to school, to college?

- A. They **integrated** Missouri, the first blacks in Missouri, Northeast Missouri.
- Q. *Which one is he?
- A. Must be _____. Edward Taylor, James Taylor, _____ Taylor, Johnny Taylor, Eddie Taylor and Charles Taylor.
- Q. They're all Taylor.
- A. Graduated on honor roll over at the college.
- Q. *Did your daughter go to the same school?
- A. No. Missouri never qualified for the Drake Relay. Graduated _____ 62 but he was top athlete when he graduated out in _____.
- Q. Very good.
- A. Oh he got a big office about 26 ~~feet~~ people. He's the only black up there and he's the top man.
- Q. Very good ~~man~~.
- A. _____
- Q. Now is that Charles Taylor, Jr?
- A. That's Charles Taylor, Jr.
- Q. I figured that _____. Were you an athlete?
- A. Not in high school. I could have been. I was a good athlete all through grade school.
- Q. But you went in the mine after grade school and you can't be an athlete and work all day?
- A. I went in the coal mine. Junior got thousands of trophies and metals. Junior was never beat. He was never beat. He was the state champ and 220 hundred _____ and all state football player. The last game he played when they shut the door in Davenport school.
- Q. Is that right?
- A. Yeah _____ was proud ~~power~~ you know. Them _____
- Q. I'll bet.
- A. I used to give my _____. Every _____ state I'd give _____ the blues. Okay, let's see your boys are so sharp, let's see them beat these boys.
- Q. Makes a difference?
- A. Yes it do. Had a lot of fun. I had a lot of fun raising my kids. They were all good. All they were raised in Catholic. They don't know nothing but Catholic.
- Q. I got the feeling that there was quite a few ~~quite~~ in Buxton too, it wasn't a bad?

1639

RR

A. Oh it was. We had no pain. We had everything we wanted, everything we would need. I didn't know anything about segregation until I got here. I didn't know what they were talking about. See when I first come to Des Moines, the only place you could go in the ~~dance~~ ^{bathroom} room would be the ^{union} ~~station~~. This is the prettest damn state in the union, be the Union Station, Rock Island station or _____ and the only job they had was shining shoes and _____, that kind of junk and I didn't feel like doing none of that. So I went to school down there. I didn't want no parts of none of that junk they were doing. I've never had a bad job.

Q. *You were talking earlier about your grandparent's generation and some of the opinions they had about life here in the United States. Did they change at all because of the times in Buxton, because they're living in Buxton? Did their opinions change?

A. No. Not the grandparents.

Q. *Not the grandparents?

A. They'd been treated too bad. Wouldn't no way in the world for them to change. See they didn't associate.

Q. *How about for your kids though and even your folks when the grandparents would talk, apparently from bitterness about the experiences.

A. Yeah, but I didn't teach my kids that. My kids have always been in the Catholic Church which _____. They always went to, Junior went, all of his grade school was in Catholic School. He went one year to Dowling and then he transferred to Tech. So they got pretty well, kept them where they wouldn't get disgusted or _____. We run into, _____ fighters and we'd go in towns you know but we had to fight small towns in Iowa and I've been all over the state. I know _____. He was a prejudice son-of-a-bitch too if you can believe. _____ we were caught. We went to a lot of places, have to give in and get brought out. We'd get in the big cars you know, Boone, Carroll and towns like that you know, well Ames too. I'd have to tell my boys to let this _____ go 3 or 4, 5 rounds Ames. I remember they wanted 6 fighters in Boone and they had that park _____. So they had a bunch of crack boys in the car well shit, my trainers could beat them. We got up there and the first boy went in _____ I said wait a minute _____ let him go all the way I told him. He said what 'am I supposed to do, lose. I told him just that, if you'al _____ they gone give, you gotta knock him out to win. I said don't knock him out. The referee and judges ain't gone give it **you got** to knock that fool out. That's why it's so hard in boxing now. See the black boys know what they got to do at _____. Like my boys. He said them white boys _____ I can beat them white boys I can win cause I got to get a scholarship. _____ beat them noway. Anyway Riley got in there and if you _____ he get mad see. I told him just out box the boy you know. Anyway the boy slipped and punched Riley. When he done that, I was in his corner too. I started howling at him but I was too late. He knocked that son-of-a-bitch cold right away. Well the crowd didn't like that. Send my next man in and I talked to him good. I told him now you let this boy go. Damn he didn't get mad. He accidentally knocked him out. He accidentally knocked him out. You know damn well, you knocked him out when you went in there see. Had Gabby Ooton down there from Omaha fighting Wilber _____. This was no contest whatsoever. _____ the same,

A. Gabby Ooten was just in the paper. Writers were writing but that son-of-a-bitch couldn't fight. Hell I had trainers could beat Gabby. So he fought Wilbur. They made a big speech, you know how great Gabby was and all _____ Wilbur knocked Gabby out in the second round. Them Son-of-a-bitches run us out of there, run us out.

Q. *Where was this?

A. Boone, Iowa.

Q. *Bonne?

A. Boone. Son-of-a-bitch run up plum out of Boone. They run us out of Carroll. They wouldn't let us fight in Des Moines. Them bums down here they newspaper was carrying, I knew every damn one of them. We had a lot of _____ could beat them in my stable. Not beat them, knock them out. See _____ we couldn't get a decision, don't care how bad was it, they wouldn't give us no decision. So when I really want to win, I'd just tell him to get rid of him in the first round, second round and knock him out _____ move in on him and make all.

Q. I'll be darn.

Q. *You talk about these race relations not being so good in the towns other than Buxton. But in Buxton they were pretty good?

A. Oh yeah.

Q. *Why was that, do you have an explanation for that?

A. It was all black.

Q. *It was all black?

A. Yeah, we had some good fighters, some damn good fighters in Buxton but the referees were black and you had to win in Buxton see. See they didn't give you nothing in Buxton.

Q. *But there wasn't any prejudice of the blacks against like the Swedes in Buxton?

A. Against each other?

Q. *Yeah, against each other?

A. Oh no.

Q. *You didn't see that huh?

A. Well they didn't allow it in there. They were all well trained. All kids were raised in Buxton Church _____. But like today.

Q. *What about the surrounding towns? What about a surrounding, were there any bitterness and bad blood between Buxton and some of the other communities around it that were mostly white communities?

A. Only in baseball and stuff like that.

RR

1641

Q. *Would fights occur when the Buxton Wonders?

A. Oh yes, we had some good ones in Albia. We damn near run everybody out of Albia once.

Q. Is that right?

A. We we took our crowd with us up there. Took a crowd with us. They had, Doc Sullivan pitching for Chicago. They were gone beat Buxton _____. Well Doc down here. Well they already had the Grand boys, Yiskies which they were proud of _____. We scotted them and looked them over and they had Doc pitching and they had either 5th or 6th inning, no scores. And they started chatter down there, Charlie King went up, no Cocoamo bat. Cocoamo bat his ball down to first base _____, first base. Next man up, Charlie King. Nobody fans Charlie King unless he wanted them to. Told Charlie to hit. Charlie he blast one _____ so that put a man on second, a man on first. Sent Elic Harvey up. Elic Harvey bunted, catch a good ball you don't know what to do with it see and Cocoamo threatening to come in all the time. They loaded the bases and sent Zebo Lewis in and Zebo Lewis, the first ball he knocked that son-of-a-bitch plum out of the park. See we knew what was gonna happen. He put that ball. Doc come up there, put one of them damn curves on him and he just stepped up on that son-of-a-bitch.

Q. And out of the park?

A. The referee come _____ just stepped up _____. Damn if the didn't try an outside curve on Zebo. Zebo stepped up on it and knocked it damn near to the fire line. And that's when the fucks start, never did finish the game. But they were looking for Doc to put them up one cause he was playing with the Chicago Cubs and them son-of-a-bitches never could play no ball _____.

Q. *But sometimes fights would occur?

RR
A. Fights occurred at that game. We didn't usually, when we were out of town like that, we would get a guarantee you know, try to get one from the officials. Like when I take guys to fight, if they couldn't stop the violence the violence start loose, we wouldn't fight see _____.

Q. That's bad off!

A. Huh?

Q. That's pretty bad off?

A. Oh yeah, uh huh yeah. So like now, like the guys playing football and basketball they know what they gone do. They can't be good as the white boys, they got to be better than they is cause if he was good as the white boys, they ain't gone never get nowhere. They know that. Can't be as good, you got to be better. We were always taught that, you got to be better. That's when I was going to paint body school, I knowed _____, 3 strikes against me when I walked in there. I had to ground. We studied, it wouldn't but 3 of us, 3 blacks.

Q. *Why did you choose paint & body school.

A. That's the only something anybody paid any money for me to go to, didn't have no money to go nowhere else.

Q. *That was about your only alternative then?

A. Well Elmer Eells was a good friend of mine, a white guy. We were really close. They owned a big agency, buick Chevrolet and he sent two guys, sent me. So we sat there and take _____ and when we graduated out of the classes, 450 when we graduated, all three colored.

*Joseph Hrabá