

Buxton Project: 424-2104  
 Narrators Name: Hucey Heart  
 Tape Number: 23B  
 Date of Interview:  
 Place of Interview: *Dr. Carter*  
 Interviewers' Names: Elmer and Dorothy Schwieder

A. He wasn't a doc, he was a lawyer.

Q. \*He was a lawyer. Do you know where either of those two men when they left Buxton?

A. Dr. Carter went to Chicago. Woodman came here. Now whether he died here or not I don't know.

#I don't know. I don't remember.

He came here because he taught Charlie Harvard what he knew about criminal law. He came here. And Dr. London, he came here.

Q. \*Now who is Dr. London.

A. #That's Ms. Field's brother in Waterloo, Valetta Fields. Yes, his mother was, was her name Susie London.

#Yeah, Minnie.

Minnie, she taught school. She was a principal in Buxton. She taught school there.

Q. \*Okay, now was she a black woman?

A. Yeah.

Q. \*Mrs. Minnie B. London and she's the one that wrote

A. #Yes I remember uh huh. That's pretty much like Buxton was to me you know as she wrote it.

Q. \*What she's written about.

A. You had one of the old teachers still living here, Olivia Reed.

#Yes, they interviewed her, Ms. Reed.

Ms. Reed, she was a Heart at that time.

#Ms. Carter just died last year. She was my ABC primer class in first grade. Buxton had everything. They had all the places to go. They had a shop they call it the Blue Goose, that's where they had their

Q. \*What was the Blue Goose? That one we haven't heard of before. That we haven't heard about. What happened at the Blue Goose?

*from people*

- Saloons*
- A. That was the honky tonk where they go to do the shimmy shake out there, the dog walk and all like that. They had that out then.
- Q. \*Now those are dances I presume?
- A. Yeah, dances, slow drag dances and drink and party and things like that. Now Hustler had that, old man Hustler.
- Q. Does that mean what it sounds like, the Hustler, was there some of that out there?
- A. No, that was the name, That was the name but they called it the Blue Goose. It was painted blue. Then they had another place they used to go to on 9th Street they call the Red Onion. It was painted red.
- Q. \*I have heard of, somebody had mentioned the Red Onion before.
- A. See I couldn't get in them kind of places, I was a little young. I had to slip in the back of them.
- proot*
- Q. Hucey we heard that sometimes the ladies of the evening would come out on pay day. That there was in Shapre's End comes up in that memory most of the time. Sharpe End was kind of the rough part of town.
- A. #Did they come from out of town to Buxton?  
Come up there yeah.  
#Uh huh, come into Buxton.  
You know you would come to Des Moines, go to Chicago, Milwaukee and they'd find out if you're from Buxton, you was a big wheel.
- Q. \*Really?
- Cause  
rep of Buxton*
- A. Yes sir, the women just flocked to men from Buxton cause see Buxton, everything they wanted was right there see, these towns you'll have to scuffle and get it. A lot of folks used to come, that's where a lot of the problems come with a lot of the families around there. These men be dating these gals from out of town coming in, a lot of problems would come, a lot of fighting and going on. Yeah they find out you were from Buxton why you were somebody cause Buxton was known as one of the greatest coal camps in the history of the United States at one time.
- Q. But and also could be Hucey because they paid well.
- A. Yeah.
- Q. They knew when you were from Buxton that you had a few bucks, you could have a few bucks in your pocket.
- A. That's right.
- Q. \*Were you aware of that as a young boy growing up and as a young man? Do you think that you were conscious of that, that you were living in some place that was really different and it was really exceptional? Do you think at the time that you understood that?
- A. Yeah, at that time I guess I had a big head like everybody else, I thought that was it you know, just paradise right here on earth.

Q. \*You really did at the time?

A. Oh yeah.

#When we moved to Cedar Rapids I thought you know I didn't say I was from Buxton, I told the teacher I was from Belle Plaine and the kids laughed and my brother told mama and I had to get it changed you know.

Q. \*Why did you say that?

A. Well because Belle Plaine you know had streetcars and lights and things, Buxton didn't have any. I was just a crazy little kid then. But then after I got older it meant so much to me you know, even now it gets bigger and bigger. I thought what a nut I was to say I was from Belle Plaine.

The company had two or three posts down there.

#Oh yeah they had lights there in the meat market too.

They had their own \_\_\_\_\_ back behind they run their own line.

Uh huh, yeah.

I'll tell you something, to me that I thought more of at that time than a kid would at a bicycle was a three cell flashlight. That was something I cherished. You know why? At night you couldn't see your hand before you and that flashlight, I loved it could throw so far away. And when it rained down there, we'd go to dances. Man they went to dances at the church, you know what they do, put they boots on and roll their pants legs up and carry they shoes in a sack under their arm. Get there and they'd park their books and put on their shoes and roll their pants leg down and dance till time, put their boots on and wade back home. But I mean it was fun, we enjoyed it see. That's all we knew and we really enjoyed it.

#When grandma took us to the, even at church at night, she'd take a lantern and turn it down low you know and see in front of her, but she carried a lantern. I guess it must just black.

Q. Did many of the people have horses?

A #Well I guess people that had money, we never had a horse nor a pump in the yard. We never had a pump either. Did you have a pump?

We had a cistern, we could draw water.

#That's what we had. Some people had pumps \_\_\_\_\_

And we put our butter and stuff down there in the bucket, put it down in there about that far from the water and it stay cool.

Q. \*That was your early day refrigerator?

A. Uh huh, and in the wintertime we take a goose and you go out your upstairs window. You put your nails and hang the goose out there.

#Well that's the way they told it was Thanksgiving when they hung the goose out. That's where people put it so the dog wouldn't get it see.

#Yeah but I know now but I just didn't know then.

Q. You just raised a question that I hadn't thought of with anybody. Did you have a lot of pets?

A. They had a lot of dogs and cats yeah. I didn't have no cats but a lot of dogs, crazy about dogs.

*Guinness*  
#We had dogs and gennies.

*Guinness*  
Q. \*Gennies?

*Guinness*  
A. #Yeah but I didn't know they ate ginnies. We probably ate them but they were like watchdogs you know.

*Crime*  
Q. Really.

*Guinness*  
A. #Oh genny.

*Guinness*  
Q. \*A genny hen?

*Guinness*  
A. #Just a genny, they make so much noise when you hit that gate. They wake up everybody.

They sure will.

*live stock food*  
#I thought that's what they were for watchdogs and I didn't know. Course we probably have eaten them along I didn't know.

But I think we had about 10 or 12 chickens, hens. Now in the wintertime they roost in the kitchen on the coal cans. We let them come in the house and they roost on the coal. Open the door and come right in, the daytime they go right on out and go in the hen house. We did, yeah.

Q. \*Would they lay the eggs in the hen house then?

A. Uh huh yeah. When night come we'd open the door and they'd come on and \_\_\_\_\_

Q. \*They knew where they were supposed to go?

A. #Oh yeah, mama had a lot

It was cold back in them days \_\_\_\_\_

#We had a big chicken house. I guess it wasn't no heat out there in the winter-time.

Q. I think we have been here almost 2 hours. I think we're going to out wear our welcome. We've learned a lot of things but we can come back again and eat the

*then getting everything at once*  
A. #You don't have time but I did bring some pictures.

I don't know if I have but I hope I've been helpful.

Q. You have been more than helpful.

A. #I know if anybody knew anything about Buxton, Hucey would.

Yeah I was quite a runner around

Q. \*Yeah, Dorothy Collier, the first day I met her Hucey that the person that I

Q. \*should come and talk to was Hucey Heart because Hucey knew everything,

A. I used to run around down there quite a bit.

#These pictures are probably, you have time for?

Q. Oh sure.

A. #I'd like for you to come and, where I can mark down if I dont have them marked. Then there was a place they call Miami.

Q. \*Who.

A. Miami right out from where this passenger train used to come by and stop in Miami going to 18 and I was working there in the summer months, my uncle'em had this place down here and had about 5 or 6 baskets. I'd meet this train see the passenger train and it had about 3 coaches and I put them on there and the guy would take them and when they come back, they'd give them to me when they come back, and carry the passengers back and forth. If you were out to 19 and 18 you could ride back to Buxton on the passenger train cause it brought the mail and stuff like that through there everyday. I think it got in around 11 something everyday. Then I used to wake up the brakemen, and the engineers was at that little hotel there, I used to wake them up in the morning so they go out on their run.

Q. \*Did you have wash houses in Buxton where you were?

A. Yeah.

Q. \*You did have them?

A. You know you had tubs. You didn't have no running water, not any of that.

#Hucey when you came from the mine, did you dip your bucket right behind the telephone company and bring hot water?

No I never do that I used to heat my water at home. See when I started in the mine, when I started in the mine I was particular, I took a bath at home in the #3 tub.

#Yeah we had this, they did in the kitchen.

But when we went out to Haydah, 19 that year built a shower house and they had showers and you had a big bucket, oh I guess it was about that big around and had a chain on it. You pull it up into the ceiling, put your clothes in there and it hooks on to the ceiling and lock your lock in the chain and when you let that down you take your work clothes and you hang your every day clothes on them hangers and you pull it up in the ceiling.

#When grandma, of course they'd put water on for the boarders, hot water but they stopped in on the you know the telephone

Some folks did yeah.

#And it was a barrel that dripped, I guess the steam and they get a bucket bottom full of hot water. I guess I don't know what that was for. But it was hot water and they kept in on the stove. Maybe it was quick wash you know.

In those days they had a stove, had a big

#Reservoir or something on it.

279

*houses*

A. Yeah and keep that full of water and put one of them great big old tea kittle on the stove see and this #3 tub. My dad had to wash in there and I did too until I got where a shower was.

Q. We heard that the reason that you hung your clothes up was because all the heat would go up and would dry your clothes.

A. That's right.

Q. Remember that, we found that with the lead miners. We went down and

A. #Do you know any of them?

This is Dr. Carter here.

#Yes but I don't know who that lady is.

*mules trained*

You buy the mules, they bought most of them out of Missouri and they have on top and they take them down in the mines. They blindfold them \_\_\_\_\_ go in the cage. They take them down in the mine for a while you can't see and then finally the eyesight come back you. Now when the driver, the driver mule, take him in you got to have somebody to lead him first. \_\_\_\_\_ a car. I've lead mule once or twice. They'd have a little haulter on him and a ring you know and I'd lead him and when he tell him to gee, I'll pull him that way, to the right, tell ha for the left. They do that, maybe take you about a week or 10 days and then you turn around and he'll put rings on him, put a haulter on. You tell him to gee, you pull it to the right. Tell him to go left, you hollow ha and after 2 or 3 weeks you take it off and try him. You jump on him and tell ha and he go to the left.

Q. \*You didn't even need the harness gear and everything?

A. Didn't need anything on him. You go on in there and say for instance you're going down, so you start maybe you got 10 rooms. You coming up to the entry going in so you pull 10, start at 10. When you got 9, take the 9 to the left tell him ha, go on down in there.

Q. \*Now would they need the mules down there year round then?

A. Oh yeah.

Q. \*And they would only bring them out when they would be sick or killed or whatever?

A. If they get killed or sick, they'd bring them on top and they had one mule \_\_\_\_\_ save the company a whole lot of money, name was Johnny. She'd go in some of them low places here. Them low places they had to shoot the bottom up so that they could put the car down in there. But see them low mules go down in there. The low mules go down in there save the company a lot of money cause they was paying you so much a yard for the bottom. When that mule got killed they buried that mule. I mean buried right close to the mine, dug a hole and buried that mule and put a tombstone.

Q. \*Oh really?

A. Yeah, not a tombstone but a market.

Q. \*And this was because he would

A. Cause he was small enough to go down in there.

Q. \*And so they didn't have to brush the bottom as they called it?

A. Right. And this thing, now I'll tell you, Clarence Marshall drove that mule. Now that was a mule was all heart. You start leaning against a car and he start pulling and he'd catch hold a tire with his mouth.

Q. Is that right?

A. Yeah, that mule was all heart. And they thought the world of that mule.

Q. \*Now he'd do what again, I didn't understand?

A. Catch hold of a tire, see a tire your track \_\_\_\_\_ catch hold to that tire with his mouth.

Q. \_\_\_\_\_ with his neck

A. \_\_\_\_\_ that neck go back.

Q. \*Oh to hold himself?

A. Uh huh. And he'd get off and get behind the car him and the man in the room and they had some chalks and they'd be pushing, tell him to get up and he'd pull and they'd keep chalking and \_\_\_\_\_ come up out of there. That's the first mule I ever seen, that mule was all heart. And just as sweet, he could do anything, and run and do anything.

\_\_\_\_\_ you hold that tail to the top up there, get that tail he can't kick you.

#Oh he won't kick you if you got his tail?

Can't.

#Oh he can't.

A mule \_\_\_\_\_ get that tail up in the air.

#Is that what he's doing?

He's just showing you how, see where he got his hand?

#Uh huh.

Put your hand up there and if you can't get that tail a mule won't kick you.

Q. I didn't know that.

A. Yeah, I learned that

Q. \*This guy is riding a chain isn't it, that's what that's called, dragging a chain?

A. All chains were 6 foot and some people I think they wind them up and make them a little shorter, I rode a 5½ foot chain. This is coal \_\_\_\_\_

End