



BUS HYMAN: "I went to de mill to start to work when de World War I was goin' on." (Photo by Charles Inabinet)

Ernest "Bus" Hyman

I come to Lando dere when I was about 13 years old. The whole family got down dere. Dat's where dey moved me at to Lando. Dey was on the farm and dey left de farm dey was on and dey come to Mr. Porter Gaston's to work around for him. We moved to Lando 2 years before de first high water come along. We had to chain the church down. Some of 'em swimmied across the creek and got dese log chains and chained 'em down on it to keep it from floatin' away. And it sho' worked. It worked right down. The church just had been built dere soon before dat. Dere was houses dere too, but dey was settin' up above de church dere. One of de houses dere it was water sweepin' all up unto it. Didn't nothin' wash away but de bridge and de trussel. Dere was about seven houses in de quarters den. Sam was living dere before I did. He's older'n me. I was seventy years old Christmas gone and I'll be 71 Christmas comin'. Uncle Henry Boswell, John Cherry and Miss Mat Neil and some od de Stewards was livin' dere den. Most of dem worked in de mill. Some colored women worked. Dey picked waste on the lower end here as you cross de bridge. Dat's where most of de colored ladies was at picking strings

and stuff out dat cotton. Then dey run dat old cotton over again. De colored men had different jobs. Dey didn't work in some parts. I worked all my days in dat mill. I went to de mill to start to work when de World War I was going on. When I first started to work dere at the mill, I started to knockin' what you call quills for de old mule (spinning) to go backwards and forwards. Like if dey ran some spools and leave some thread on that bobbin why I had to knock that off of dere and let it come on back dere to de mule so dey have dem quills dere to go right back on de mules when dey went to runnin'.

I know all de Haggertys, everyone of 'em by name and de Ramseys, Mr. Walt Hyatt, Mr. George Ferguson, Curtis Hefner and Jim Hefner. Why my wife cooked for Mr. Jim Hefner for years. A lot of women, dat was dere job — out on de hill cookin' while de white ladies worked in de mill. Dey mighta' made \$3.50 a week. But long in dem times everything was cheap.

You got paid in dem loonies and you could get anything you wanted at de store. You had to stay right around dere if you didn't have nothin' but dem loonies that's where you had to stay at cause it wouldn't nowhere else take 'em. Dere was another store'd take 'em but you had to give him so much to take yo' loonies, you didn't get as much for yo' dollar dere as you did at de company store. If dey went to Chester dey had to have what you call dat real money cause dey wasn't taken dem loonies nowheres else.

People traveled mostly by foot.

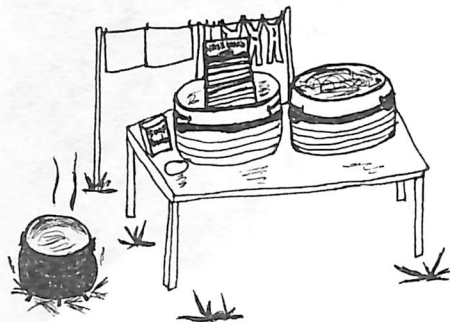
De peddlars used to come up in de quarters selling, but you had to have dat real money. Dey couldn't use dat loonie. It wasn't any good to dem at all.

I didn't go to school very much 'cause I had to go to de field. Now de first school ever I can 'member in my life dat I ever went to, it was down here next to Richburg — the old Mount Myriah. And I left dere and I came to Lando and dey had a school down dere dey called the Old Mission. Well, I went dere about 3 or 4 weeks and no more. See dey didn't have school like dey was havin' now cause de folks had to get out and get in de fields. When our church first started dat's where it started from. Dey start to havin' prayer meetin' in de Old Mission over dere and we left dere and dey come on 'cross and start to havin' prayer meetin' in a house down here in de quarter. And dat's where our church sprung out from. De Old Mission was right dere where you turn dat road to go to Mae Tadlock store. Mr. Westbrook and a bunch of 'em furnished some logs and one stuff and another to build de church. Then, I think Mr. Bascom Heath, he give 'em de land dere to build de church on. Den we moved on de highway to de new church. I don't think folks was sad to leave it at all, but dey was glad to get outa' dat one and get to another one. Dey had to go dat one by theyselves — no help.

Mr. Harry, I knowed him he was just a little boy, just about dat high. I never will forget it. I went up to de house. I was hauling coal on de wagon. Day come 12o'clock. I went up dere to de house to meet Mr. Heath coming from de store up to de house to get his dinner. So Mr. Heath he hadn't come up, so I took my mules on down dere and fed 'em and went to meet him back up dere, but Mr. Heath he still hadn't come. Harry had on a little pair of overalls — had one little front

pocket and one little hind pocket – and when I went up to de door and knocked, he asked me, “Who do you wanna see?” I say, “I wanna see Mr. Heath.” He say, “You talkin’ to Mr. Heath now.”

All dem folks what stayed in dem quarters, dey had to use water out a’ spring – drinking water, washin’ water, cooking water. And I mean dat was good water too. Just anytime dey needed water dey went and got some. Somehow or ’nother dey said dey wasn’t able enough to put water around dere, to the quarter. It’s been right along about 15 or 16 or 17 years since everybody leave out de quarters. Den de houses just went down. Comin’ way along late dey got lectricity to de quarters but way long time dey didn’t have no ’lectricity.



Folks don’t wash now like dey used to wash way back yonder. Dey’d fill dat big pot and things and put dem clothes in dat pot dere, put de powders in ’em, make a fire around ’em, and let dem clothes boil, den take ’em out and put ’em in yo’ tubs dere and rinse ’em 2 or 3 times and put ’em out over de yard.

You had to keep cows and pigs den – don’t you’d starve. My wife made butter. She’d make dat butter and she had one of dem things that’d press dat butter down in dere. You didn’t need no frigerator den. I see ’em right now go to store and buy a coke cola or anythin’ and if it ain’t on ice dey don’t want it. Back yonder dere wasn’t no stuff like dat. You went to de crate right dere and when you open it up, dat coke cola drunk good.

We kill our own hogs. You had to do all dat kind of stuff to have somethin’ to eat. Meat would save better back dat day dan what it do now. You didn’t have to do anythin’ but put your salt and stuff on dat meat and put it down dere and meat’d keep better back den dan what it do now. Put dat salt on and let dat salt draw all dat blood and stuff outa’ it. Let it stay packed down in dat salt and fore long dere you take it outa’ dere and take it on somewhere and hang it up and smoke it and you had meat.

After I work on de job knockin’ dem quills, well I worked on dat job dere for about three months and I slipped around in de mill up and down dem alleys and I was puttin’ up ends on another job over dere. Well, dey cot me puttin’ up dem ends on de ’nother job down dere and so dey took me from knockin’ dem pins and put me on that ’nother job and dat was

running cards. Den I run cards for right around ’bout 50 years. Sometimes it was hard work, but now when you took the advantage of de job what you was on dat’s where you got your rest from. But now you let dat job work you it could work you right much. When you let it get behind on you, dat why when you get on dat job, you got to take de advantage of dat job so you can get your rest off it. \$6.60 for ten hours a day, dat’s what I was getting in a week and Saturdays till 12 o’clock. I don’t know, but I kinda believe the white person was making a little bit more.

My children went to a school right up here on top of de hill from Lando – right here on company land.

That was a cotton gin back there – belong to Westbrook. Dey gin dey own cotton right dere and use dat cotton to make yarn in de mill.



REMAINS OF MACHINERY used in the old cotton gin.
(Photos by Rusty Ramsey)

You didn’t get on dat dinky train to go nowhere – just de fellows what was runnin’ dat dinky and bringing it backward and forward with the stuff.

Some of de colored people what died was buried right up here next de Red Oak and some of ’em was buried down dere at old Mount Myriah. De mill didn’t have no cemetery for de colored.

Take dat pine top tea dere and get you some grass and one stuff and another and if you took a cold dere, you’d get ’round dat and get some tallor like what you gets when you kill a cow, and stuff and grease you and dey wasn’t no such things as no doctor and one stuff and ’nother come around. Dey done dey own doctorin’. This here red devil you’d go out dere and kick at dat old red devil and take dat dirt and get dat old black stuff and put in on dat sore dere. I was walkin’ out cross de field de other day here and I saw some of it. I used to see ’em go to de chimney even and get just soot to put on a sore. Dey wasn’t no such thing as going to de hospital ’round dere den. I never did hear tell of de folks having so much a heart trouble and one stuff and ’nother back yonder when we was usin’ dat kinda’ stuff.

De flu was pretty rough on some families but my Mama and Daddy would come around and tell us when some of de families over dere'd take dat flu. Dey come 'round and tell us, "You better not go over yonder at dat house over yonder." But dat's de very place we'd make it to — but dey didn't know it. But we didn't get de flu.

Miss Mag Young could just set down here and talk dat old fire rite out. I had my neck burned rite 'round and she'd talked out dat fire. I never knowed what she say but she talked dat fire rite out.

We played baseball many many a day. I played all over Lando Hill down dere. I played out in de pasture but our regular ball diamond was rite on this side of where dey built de Church (Baptist). I've played ball a many a day dere at dem old big rocks. I know no other games less it was jumpin' rope or ridin' trees — get up on dat little tree and bend it down and get on it and ride. What you talkin' 'bout, dat waz all de fun we needed. Den we'd get a stick and put it 'tween our legs and get a switch and call it ridin' a horse.

Christmas den was a Christmas, but it ain't no Christmas now. A Christmas Day would be 'bout de happiest day a chap could have rite 'long den. But now a chap sees Christmas every day now, everyday. Now, when I was a little boy comin' up look like Christmas was gone never come. I didn't get but 'bout 2 sticks of candy, 2 apples and 2 oranges. Sometimes dey'd kill a chicken out dere and bring him on back and cook him — de best chicken you can eat. You hang dat stocking up dere and dey tell you Santa Claus is coming down dat chimney.

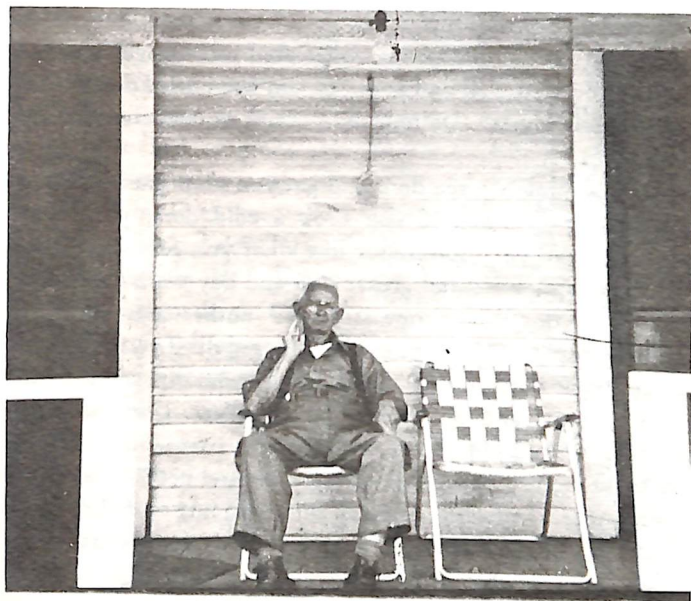
When I was a little boy comin' up, it didn't make no difference 'bout where you was white or colored. If I went over at dat white ladies' house and had done somethin' wrong, she whipped me, and when I come back here to de house, I got 'nother one. I tell you dat right now. But you take it and you hit a chap now and you done done it. That's what's a matter in school today. You can't whip 'em and when dey took prayer out of de school house dey done de wrong thing.

Durin' depression times, I live heap better dan I live when de mill's running. Dey had what dey called a lease, dey had us out here workin' on de road. On every Wednesday we had to meet dat little wagon come out from Chester dere with dem beans and irish potatoes and one stuff and 'nother on it. Dey give me more'n what I could get in de mill for I wasn't making but \$6.60 and dey give me food. I had more better den I did when I was working.

I didn't have but 3 chaps to raise and it was pretty tough dere when you wasn't making nothin'. My wife made the clothes outa' anything she could get her hands on. I wore a many and a many flour sacks shirts. I went in my long shirt tail and nothin' but de shirt many and many a day. God knows I did and dat's de truth.



BUS HYMAN: (Photo by Charles Inabinet)



SID IRBY: (Photo by Kelly Curtis)

On October 29, 1975 shortly before he was scheduled for an interview, Mr. Sid Irby died. Buried with him were memories that may go forever untold.

It is our sincere hope that this publication will preserve the memories of many others for future generations.

THE EDITORS