



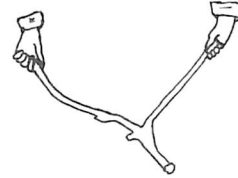
LOTTIE ALLEY GUINN: "I went to school in a little long one-room house . . ." (Photo courtesy of Ruth Sanders)

## Lottie Guinn

I do not know my grandparents' names — neither my father's parents, nor my mother's parents. I've never seen any of them. My mama was just a girl when they had the War Between the States and I've heard her tell about that and how mean the Yankees was. She said she had a brother in the war, but he wasn't killed. He had a fever and died.

She said the Yankees set a lot of nice houses a fire and burned 'em down. Said she had a brother just curiosity age and said the Yankees come up on horses. They took the people's cattle and things like that you know. Said when they come up her brother, (I don't know what his name was — we had it all in a old Bible but do you know that Bible actually rotted away and I miss that a lot), he went running up stairs to look and when they come in, they called that boy back downstairs. Said "Who was that run up stairs?" They told him that was one of the boys went upstairs to look at the fire. Said, "Bring him down". They called him and told him to come down. Said boy they tongue lashed him awful and said "You run again when we come up and we'll pay you for it". They 'llowed to whip him, you see. Now what was the difference in having slaves and the Yankees coming down and doing things such as that. I thought it was terrible. Mama said that very near all country people killed maybe two or three hogs in the winter, and she said when the Yankees was coming through that the people hid their hams way up in trees. They had to because those Yankees'd take every ham they found.

I was born in 1896. Before I moved to Lando, we lived in the country, but don't ask me where it is, 'cause I don't know. Morgantown, they called it. It's in Chester County. I was six years old when we moved and I was glad to move to Lando. My daddy had come from Bluefield, W. Va. and come down in here because everybody just had springs and he knew how to dig wells. My daddy didn't dig wells himself, he had a crew. He knew how to find the water with a divining rod. You



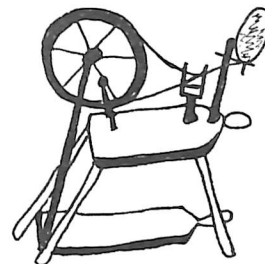
know where the Millers always lived in the pear trees? Well, he dug that well. He said that was the worst well in Lando. He wasn't satisfied with it, but it wasn't nothin' he could do about it. It would fill up when it rained and he didn't like that. He said it was too much surface water going in that well.

My mother never did work. I don't think I ever remember her ever going over to even look at that mill because she knew she wasn't goin' to work in it because she had too many children at home — like the "old woman who lived in the shoe". But she didn't wanna come to the mill — I'll just be honest with you. But after she went there and stayed and learnt some of the people, she was contented. Then she had a niece one time said something to her about us being "factory tax", and you know that made my mother real mad, but she didn't say anything to the girl. But after she left she said, "You know, I could have cut her off close with a remark, but I wouldn't do it because she was visiting here".

Mama and them pulled their cotton and then they'd have it ginned. Well that'd take the seed out, and then they could use these bats with wire on the handles to comb the cotton.

They made all of their own clothes and they made all of their own covers and things like that. They spun their own material. They had hand looms.

My mother had a big spinning wheel at home and spun. I remember well. And I'm so outdone with myself about that thing I don't know what to do. You know where the Collins' live? Well, that's where I was raised from the time I was 'bout six years old on 'til I was married. My mother and father moved to Lancaster after I had done married. Well, they had four closets in that house and my mother had that spinning wheel back in one of the closets and I didn't think of that spinning wheel when they moved. And I don't believe they thought of that spinning wheel back in that dark corner of the

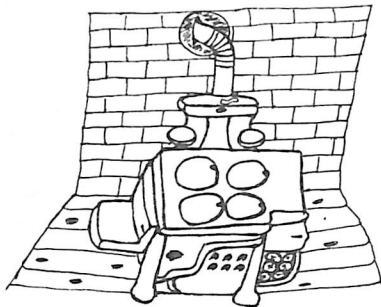


closet. You know we didn't have electric lights then. And so then, when I thought of the spinning wheel, I went. But there wasn't no spinning wheel there, and I've never laid eyes on it since. I could've had that spinning wheel and I would've never done away with it. I can't remember the spinnin' part as much as I can the batting that she put in between quilts. And I can see her yet how she worked that thing.

My mama raised all her children and made all their clothes by hand, all but Inez. For then when we moved to Lando, around 1901, she got a sewing machine and Inez was born after that. My mother had nine children, 6 boys and 3 girls. Joe, Rob, Jim, Lewis, Buddy, me, Otis and then Inez was the baby.

My daddy helped Rob and Jim make what you call a flying jenny. You put up a pole in the ground or a stump just the height that you'd want it and take a ball and bolt a plank to that stump they'd put in the ground. That stump had to go way down in the ground and fix it so it wouldn't slide and throw 'em off. They had that flying jenny that went around and around. Well they fell out and was fighting like cats and dogs and my mother and my daddy both run out there and one got one boy and one got the other and they made them come in and sit down 'til they thought they could play right. They stayed in a little while, but then they eased out again.

At first my mama had a small stove, but then she got a range that had a oven where you put your biscuit. She had a big biscuit pan cause we all loved biscuit. It had a warming closet on it and it also had a resevoir on it that you could put water in and have hot water all the time and dip it out of that resevoir if you needed any in your pots. It was a wood stove. They called that small stove a number eight.



We ironed with a old black smoothing iron. You set those in front on a fire or set it on top of your stove. You'd have more than one and you'd change irons. When you was ironing with one, the other one'd be heating. I did have one that my mother owned and I got it when my mother broke up house keeping. It had a homemade handle on it that my father had made.

When we had to carry water from a spring, the boys had to carry it. But sometimes the water would run out when they wasn't there and I'd have to go carry the water. I wanted to set it up on my head like a colored person. They could just walk with a bucket settin' on their head and not hold it and I always wanted to do that. After about one time of trying it that was enough for me. I had to turn around and go back and get some more water. My job was to help rinse the clothes. I didn't do much rubbin' cause my mother didn't trust me to rub 'em clean enough. She made her own soap that she washed

her clothes with. They used that grease from hogs and made soap and then cleaned clothes in it. My mother made her soap on and on for years. I always did think that was real funny that we washed grease off with grease.

I went to school in a little long one-room house and it set right there where the Holiness Church is. Miss Henrietta Lyles was my teacher when I first started to school. That little old house got so bad, for it was already old, so then they started letting us go to the Methodist Church for school. We played tag and drop the handkerchiefs there at recess.

We used to have box suppers. My brothers would go with me to the schoolhouse. My mother was very strict on me. But then someone would vote on my box, but I knew who it would be every time. Your box supper would be a box. Say that you'd have chicken and make sandwiches and fix a nice box and then the boys would bid on it. And that's the way they would make money for things see. The boys would watch to see the color of the ribbon on your box as you'd come in so they'd know which one to bid on. After we'd eat, then they'd skip-to-my-lou. All this happened in that old school house over there down below the Methodist Church. Upstairs is where we'd have our recreation. I'd say I was maybe 15 or 16 years old. They didn't have no special time, but we got together in a oyster stew supper or a ice cream supper just about every Saturday night — Just a bunch of us.

I know what I had to do the first day I worked. I come from school to the mill and I went in and they put me to what they called taggin' blankets — sewin' the tags on 'em. I got 25 cents for that day and I sewed every one of 'em on with a needle. I believe Clarence Mosely was running the cloth room at that time. That was before Mr. Cook. They give me 25 cents 'til I got fast enough to work by the piece. Then Lela, the girl that Gilbert married, she and I worked together in the sample room and we had to check all the samples that went out. Mr. Heath come up there one day and he was liftin' this blanket lookin' it over, but I knowed he was lookin' at us too.



LOTTIE GUINN: "I know what I had to do the first day I worked . . . they put me to taggin' blankets."