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Interview with Virgie Mae (Chaney) Edwards (FA 66)

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WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY FOLKLIFE ARCHIVES

INFORMANT/FIELDWORKER DATA FORM

I. INFORMANT

NAME: Virgie May (Chaney) Edwards
(Include fullest possible name -- first, middle and/or maiden, last)

(For example: John James Smith; Mary Ann Franklin Smith (Mrs. John))

ADDRESS: 655 Morris Duff Rd Woodburn, KY 42170

PERSONAL DATA: Age 96 Date of Birth Jan 14, 1893

Place of Birth Hart Co, KY Sex female

RACE/NATIONALITY/ETHNIC BACKGROUND: white

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: (Include education, occupation, places of residence, religious affiliation, etc.)

housewife, Baptist since 14 yrs. old, 2 yrs. highschool

II. COLLECTOR

NAME: Carolyn Ann Helm
(Include fullest possible name as described above)

ADDRESS, LOCAL: 916 A Avery Ct. Bowling Green, KY 42101

ADDRESS, PERMANENT: 10057 Nashville Rd B.G., KY 42101

PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE INFORMANT, SUCH AS COUSIN, FRIEND, EMPLOYER, ACQUAINTANCE, ETC.: acquaintance

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

Interviewer: Carolyn A. Helm

Address: 10057 Nashville Rd
Bowling Green, KY

Interviewee: Virgie Edwards

Address: 655 Morris Duff Rd
Woodburn, KY 42170

Place of interview: VE's home

Date: October 13, 1989

Other people present: none

Equipment used: Panasonic No. RQ-353

Cassette: Scotch AVX 60

Amount of tape used: (side 1): all (side 2): all

Brief Description of contents: a discussion of Ms. Edwards remembrances of Woodburn and her husband's role in the community.

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(opening announcement)

(004) I have lived in Woodburn since 1932, I'm not sure how many years that is I guess 57 years is right. I moved here with my husband and my son. We were originally from Hart county, but my husband got a bank position in Woodburn. The bank had already been established before he got his job. The bank closed after The Depression like several others and was an auctioneer at the stockyard after that. He had full time work and remained there several years. I only went to the stockyard one time. He was an auctioneer in Franklin, Russellville, Springfield, Glasgow, and Bowling Green. I went to Logan county one time when he worked as auctioneer there. I worked around home, but not outside of my home. We lived on 240 until 1943, then lived here. We only lived two places in Woodburn. We raised tobacco, corn,

soybeans, and wheat. We hired help to get the farm work done because my husband (040) worked full time as an auctioneer and with the live stock business. We hired two men to help with the farm. My husband's name was John William-initials J.W. He died in 1968.

Woodburn had a good school here most of the schools burned. Authorities decided to make Richpond the high school. My son went to Woodburn school, I only had one child. He went to college and died in 1974. This is home to me because I've spent many more years here than in Hart county.

I was one of nine children, only three survive. I was the oldest. My two sisters are still living one in Horse Cave and the other about 70 miles outside of there. There were 4 boys and 5 girls in my family. I had headaches when I grew up and going to the doctor was not common then. The cause was not determined and they went away as I got older. I stayed with a woman in town at night sometimes. I went to high school.(082)

My husband and son ran a trucking business where they hauled live stock. I took care of the book records. I would send out the trucks and check them in when they returned. I would do the housework and I canned. I raised a garden up until two years ago, I don't think I'll ever raise a garden again. I do not care too much for the vegetables they can be bought cheaper than the labor put into them. When my family and I took care of the farm ourself, we had tractors and mules. Now, I do not own equipment and have to hire someone to do the work. I let it grow up with

weeds.

Most people owned farms and at least farmed part time. There were never any factories in Woodburn. A lot of people shop at Crossroad's Store on the corner it does good business. Most people do go to Bowling Green to shop. There were grocery stores here, when the town was booming.

There has not always been a fire department, but Woodburn's was one of the first volunteer fire departments in Warren county. Just about everything in Woodburn burned down.

I think The Depression to a great extent had an effect of the closed businesses in Woodburn. (129) I'm not really sure why Woodburn changed so much. My husband worked with the distribution of rationed supplies during the Depression and I have some of that material left. He worked in Bowling Green when he did that. Woodburn is only 12 miles from there and people went there for distribution. Our banking was done in Bowling Green. Few people go to Franklin, it is a little closer.

I did not know that Woodburn was referred to as "Old Woodburn" or "New Woodburn." Old Woodburn was the thriving community of the past. The trailer camps are where new people to Woodburn often live.

Years ago, before I lived here Woodburn had a college called Cedar Bluff. I don't think anyone is still living that went there. Between the Christian Church and Baptist Church was the school on 240. It was Woodburn school, now there are fences and a ball park. It went from 1st grade through high school. (183)

Children from Woodburn, Richpond, and all around went there. It is older than Richpond School. Richpond School has an addition built on. Parents brought their kids, there were no buses then. [bird crying in the background]

[personal conversation about the truck in the driveway and the nurse that rents from Mrs. Edwards]

We did not build this house we bought. I think the new house in the square is an improvement since the railroad stopped picking up a passengers. Some people don't like, but it was not being kept very well. Now that area it is being kept better than before.

The stockyards have been torn down. As you go through Woodburn it was the corner building. It was a very small stockyard. All the animals like cattle and sheep were auctioned at the stockyard. Most of the people who own farms have some cattle and I think there is a lot of cattle in Woodburn. (226) I sold 15 head of cattle last week. Usually beef cattle.

[personal interjection by interviewer]

I see Tommy Chaffin mowing lots around Woodburn often times. He is always doing something. His wife works at Crossroad's. Crossroad's was a restaurant when Woodburn was more prosperous. It served sandwiches and was a good place to eat. It was also a small store.

Not very many people live here, but I like it in Woodburn. Evans Duff is the only person still living that was here before we lived here. I have been here a long time, but I was not

raised here. I have always have gone to Woodburn Baptist Church and was located in the same place the entire time. The Union Church existed before my time and I think it was across the highway near the cemetery. (269)

The church has had several pastors. Many famous pastors have gotten their start there. [personal interjection by interviewer] We have a good church with good people.

[dog barking] There have not always been nursing homes in Woodburn. We have good nursing homes, one of the best. I have spent time in one because of different injuries. [dog barking] They usually have a long waiting list to enter their facility. [dog barking, personal interjection by interviewer] (340)

Cynthia and Brian Adams are not related to me, they are good friends. [speaking while looking at pictures in her house] Along with the Chapman family. Mrs. Hopper is like a sister to me. I know a lot of the young people, but not all of them. I'm out of touch with them. I tried to teach a junior class at church years ago and then I knew all the names. I try to attend church every Sunday, but I've missed a lot due to illnesses in my family. I took care of my mother in my house. Mrs. Edwards, J.W.'s uncle, and Doris my son died here. During that time I could not attend regularly. (381)

No family members other than the three of us lived here. My house is comfortable in the summer, but hard to heat in the winter because the ceilings are so high. [clock strikes] Gas and electricity are too expensive for one person to heat all the

house. I only heat only three rooms. I could live more economically in a smaller place, yet I come from a big family with a big house so this is where I live. I would miss living here if I moved to government housing. I have a room upstairs for storage and have been in it only one time this year. (437)

"END OF SIDE ONE"

"BEGINNING OF SIDE TWO"

(004) During the 1937 flood there was water everywhere. We road in boats around Woodburn Baptist. I own the land across from the church and the water was way up in the field. The only way to Bowling Green was to take 240. It was the worse flooding I've have ever seen. It was in the fall and did not effect the crops. It took a long time for it to go down. It was bad in Louisville and other places. My brother took his boat to Louisville and helped rescue people. No one died in Woodburn because of the flood. Some people would not leave their homes.

[personal interjection] It had a drug and grocery store all those buildings on the square were occupied. Some of them burned. The corner store was a grocery and next to it was a drug store. The other were used there was a hardware store. There were two dry good stores on the opposite street. They were locally owned. The drug store was owned by Albert Hobbs. The food store was owned by Hobbs and Uhls. Mr Blackburn owned the dry good store on the other corner. Mr. Jones owned the other dry good stores and had a little picture show. I think the picture show building has been torn down. It was about 30 or 40

cents to see a show and I'm sure it was not the latest pictures.

On the left as you leave the square, the last house was a hotel where the teachers stayed. It is a two-story building. (044) Mr. Uhl, Mr. Gray the principal, Miss Rasdal, and all the teachers from out of town stayed there. My brother was principal at Woodburn School he lived with us for several years. His name was Carl Chaney. Some of the other teachers lived locally and taught at Woodburn. Mrs. Margery Lewis was a teacher but has died.

[explanation of project by interviewer]

People worked together in Woodburn, I think it is just a good place to live. We helped people build houses. Still today they help each other. This summer a tornado came through. Many people helped with the destruction it caused. (090) There are still good people. I have made all the quilts I ever had. I had 5 or 6 quilts when I married. I didn't do too well on those first ones. I do have a few that I made in the past but I have quit making them. My mom raised babies and did not have time to quilt. She cut out pieces for a nine patch or something simple and then us kids would put it together.

[personal comments about the nurse that rents from Ms. Edwards]

To raise all your own food takes all the time you have to get by. My mother would get up early most days and would be wet with perspiration half way down her blouse. People won't live like that now. [personal interjection by interviewer] (150)

[personal comments about the pastor at Woodburn Baptist Church]

[car drove by] (198) [further explanation of project by interviewer] (200) [more comments about the pastor] (223)

Many of the preachers spent time at my house. During revivals they would stay here when then the hotel was full. People used to entertain visiting preachers, but that is seldom done anymore. The last time Dr. Daily was in town he stayed in my house. One of his first pastorates was at Woodburn Baptist Church. He teaches at Western and Louisville and has other duties. I was not able to attend the Homecoming service, I had fallen.

[personal conversation between interviewer and interviewee]

Willie Mae McGown has moved to the government building in Bowling Green. She lived on College St. and she sold her house. It is hard for her live away. She is a good friend of mine. She lived 5 or 6 miles in the country when I moved here and later moved into town. She has lived here most of her life I suppose. (284) She probably went to school here. I believe she lives in the towers in town.

There were a lot of black people who lived out 240. Only one family lived on this side of 31W in Woodburn. Very few of them are left, many of them have died or left Woodburn. You never worried about finding help, you could pick up a black boy to help you. Now, you can't find any help. Dianne Harris has been helping me.

[comments about interviewee's sister staying with her and getting help with housework] (333)-(402)

[clock rung, cars driving by]

I loved my grandmother on my mother's side. I stayed with her when I attended high school one year in Hikesville.

[interviewer's personal comments] (426)

"END OF INTERVIEW"