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Annie Lee Patton Young

Interviewed in her home by Michael Kline and Bill Vincent April 17, 2008

This remarkable woman will celebrate her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on October 5<sup>th</sup> and has a clear memory of major events in her life dating back to the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, beginning with her school days at the Woodlawn School. Her father had purchased the old Griffith place because he wanted to farm in the ridge soil, excellent for raising tobacco. In this community were four leaders who wanted to build a school for 37 local children. The effort was approved by the State Board of Education on condition that the community provide the building. Logs for the structure were donated and seven families labored together on the construction.

Mrs. Young vividly recalls her school days including playground games and tells of current efforts to restore the old school as a community center. Her family members were tobacco farmers and all six children worked the crop. Young talks about many aspects of farming the “money crop,” including carrying beautifully tied bundles to the market in a wagon with a team of mules. She remembers trips to the market at Danville, Virginia when the family had to stop for the night and camp along the road. Her father, Lonnie Lee Patton, died in a tractor accident in 1920 when she was eleven years old. Her mother, Mary Alice Basin Patton, prevailed on the farm with the help of the children and switched from tobacco to truck farming and canning.

They acquired a canner and produced hundreds of cans of tomatoes for sale. Young’s mother was a good planner and organizer. Each child knew her job and did it. The brothers plowed with the old mules, and through the summer all the children hoed crops. The family attended Cross Roads Presbyterian Church where Young’s mother was active in a circle of quilters who worked wherever they could in a quilting room at the church. In the fall a quilt bazaar was held on the church grounds and quilts were sold to raise money for the church. Some quilts were donated to local orphanages. Homecomings were great events at the church with dinners on the ground, cemetery decorations and afternoon preaching.

Young’s mother sewed all the clothes the children wore to such occasions from whatever materials were available, including feed sacks. The Basins and Pattons were Scots-Irish settlers with land grants dating back to King George and issued from Granville (Bill Vincent comments on details). Both families owned slaves. Young’s closest neighbor and friend is Martha Jones, descended from slaves owned by the family. Young’s mother provided tuition to the teachers’ training institute in Davidson County. It was excellent training. Young taught school for seven years in Davidson County before returning to Pleasant Grove to get married. She lists community events she and her husband attended as young suitors and ends with a description of summer church revivals that generally lasted a week. Her favorite old church song is “He Leadeth Me.”