

KK-CD-012-056

Leonard Martin at home, Burlington NC 27215

Interviewed by Michael Kline for the Pleasant Grove Listening Project

April 22, 2008

00:00 Name and date of birth

1:30 First place I can remember living in Pleasant Grove on Claude's farm

2:00 Family farmed tobacco, by the age of six I was pulling sticks up the row of tobacco and they was cutting tobacco then, not priming it. They would split the stem and hang it on the stick before housing it in the barn.

3:10 And we lived in an old log hut on the side and the landowner lived way over in another field in a bigger house with the barns and horses. We stayed there about twelve months because the croppers would move around always looking for a better arrangement. Discusses live stock, the milk cow.

4:15 Share Cropping arrangement: you only get half of what you work for.

5:15 I've always wondered, how did all that happen with that? I guess the land owner's charging you for raising it on his place,

6:10 So we left from there and moved on up the road to another place we didn't stay very long. We moved on to Harris McCauley's place back over near Patilla School. We raised a crop there. I saw people plating crops of the prettiest water melons in straw fields. The straw shaded the young melon plants to get a good start. So we stayed on the McCauley place.

8:50 His sister was living down below us. She married a man called Quip McCauley. I enjoyed it there, enjoyed the horses. Sometimes they'd get out, we'd run them back in the pasture.

9:39 Raising hogs: with everything, the sharecropping families took in about \$150 dollars a year, And they lived off that with what they raised in the gardens. Talks about laying by garden stuff and wild berries. That's the way we lived.

10:30 You didn't take and go out here make nothing much. We left there and moved up to Union Ridge. We didn't stay there long either because they couldn't get along, But I got to go to a few days of school there. Old one room school with a pot-bellied stove.

12:00 School days and playground games: we made our own balls, take an old stick and play ball. All the kids were in one room, different grades in different rows. I never did learn very much because I never got to go. I'd just get to loving the school and we'd pick up and leave and go somewhere else.

13:50 Place where I was born: a place called Rupidoo, the other side of Haw River. I was too small to remember it and other places we moved to.

14:50 Move to the Square (Squire?) Farm, it was really the Cantrell place. I remember my dad cutting wood off from the house, I carried him water and a biscuit through the rain and fog because he wouldn't take time to come to the house. His feet got wet, but he kept doing chores. He took pneumonia and died. The old Sharpe

- Funeral home hearse was so heavy it left tracks in the ground which stayed until we left the next year.
- 18:30 Mother said that daddy come back to watch over us after he died. Every night about dusky dark something would walk over the porch floor to the door where he was carried out. And that happened every night that I can remember being awake. Mother always said, "That's your daddy coming back." We weren't scared, we'd just listen at it. That was the end of my daddy, They carried him down to Martin's Chapel in a big old hearse.
- 20:10 My mother gave birth to my baby brother she was carrying at the time of my father death. That made eight kids.