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Outline for autobio

A Rural beginning

We lived in a circul[ar] rural location, surrounded by rivers and creeks. [It] was a life filled with hard work [and] few outside friends of the same age. We were seldom lonely because we had devoted family in our household. Our parents were healthy. Our maternal grandparents lived very close by.

Our house was medium[—sized] styled like parts of two buildings with a porch between joining the rooms that [ ] went from each side to the other without going outside. We lived there from my earliest days of remembering until approximately age 5 years old.

During our stay at this location, the top 3 left home. The oldest daughter was sent back to Texas. [Illegible.] She learned to become a teacher when she returned to Oklahoma. She was a teacher and [no] longer stayed in our home, but [she loved] us and [I] wanted to be like her.

About this time Grandmother Margaret Wilson died and we moved to another community from Nerotown/ Browns Chapel, McIntosh County, township Fame, some miles from the large farming river bend, often taken back to the river bend to work in the fields for the big farmer during the high work season — chopping the cotton and corn fields, picking the cotton. Our dad was a sharecropper. We changed locations very often with children. He depended largely on their work in the field. They were taken to large farm fields to Huttonville, a highly mixed population of African-mulatto and native Indians.

At age 5, I began to realize the surrounding events and family changes.

Growing up (part 2)

There were four siblings [in addition to] the present six at home. One deceased and three going on their own. At age five, I began to see the family plainly, and realize[d] what they [were] supposed to look like. At age 7, I found out at school that the oldest daughter was teaching school. Roosevelt, the oldest brother, was off doing jobs in Kansas. The third passed away during malaria fever epidemic. The fourth, Oscar, was between home and being hired out. At age 5, there were six of us all together.

The six left were [at] the same school. Our family remained [at] six for three years, then twins were born, then lastly our youngest brother Jewel.

My sister became my role model. I wanted to become a teacher. I was always so thrilled whenever she came home to visit us. She moved to a town a little way from us, but she met some people who came to where we lived so she often sent me things for school. She would

put my things in a pillow slip and give them to mother's friends who worked in the nearby community.

Our community was connected to an area under scrutiny to changes [in] the population, where there were many mixed races — American Indians, people of [illegible]

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and Afro-Americans, caucasians, and American Indian. Then a mixture of American Indians, Creek, Seminole, etc. — many of whom were settled between a big mountain and areas of small mountains. During this time the U.S. Government was making gestures to the several groups to join school and community affairs.

During the days of President Hoover and following, times were hard. The crops in the field stopped growing. There was no cotton to pick, no corn to grown, and sell, and people's farm animals died.

There are mysteries in life sometimes one doesn't really understand. Although our family was large, we never were without food. Our mom raised chicken and sold surplus chickens and eggs. She knew how to preserve food by canning in jars, how to dry fruits and we all raised the big gardens. We found big patches of berries and grapes and sometimes apple or pear trees growing on an unclaimed area. We received some basic foods from government programs.

For entertainment:

Our family was very Christian oriented. My grandfather was a self-styled preacher, therefore we heard and when we were advanced in school, we were taught much about how to live God's word.

Our mother was appointed P.T.A. chairman, then the missions teacher at church. Mother worked with the 4-H Club at school and spent one week at the College which helped to inspire me to get a college education.

Our community school grew very fast so that we outgrew the facility and the J. Rosenwald Foundation built a very beautiful structure for our 300 students but soon our family moved [from] that community to a location which was near the [illegible].

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If you have been interested in history as to how your life began, and how you got where you're at may also think about what things have affected your being here now. You may have experienced many hardships and overcome many changes that affect growing up in life. I will share just some experiences.

Our family moved five times from my age 1 to age 16. Being the 9th [child] and a girl surely affected my growing up. Living out in a rural community having lots of different friends who had visitors from towns like St. Louis, Tulsa, Chicago, and Kansas City gave me ideas to some day, just go there. I only had one aunt who lived in Tulsa, Oklahoma and knew none of dad's people or where they were.

But my desire grew stronger to know more about my family. As my interest in history grew more in school, I began to study and explore history. I became interested in drama. I did some tap dancing in sixth and seventh grade while I still lived in the last rural school which I loved so much because I spent the most of my grade school years [there]. I learned to sing, to do 4-H club work.

With the constant changes of teacher[s], who saw some interest in me and constantly talked to my parents about me, although I had five other siblings in the same school. Huttonville was my home school forever.

My first teacher — Mrs. Adah McGhee — 3-quarter Indian, who from time to time came to visit us riding on a horse. We had teachers in our school from Baton Rouge [ ] to Indiana. They made me a student of history. I have been blessed to visit Alabama, Louisiana and New Orleans.

I was blessed to experience my first college classes at the Booker T. Washington freshman college one year and was awarded one full year freshman certificate to enroll in Langston University for a B.S. degree in Elementary Education as a result.

Three years' teaching experience in Oklahoma. On coming to Washington, DC, thirteen years teaching in the state of Virginia, Arlington. Blessed to have been among the first [African] American [teachers in] integrated [schools] in Virginia school[s].

I was employed in the federal government Dept. of Transportation when I was called to Va.[in] Arlington. I attended D.C. Teacher's College [and] Howard University in summer, and during my first three years, American University, Washington, DC, toward the Master's Degree.

After this all, I served Eastern Star until a voice spoke asking [what] had I planned to do

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after this. I resigned Eastern Star immediately. I was asked to help with the senior citizens of Simpson Memorial church where we worked as a club, making things, formed a limited travel choir, where we went on short trips.

I came to DC in 1951, after making consecutive trips while my husband was studying until such time he became employed at the Pentagon. During those years I had joined the First Baptist Church in DC and remained a choir [member].

Our first was then already born, and enjoyed his aunt Jenetta who took him with her as [guardian] at age 5 until school age in her school near home in Oklahoma.

We have lived in DC until my husband passed away in 1995. I continued to live in DC until the direction of my spirit said "move on, one day."

I now live in Silver Spring, MD. I'm a distance from my two sons like Tampa, Florida and the closest lives in far parts of DC. i have lovely grandchildren and beautiful, smart great grands.

I can't expect but so much from them because all of them are very smart and very busy which I am proud of. The "Number One Joy" is most of them recognize that there is a God who c an help them.

It's my prayer daily that they won't turn back. For this is how I stayed with God. There were uneasy times in my life that God and I knew about.

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Since I only present my part, I had to omit all the details or minor points I left out, or to the imagination:

How we dressed

How kids were kept clean

What we ate

How we kept food

How was food prepared

How we survived storms

Where we went to church

What we did at church

What we did at church

How kids got along to school

And many other topics