

Jordon Crawford

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Partial Interview Transcript

13:43 – SW: Now, you said that he [Junior] was born in this house, did he farm right in this area?

EA: Yes. Yes, this farm has about sixty-five acres. [He] farmed tobacco, tobacco was the big crop; tobacco and cattle were the money crops.

SW: And do you know if he would have sold that tobacco in Asheville or over in Johnson City?

EA: Well, part of the time he sold it in Asheville, and some of the time he sold in Johnson City, Tennessee –

SW: --Wherever the prices were better.

EA: Right.

[pause]

EA: There's a barn over across the creek there; it was built... I think my husband was sixteen when they built that one, and it was for burley tobacco. And they cured burley tobacco up in that barn.

SW: Now how long did you live in Mars Hill, was it just when you were working at the college?

EA: Well, I lived in Madison County, let's see, I was in the...when we first came over here, I was in the fourth grade, and then the war broke out, and my parents went to, well my dad and my stepmother went to Detroit to work, and we lived with our grandmother. Then they [my parents] came back and we moved back over here and then we went back again to Spruce Pine with an aunt.

SW: All over the place.

EA: Yeah, it was. But I've been in Madison County; well, I guess we moved over here to stay when I was in the seventh grade.

**16:59** – SW: Now, you've talked some about...your husband working as a farmer and selling in Asheville and Johnson City, some other people that I've talked to have mentioned that it has changed a lot since the cattle market left Asheville, and just how the city has changed; do you feel like this community has changed since you've lived here or in the surrounding counties; how have you seen it change?

EA: Yes; it has changed. In, let's see, 2004, the government no longer supported the price of tobacco, and they called what was a "buy out;" and so, anymore, if you grow tobacco, then you're on your own to sell it. And before, the government would put their price on it, and then the buyers would have to start at that price to buy it for the auction, for the auctioneers.

SW: ...Do you feel like there's a lot more families that cannot afford to farm anymore because there's just not the same money in it? Or enough to support their families?

EA: Right, there's not a lot. Some have gone to other things. Some grew cabbage, but I haven't seen any cabbage or cabbage fields.

**19:26** – JC: So are there a lot of people in the Beech Glen community that still do cattle?

EA: Yeah, cattle I'd say is the big money market in farming anymore...I think the man who has cattle here has about ten [calves]... So there's a good market for cattle; it's pretty expensive.

When you go to the grocery store to buy beef you see [that].

**20:24** – EA: For a while, back years ago, several people in this area raised frying chickens; had those long –

SW: Long, smelly houses –

