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Tom Crosby Oral History Collection
Emma Jennings Oral History Interview

Interviewee
Jennings, Emma, 1925-

Interviewer
Crosby, Tom, 1940-

Date
July 10, 2007

Location
Santuck, South Carolina

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Scope and Background Note
In this oral history interview, Emma Jennings discusses her educational experiences in the 1930s at four elementary schools: McBeth Grammar, Carem Elementary, Poplar Grove and Beaty Bridge. She also describes the size of the school buildings and classes, school activities, games played at recess, community involvement, length of the school year, and the difficulties that parents, students, and faculty faced including paying for an additional (fourth) month of school, having one teacher for multiple grades, walking miles to school in the mud and cold, and students’ responsibility for cleaning the schools, the teacher who took classes on field trips to learn South Carolina history, the history of the Poplar Grove School building and current attempts at preservation of Rosenwald schools. Mrs. Jennings' brother is also present at the interview and adds comments. Emma Jennings was born in 1925 in Union, South Carolina. Tom Crosby interviewed Emma Jennings at her residence in Santuck, South Carolina, on July 10, 2007. Interview covers Jenning's primary school education at McBeth Elementary, Carem Elementary, Poplar Grove, and Beaty Bridge Elementary Schools in the 1930s.
Tom Crosby: Today is July 10, 2007 and I’m in the community of Santuck, South Carolina, which is in the southern portion of Union County and I’m at the residence of Mrs. Emma L. Jennings. What is your date of birth, please?

Emma Jennings: My date of birth is January 22, 1925.

TC: January 22, 1925. Now you have told me that you have attended several elementary schools. First of all, I forgot to ask how many brothers and sisters do you have?

EJ: I don’t have any—.

TC: Originally?

EJ: I don’t have any sisters. I had three brothers and one brother is living now.

TC: I see, so you originally had three brothers and one brother is living at this time. Now back to the schools that you attended, what was the first elementary school that you attended, the name of it?

EJ: The name of the first elementary school that I attended I believe it would be McBeth in Union.

Mrs. Jennings’ Brother: McBeth Grammar.

TC: McBeth Grammar in Union? Oh, I see, McBeth Grammar in Union. Do you by any chance remember how many rooms that school would have had? It was relatively large, wasn’t it? It was rather large. You may not remember the number of rooms it had.

EJ: It was rather large.

TC: Yeah. Did it have an auditorium, do you remember?

EJ: I don’t think it did.

TC: I see, okay. And after McBeth, you moved I guess to the county?

Mrs. Jennings’ Brother: We moved so much.

TC: I know one, you told me you attended Carem Elementary.

EJ: Carem Elementary.
TC: And that was located in Union County south of Union, Carem, that’s C-A-R-E-M. How many rooms did that school have?

EJ: It just had one room. It had more than one room but the classroom was just one room and it was another room that was used as a cloak room and for wood.

TC: I see, to store the wood?

EJ: Yes.

TC: Okay, was there any food at the school, lunch?

EJ: No.

TC: You had to bring your own lunch?

EJ: Brought your own lunch from home.

TC: I see. Do you remember about how many students were at that school, could you say?

EJ: Well, I couldn’t say exactly how many but I’m sure there were twenty-five or thirty.

TC: I see and do you remember what grade you were in when you were at that school?

EJ: I believe I was in the fourth grade.

TC: Fourth grade? Do you remember the name of the teacher?

EJ: Reverend Lemuel Tobin.

TC: Reverend Lemuel Tobin, T-O-B-I-N. I see. And then after that school you went to what school or if you can’t remember the sequence, what’s the name of another school that you attended?

EJ: We attended Poplar Grove School but I don’t think I can remember one after another.

TC: The sequence.

EJ: We attended Poplar Grove.

TC: If I may interrupt, it may have been the Beaty Chapel after Carem. The reason I’m saying this is because Poplar Grove was built around 1931 or ’32.

EJ: I didn’t go to Beaty Chapel. We never did go up there.

TC: Oh, you never went to Beaty Chapel?

EJ: We didn’t go to Beaty Chapel.

TC: Oh, I thought you were telling me earlier that you attended Beaty Chapel.

Mrs. Jennings’ Brother: You’re talking about Beaty Bridge?

TC: Beaty Bridge.

EJ: Beaty Bridge down here near the river.

TC: Oh, so did you attend Beaty Bridge?

EJ: Yes.

TC: You did; okay, I made a mistake when I said Beaty Chapel. So do you think you attended Beaty Bridge before coming to Poplar Grove?
EJ: I think we did.

TC: I would think so, on the basis of how I have found out when Poplar Grove was built. Now, if I may say to you, I have seen where Carem was a Rosenwald School and Beaty Bridge was a Rosenwald [school] too, so they got money from the Rosenwald fund to help build them. Then after Beaty Bridge you came to Poplar Grove, which is located in Santuck, S-A-N-T-U-C-K, is the way it’s spelled.

EJ: Yes.

TC: Sometimes it’s spelled S-A-N-T-U-C. Would you happen to remember the year that you graduated? You finished the seventh grade, right?

EJ: I finished the seventh grade but I don’t think it was at Popular Grove. I believe it was at Beaty Bridge.

TC: The teacher was Miss Brooks?

EJ: Miss Brooks, at the time she wasn’t married but before our school year was out or it might have been the next year, she was married to a Robinson and he was a preacher, Reverend Robinson.

TC: I see so it seems that you first went to Carem Elementary and then you went to Poplar Grove and then the last school you attended was Beaty Bridge.

EJ: Beaty Bridge, uh-huh.

TC: Okay and you finished the seventh grade?

EJ: Seventh grade, uh-huh.

TC: I see and you didn’t attend high school?

EJ: No, I didn’t.

TC: Okay. At those various schools do you remember some of the kinds of games that were played at those schools?

EJ: Well, at Beaty Bridge we played basketball.

TC: You did?

EJ: We played basketball. And we played basketball and some of the schools that we played was Poplar Grove, played Poplar Grove, and another school that we played was Mount Rowell.

TC: Up in the northern part of Union County.

EJ: One of the teachers at that school was Johnsie Williams and she was related to me.

TC: Oh, I see. Now also I’m aware of some information pertaining to her. I think there’s a person that I know, her name is Dr. Barbara Jenkins.

EJ: Barbara Jenkins?

TC: Jenkins, that was her daughter.

EJ: Daughter, right.
TC: You’re related to them, I see. When I asked you about games being played, you were referring to games as a team from your school. But also I’d like to know what kinds of games and activities were played let’s say at recess time.

EJ: Oh, like at recess we played jump rope and hopscotch and those kinds of games.

TC: I see.

EJ: And baseball. Some of the girls really played baseball with the boys but I didn’t because I didn’t like to get knocked around with them boys. [Laughs.]

TC: Oh, I see. You didn’t want to get knocked around. They were rough.

EJ: Yeah.

TC: I see. Do you remember any kinds of activities that may have been used to let’s say raise money for the school for various things?

EJ: Well, we would have programs like, we’d call them—

Mrs. Jennings’ Brother: Fish fry.

EJ: Yes, we’d have a fish fry and hot dogs and sometimes they would have what they call a cake walk where some of the mothers would make these cakes, you know, and then some of the teenagers would [try to win the cakes].

TC: Try to get the cake.

EJ: Yes, couple off—different couples—and vie for the cake.

TC: I see. How did they vie for the cake?

EJ: They would get in a circle and whoever could make it to whatever this—

TC: There was a stick or something.

EJ: Yeah, whoever could get that stick first would get the cake.

TC: So the stick would suddenly be pushed out, I guess, and the person would touch it?

EJ: Yeah, whoever could touch that stick first, you know, the couple.

TC: Yes, as they went around. I see. They called that the cake walk?

EJ: Cake walk. And then we would have, I don’t know if they charged anything at the door or not, I can’t remember but we would have like school closing we had to put on this program and we would have plays and recitations and plays.

TC: I heard somebody else talk about that. Look like plays were pretty popular back then.

EJ: They were. I know they had plays and it was real nice.

Mrs. Jennings’ Brother: And recitations.

EJ: Yes, we had recitations and sometimes it seemed like the teacher would give me the longest one, it was.
TC: Well, that’s good. She knew that you could do it. I see. Now at school I remember when I was in elementary school, Kathleen Eison especially, she used to have these little, I don’t know what, they were like little soldiers and I think they called it a drill team or something like that, had the soldiers drill and we actually had a little BB rifle or gun, I guess, or something like that. You’d hit the bottom of the rifle on the floor and make a noise.

EJ: Oh, you was having a drill team.

Mrs. Jennings’ Brother: Tin soldiers?

TC: Maybe so, I don’t recall right now. Okay, let’s see, now how many months would you say you went to school?

EJ: Well, we had three months and some of the fathers got together and they paid for another month.

TC: Someone else told me the same thing, Mattie Savage.

EJ: We had, we had a room full of Sims down there because we were Sims and a bunch of them and they were Sims and so it was a bunch of Sims.

TC: So to get four months of schooling the parents had to pay the money for the teacher?

EJ: At one time they paid for that fourth month. I don’t know how many times that they did it but I know they paid for a fourth month and then finally they gave us the fourth month. And I remember we had a month in summer. It might have been the month they gave us and we went to summer school. You know, after you gathered all, you know, you hoed the garden and everything.

TC: And they had a term what they called lay-by?

EJ: Yes.

TC: And lay by meant that you finished plowing the cotton for the last time?

EJ: Yes, and we would have that summer month in school and we would have classes out under the trees because it was so hot. It was too hot to be inside and the teacher would have us out under the tree in the shade.

TC: Oh, I hadn’t heard that before. So you’d have school out under the tree?

EJ: Under the tree.

TC: When it was very hot like in July?

EJ: It was in August.

TC: August, before the cotton was ready to be picked.

EJ: Before the cotton was ready to be picked.

TC: Would she bring a little small black board outside to write on, do you remember?

EJ: I don’t remember if the board was too big because the board was up side the wall.

TC: I know but I thought maybe she may have had something to carry it out.

EJ: She might have had something that she brought out.

TC: Had made, maybe.
EJ: She probably did make notes on paper.

TC: Like a slate.

EJ: Or something like that, but I can remember those days outside under that tree and we would have classes out there under the tree. Some of the children would bring a watermelon or a cantaloupe or something.

TC: For lunch or recess?

EJ: Yes.

TC: Had a good time.

EJ: We just had a lot of fun, you know.

TC: Yes, that watermelon was good.

EJ: Yes it was.

TC: Did they have any ice to put it in to make the water cold or anything like that?

EJ: No, we didn’t have no ice, didn’t have any ice.

TC: How many students would you say were in your grade level?

EJ: Well now, this teacher, she had grades one through seven.

TC: Now this is at?

EJ: That’s at Beaty Bridge.

TC: Beaty Bridge.

EJ: We had I reckon about forty students down there. We had a lot of kids down there because the students came from up the road here by Whitney place up the road.

TC: You mean, where the funeral home [is], Whitney’s?

EJ: Yes. The white people. [Laughs.]

TC: White, but they were kin to them. They would come from the Whitney place, which was white-owned property?

EJ: Yeah, I mean up here.

TC: And said they were kin to them? Where is that place you’re talking about?

EJ: It’s right up the road here.

TC: You mean where Mr. Epson—?

EJ: No, that’s on the other road. That’s on the Perry Farm Road.

TC: You’re talking about this road?

EJ: This road, not 76.

TC: Okay, so about how many miles did they have to walk?

EJ: Lord, have mercy. We walked from what we called it the Hopkins place down there. I reckon that’s about three or four miles. And then see this road and see where the mailbox at?

TC: Yes.
EJ: Well, that was the main road.
TC: I see, at that time?
EJ: At that time and it wasn’t paved. It was mud. And so I used to tell my children I said we’d walk from up at the Hopkins place down there to Beaty Bridge and when you’d get there, you’d have three soles on your shoes and two of them was mud.
TC: Really?
EJ: Yes, two of them were mud.
TC: Three soles and two of those soles were mud?
EJ: Mud. When you’d get to school they had them sharp sticks out there at the steps and you would scrape the mud off your shoes. And then on Friday it was clean up day at school.
TC: Now you had one room or two rooms more or less?
EJ: One room and a cloak, one big room and a cloak room. You had a cloak room and in the front was the boys cloak room. There were two different rooms on the front. We had a stage. It was a stage and then go by the stage to the girl’s cloak room. And on Friday it was the clean up day and the larger children would be sweeping and all that dust and sand.
TC: In the building or out on the ground?
EJ: In the building, we had to clean it up, you know.
TC: Because they had tracked some dirt in.
EJ: Some mud in there, you know, and the teacher would bring some kind of oil and it was put on that floor.
TC: I think it was oil from the cars.
EJ: Yeah, and put on that floor.
TC: They’d change the oil in the cars. It was that oil.
EJ: Some big boys would put that on that floor to keep that dust down.
TC: To keep the dust down.
EJ: Sure did and the heater sat in the middle of the room and that pipe went across there. I don’t know how come the thing didn’t burn down because the pipe went out the side of the building.
TC: No chimney?
EJ: I think it had some kind of little opening.
TC: Area there.
EJ: Area there.
TC: But there was no chimney from the ground up?
EJ: No, there wasn’t a chimney.
TC: It was just built in a section of the wall?
EJ: That pipe went through that wall and they had a metal, I don’t know what it was. It might have been brick or it could have been just metal where that pipe went through. That was the heat.

TC: So what happened when it was, and I remember myself because I walked to school, what happened when it was raining and all of that business, did you still go to school?

EJ: Yeah, because our teacher told us, said, “Put on some old coats.” Said, “It don’t make no difference what they look like,” said, “put them on and come on because you don’t want to miss no days because you didn’t have that long to go.” When we’d get there we may be wet but they’d make that big fire.

TC: But you wouldn’t be totally wet?

EJ: No, because you’d have on two or three coats.

TC: Yeah, I see. Isn’t that something?

EJ: Nobody couldn’t laugh at nobody else because we all had on two or three coats.

TC: All poor. Now I guess it snowed sometimes occasionally.

EJ: That was the only time that we didn’t go. Back at that time we don’t have snows like they had then back in it was in the ’30s, I reckon.

TC: So if a thunderstorm came up and you were on your way to school, you’d just keep on going I guess.

EJ: You’d just keep on going till you get there.

TC: Scared to death of the lightning.

EJ: Yes, you’d be scared to death of the lightning.

TC: So you remember that?

EJ: Yes, if a cloud came up before we left school we didn’t leave until it was over.

TC: Now if a cloud came up before you left home I guess some of the children would be late for school.

EJ: You’d be late for school. If you were late for school the teacher, you know, the teacher didn’t say anything because she knew how it was. And then whenever Miss Brooks was teaching us she boarded with Aunt Frances who stayed down here and she was walking to school too.

TC: Was she?

EJ: But see, she didn’t have as far to walk as we did.

TC: Right. Now do you remember any field trips?

EJ: Yeah, we had a field trip I remember and went to Poplar Grove. That’s where we went.

TC: Maybe for May Day, or—?

EJ: That’s what they called field day, played basketball and the boys, some of them were playing baseball, just different games.

TC: Then they wrapped that [May pole].
EJ: The May Pole, and from each house they carried a picnic basket.

TC: Oh, they did?

EJ: Yes, you’d just have all kind of good food. Them mamas would consolidate that food. You had your basket and this student has their basket and they’d get all that food together.

TC: I hadn’t heard that before. When I was at Poplar Grove we had a lunchroom. It was up to date. [Laughter.]

EJ: It got up to date then.

TC: I showed a picture of Poplar Grove to somebody last week and he had gone to a one-room school, I think—Douglas School, down there [at Goshen Hill].

Mrs. Jennings’ Brother: That’s the name of that school.

EJ: We was trying to think of the name of that school last night and we couldn’t think of it.

TC: Yes, and he [was so surprised]. So I showed him, as I’m going to show you, you remember what Poplar Grove looked like, a little about it? But anyway I showed him a picture of Poplar Grove so he said, “Oh, you were in luxury.” [Laughter.] Yes, so now I guess I’ll let you describe Poplar Grove, since you went there for a while. Do you remember how many rooms it had?

EJ: Well, I remember—I’m trying to think. We had Miss Boler’s room and Mr. Reid Johnson’s room and Miss Kathleen. I went to Miss Kathleen too.

TC: Who was the principal?

EJ: Reverend Johnson, he [was the] pastor at Thomas Chapel.

TC: I see. So there were four?

EJ: There was four.

TC: Okay. Do you remember when they added a fifth room?

EJ: No, I don’t. I guess we had four.

TC: I found an article. Do you remember the old paper that was called the Palmetto Leader?

EJ: Uh-huh.

TC: It was a black paper, out of Columbia, and was called the Palmetto Leader. I’ve been looking in that paper for various information and I came across this article about the graduating class at Poplar Grove in 1941 and Professor Bogan was the principal. There was a picture of the students, about thirteen I believe, and the article stated that an additional room had been added in 1941. You know how Poplar Grove looked. There was one room off by itself, you remember? There was one room off by itself. That was Miss Moore’s room when I was there.

EJ: That room wasn’t there when I was there.

TC: No, but through the years you’ve seen it since then and you remember that one room off by itself?

EJ: Yes.
TC: That room was added—had to have been added—in 1941. That was a large room and Pap Gilliam—I don’t know his correct name, his name is Robert, I believe. But anyway, so through the years they tore those first four rooms down. I think they built Buddy Gilliam a house. Well, what’s interesting to me is why they didn’t tear all the five rooms down. They tore just four, those original four according to a picture that I have seen that pertains to designs to many of the Rosenwald schools.

So that room, that house that Pap lives in now it was added according to the information that I have in 1941. But it was a large room and they tore those four rooms down, as I said, the first four rooms down to build somebody else a house and left that one room, which is large and they divided it into three small rooms. And that house where Pap is living now is the last room of Poplar Grove that was added in 1941. So that’s an interesting thing and another thing is that there were originally sixteen Rosenwald schools in Union County and all of them have been torn down or rotted down or whatever and the only one that has at least a portion of it still existing is the one where Pap lives now. That’s the only one that has at least a portion of the building still existing.

Sims High was torn down I guess like in, oh, must have been in the ’80s I guess, early ’80s, I suspect. They tore it down, the original Simms High. There were two buildings, as you know. But that’s an interesting thing.

EJ: Well, you know Barbara Jenkins is into that [Rosenwald school research].

TC: Yes, the Rosenwalds.

EJ: Because she was talking about it at the dedication [of the Sims High historical marker].

TC: Yes, and she made reference to me. By the way, now that you’ve mentioned her, if I may mention something of a personal nature. I wrote an article about the Rosenwald schools in Union County. I don’t know whether you read that article. It came out in February, [2006]. And I’m active in preservation in South Carolina, the South Carolina African American Preservation Commission, and it’s related to the National Historical Preservation Trust. So there’s going to be a national meeting in Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota in October of this year, October 2-5, 2007 and they would like to get minorities to attend that meeting. So there was an application to apply for funds to go so I applied and I’m going to have free housing.

EJ: Oh, that’s wonderful.

TC: For the 2-7 of October in Minneapolis-St. Paul and I think, I’m pretty sure that article I wrote was helpful for me to get that privilege of staying there October 2-7 with all the hotel stuff and registration paid.

EJ: Well, you know, I just wonder, I know I talked to my brother about it.

TC: Excuse me, and Barbara wrote a letter of recommendation for me.

EJ: Oh, she did? I’m glad you’ve got that opportunity.

TC: Well, thank you. I interrupted you. You were about to say something. Do you recall?

EJ: No.
TC: You’ve forgotten. Well okay, I really have found out a lot of interesting things about your years of schooling.

EJ: We had some, well you know, it seemed like to me the children of today they’re not interested in learning and like when we were growing up, me and my brother, we’d walk a country mile to get a book or a newspaper or just something to read. We loved school, I mean you know.

TC: Yes. Well, see many of us, our parents didn’t have—I should say, some of us or many of us, they didn’t have that much education. That wasn’t true for all of them but it was true for many of the black kids in the South in the ’20s, ’30s, and ’40s; ’50s, too. They were interested in us and encouraged us to go to school. Well, if they didn’t encourage us, let’s say, as much as they should have, for various reasons, as you know, they wanted their children to go to school. They wanted their children to go to school.

EJ: And they wanted them to learn.

TC: They wanted them to learn. And we didn’t, especially when we got a certain age I’m sure, we didn’t want to live like many of our parents did. You know what I mean, and it made a difference. And then you know the family structure. Usually there was a mother and father there. Today it’s a different thing and unfortunate to say but it’s true, we had all black teachers.

EJ: Yes, some good black teachers.

TC: And we had good black teachers and they cared and I guess I’ll let you, if you don’t mind, if you want to say more about the teachers.

EJ: Yes, we had some good teachers because I know our teachers, teaching down here at Beaty Bridge, she was really interested in the students. She would—like my brother, he was in the seventh grade class and she was teaching him out of books that—you know, children, when they went to college, because she wanted to prepare him to go to high school. Of course, he went to high school but Mattie, she did like I did, she got married so she didn’t get to go.

TC: One of those little boys started picking at you. [Laughs.]

EJ: Yeah. Turn your head all the time. And then, later years, you wish you had awent, you know. You wish you had a-went.

TC: But did you, I asked you earlier about did you go on any trips. I read an article pertaining to Beaty Bridge. This lady, was her name Robinson?

EJ: Yeah, Robinson, she was Brooks and then she got married. She married Reverend Robinson. Yeah, she took us, we went to Charleston on a trip and we went to Asheville on a trip. She wanted her students to learn something.

TC: And see different things.

EJ: And see different things. We had been studying South Carolina history and so we sold candy and we did things, you know, and we made some money and I know she put her money to it, too, and she took us to Charleston.

TC: And Asheville.

EJ: And the next year she carried us to Asheville, North Carolina.
TC: Did you go to Columbia?
EJ: We stopped in Columbia. We stopped in Columbia.

_Mrs. Jennings’ Brother:_ At Allen.

EJ: At Allen, who was that at Allen? Oh, we stopped in Columbia to see, Lou Ella was at State. Lou Ella was at State. We stopped in Orangeburg and we stopped in Columbia. But I don’t know who was at Allen when we stopped there for.

_Mrs. Jennings’ Brother:_ It could have been somebody Miss Brooks knew.

EJ: We stopped there and was it Marguerite or somebody that was at Allen?

TC: It may have been somebody like that.

EJ: Somebody that we knew was at Allen University because we stopped at Allen University and somebody sent a package but I don’t remember now who it was there.

TC: It could have probably been Marguerite maybe.

EJ: It might have been some of them but we stopped and carried a package.

TC: Well, the reason I know about this and asked about this trip, I found an article in the same newspaper, the _Palmetto Leader_, about the trip to Asheville and that’s how I know about it.

EJ: Well, she sure took us to Asheville.

_Mrs. Jennings’ Brother:_ You’re kidding.

TC: Yes, and I’ll bring it and show it to you. I’ll bring the article.

EJ: We had an aunt lived at Asheville and we went to her house and that’s where we ate our lunch. And she made dinner for our teacher [and] the driver that took us. This man, I don’t know who he was but he was from Union and he had one of these big cattle trucks and he fixed that up with seats and stuff, you know, for the children.

TC: Oh, so that’s how you got there?

EJ: Uh-huh.

TC: You had a truck that would carry cows?

EJ: Yes, uh-huh.

TC: And he put the banisters on it?

EJ: Yeah, he put the banisters on it and he put seats across there and then he had the—what’s the thing, in case it rained?

TC: Canvas?

EJ: Canvas, he had the canvas where if it started raining we could fasten it down.

TC: I see. This is really interesting.

EJ: We sure did but I can’t remember who he was.

TC: He was a white man?

EJ: Yeah, somebody from Union. He was somebody from Union. It was somebody
from Union.

**TC:** Your brother said, “We didn’t have a truck, we had the wagon.” In concluding here, do you have any additional comment you’d like to make about maybe something that we haven’t talked about or something that you remember that was interesting as you went through elementary school?

**EJ:** Well, anyway, speaking of this trip, what sticks in my mind, we went across, they done tore it down now, the old Cooper River Bridge down to the beach. I had a cousin and she was afraid of the water so she didn’t see any of it. She kept her head covered up till we got across.

**TC:** Really? I see. Yeah, so any other comments about maybe describing the teachers and the principal?

**EJ:** Well, this teacher what I’m telling you about took us on those trips, Miss Brooks Robinson, she was a very caring person. She wanted her students to learn and one of the reasons that she struggled to take us to Charleston, we were studying South Carolina history and she wanted us to see some of the places.

**TC:** That you were talking about in class.

**EJ:** Talking about in class and we would have geography, which I don’t know if they talk about geography in the schools now, but we had geography. One of the days we couldn’t have all the subjects in one day because she had seven classes. We had reading, writing, arithmetic; we had that every day.

**TC:** You did? Each class, each grade had that?

**EJ:** Had that every day.

**TC:** Reading, writing, and arithmetic?

**EJ:** And I believe we had spelling, too.

**TC:** Yes, most likely. Did they have spelling bees?

**EJ:** Yeah, we had a spelling bee every Friday.

**TC:** You did?

**EJ:** Yes. And when we didn’t have the spelling bee we had the Roman numbers from one to a hundred, which I’ve forgotten. I can’t say them no more.

**TC:** So in that spelling bee, I guess you did it by grades and age groups?

**EJ:** Oh, yes, and we’d have them every Friday after recess, spelling bee. And when it would end we had spelled everybody down, me and him would be left on the floor.

**TC:** Congratulations. I used to like it, too. I guess with that we’ll end our discussion. I really have enjoyed it. I appreciate your time.

**EJ:** We have enjoyed it, too, because both of us are history nuts. You know, we love history. That was my favorite subject in school and I’ll tell you who was my suite mate down at Beaty Bridge, Mot Sims. Mot, you know, couldn’t read too good but he was a good student. He could remember things.
TC: Okay, you made reference to your brother. He has made a few comments as we went along here today, but he went further than you did.

EJ: Oh yes, he went to Sims High.

TC: Now I have to get on his case and ask him some questions. So again, thank you for your time.

EJ: I enjoyed it.

End of Interview