

Weddings were special occasions on Pebble Hill. This one took place c. 1904.

Chapter Two

RELIGION AND EDUCATION

JH: Okay, you . . . Aunt Prinetta, you mentioned that you spent six years at Ochlocknee Elementary School. Was that a grade school? And, I think, is it from one through seven or what?

PHG: One through seven. Now the school, the building, was an old masonic hall with a one-teacher classroom. Later, a modern school was built for two teachers.

JH: Who built these schools?

The school was built by Miss Pansy's mother, Mrs. Ireland. It was built in the later 20s, around '25. There were about 50 to 70 children. The community was a large one.

JH: Was this school built strictly for the blacks?

Yes, for blacks.

JH: Was that an interest that Mrs. Harvey had, towards black kids, to get them well educated . . . ?

Yes, she had shown interest. I was told by my mother that Mr. Jim Mitchell owned a portion of that plantation, and Mrs. Harvey became in possession of it some time in later years. The children who didn't live on the plantation were given the privilege to attend the school. Those who lived near did attend. Even at that, many walked 4 or 5 miles to the new school.

JH: New school, Ochlocknee School. Okay, how did you all get to school?

We walked, yes, of course. Some of the children parents would bring their children when the weather was bad or cold.

JH: Okay, you mentioned that you had finished at Allan Normal School; when was this?

I graduated in 1932. Yes, it was a private school.

JH: Tell us a little about Allan Normal.

Allan Normal was supported by the American Missionary Association. Our faculty was an integrated faculty. We had teachers from Connecticut, New York, Massachusetts, Ohio, and Canada.

JH: They were from different places.

Of course the black teachers were southerners. When I entered Allan Normal there were three black teachers on the faculty. During later years, they added more. Do you want names of them?

JH: Well you know, whatever you feel, go ahead.

There was a Mrs. Everlee Evans, grades 1 and 2; Mrs. June, grades 3 and 4; Mrs. E. J. Edwards, 4 and 5; Miss Lee, 6. Those were the elementary teachers. The home-room teachers for the junior and senior high school were Miss McCarthy, Miss Mar-den, Miss Carruthers, Miss Gifford, Miss Barrier, Miss Cheney, Mr. Smith, Miss Northan, Miss Hall, and Miss Rosebud Floyd Dockett, you know, Dr. Dockett's widow.

JH: Is that Dr. Dockett who ran the pharmacy down on West Jackson Street? Is that his wife?

Yes, she was our English teacher. We had a Mrs. Smith (Iena Ivory Smith). She was an Allen Normal graduate who was hired as the librarian. And we had a Mrs. Hall as the manual training instructor. This was a school for grades one through twelve, first through twelfth.

JH: Now I had been told that once you finished the twelfth grade, you were qualified as to go out and teach. Is that correct?

If you took the normal courses. Those were subjects that prepared one to teach grades one through seven. It was not a college.

JH: It was almost equivalent?

We had courses that were taught in college such as psychology, methods of teaching, and others.

JH: Now when you left Allan Normal did you go right on off to college to get your education?

No, I taught for a while. This was in 1932 through 1938; however, I would attend summer school for teachers during the summer months.

JH: You went to where, Albany State?

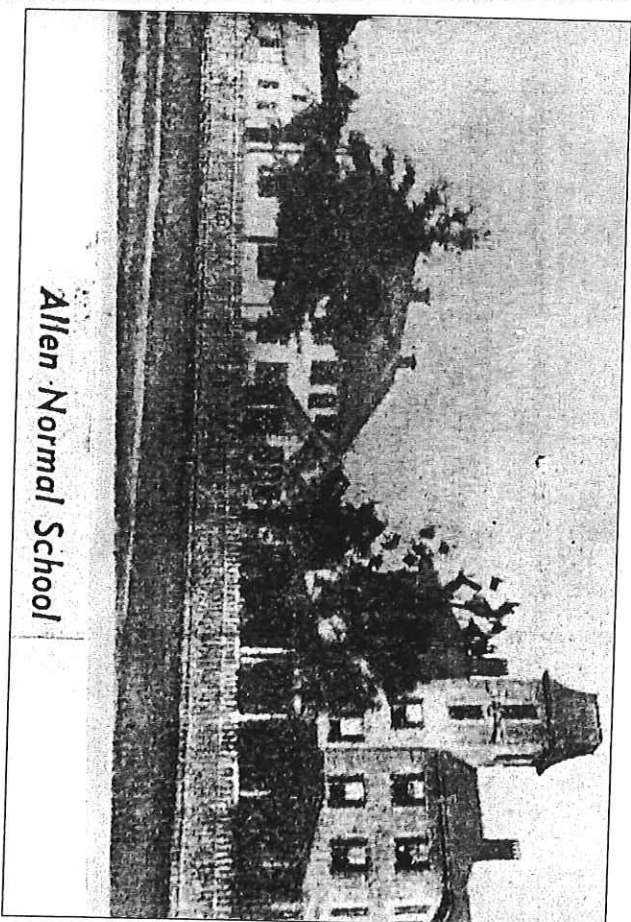
Albany State University, yes. Through summer courses, I completed three years of college work there. After I married, my husband sent me for one year to complete my fourth year.

JH: Now you mentioned earlier that you had gone all the way from high school to college. Now you start teaching at New Union School and . . . your husband was the Reverend James Napoleon Green. He built this school . . . now we have a picture of him and also of the school. Can you sort of tell us a little more about that?

Well now, this was the school when he first became principal. It was just a four teacher school, but of course, it was a four-room building. There had an agricultural department, and this was Mr. Solomon Bacon, who was the agricultural teacher. These two buildings were there when my husband came.

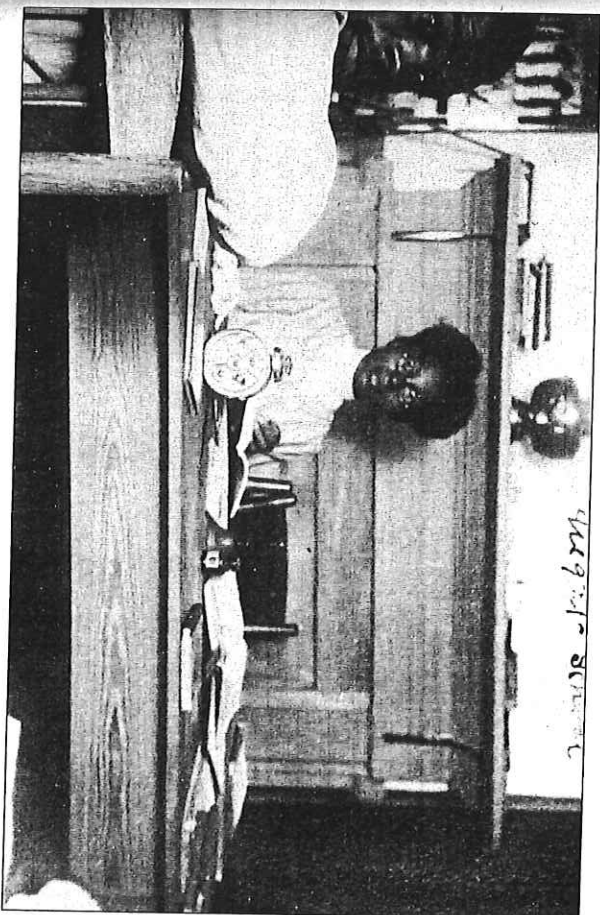
JH: Is this your husband in the center there?

This is he; this is Reverend Green. But anyway, they were teaching the boys agriculture, first through eighth grade. When he became principal, he saw the need. It was such a good community. The children were so well behaved and everything. He built this building. It was the high school building. This is the one that was built

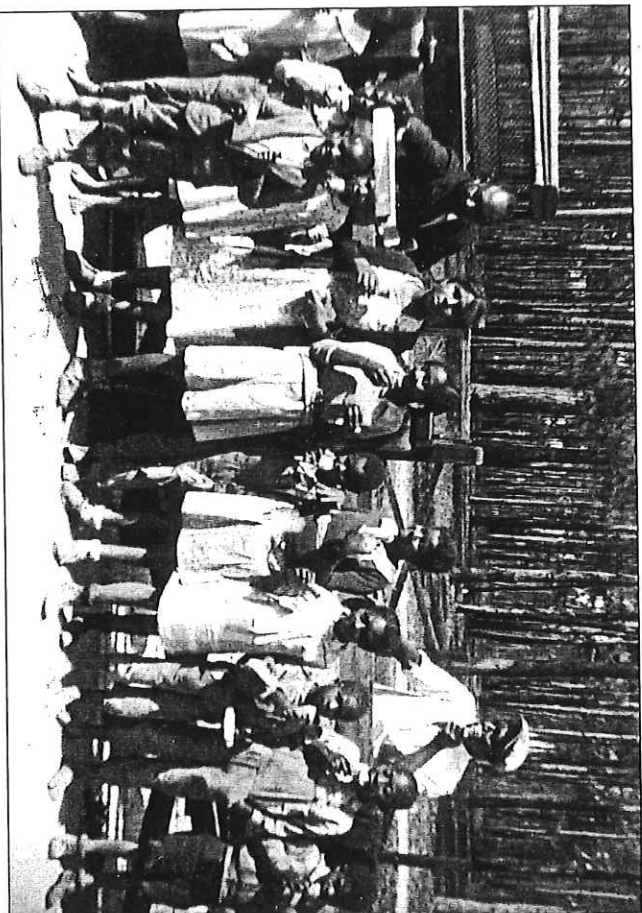


Allen Normal School

Allen Normal and Industrial School was supported by the American Missionary Association. It operated from 1886 to 1933, serving the religious and education needs of black students in the Thomasville community.



The owners of Pebble Hill always took a key interest in educating children. Two schools were provided on Pebble Hill for grades one through seven, c. 1910.



Lloyd Hadley gave ice cream to some of the children at school, c. 1923.

under the supervision of Reverend Greene. The children had a wooden bus that transported the children to and from school.

That was back in 1941. That was the kind of bus they had when we were went there to work. Later, a second bus given. This is the bus the county gave them. After that, I think they had another one, but this is their first bus given by the county.

This was a farming area. There were quite a few farmers. Most of the blacks in the area owned their own property. Many children from the plantation . . . attended New Union.

If they had to go to school, they had transportation. Mrs. Hadley had a station wagon. She drove the kids to school in Thomasville.

JH: Ruth Hadley.

She taught at Douglas, and all you did was get the kids to her house, and she drove the kids to school. Their parents had to pay a very small fee for the children to ride with her.

I can recall my very first year in school. Mrs. Harvey and Miss Pansy always had a nurse to look after the school children. There was a Mrs. Hall, a nurse. I think she was connected with the county system, but she worked with the children at Ochlocknee Elementary School and the one near the big house at Pebble Hill. These were the two schools on the plantation. Now Mrs. Hall would come; she would make sure we all got our vaccination, whatever type that we needed to have. This was done the first of the year, and she would check us . . . ever so often, she would check us, physically checking; if you had any kind of illness or infection, she saw to it that the sick one would go to the doctor. Dr. Reid was the main doctor, and Dr. Jarrall was the substitute when Dr. Reid would be on his vacation. I guess, I don't know. If a child had any



Miss Pansy provided college scholarships to many former children from Pebble Hill to go to colleges such as Albany State University, Fort Valley State University, and Florida A&M University. She was a great help in educating the youth on the plantation.

serious illness, and the parent didn't . . . even if they didn't live on the plantation, the doctor offered his services. I can recall when my sister got ill, and we were living on our own home. Mrs. Harvey did what she could to help her get well. As far as a hospital . . . getting you to the hospital . . . children that attended the schools got the same service. Care was given to all in the community, whether they lived on the plantation or not.

She had an office there, but I don't know where she lived. I think she lived away from the plantation. I remember she would take . . . if there was an illness in the family, she would go and see what she could do there. If they needed some assistance, needed a doctor and had limited finances, Miss Pansy or Mrs. Harvey saw that the needs were taken care of.

Mrs. Harvey and Miss Pansy, I believe that they just had an open and pure heart and loved human being. Whatever they could do for you, they would do it. I mean, they didn't show any difference in whether you were white or black; they just took you as a human, and if you were in any ways connected to the plantation, you would be looked after . . . as if you were a worker there. I had some of the privileges that the children who lived on the plantation had because if I were sick or mama, and if our finances were low, Miss Pansy didn't want Dennis' mother to suffer. She was just as interested in us as she was in Dennis' immediate children. See what I'm saying?

She was just that type of person. When I finished high school, she wanted me to go right on to college, but mama needed some finances, and I chose to teach. I taught for a while, and then of course I went right on to college during the

summer months.

She offered to finance my way through college, but mama thought that she needed me more right then to help with the finances. I never asked her to repeat that offer again, of course.

That was him. Dr. Reid would come out to the home, when we had typhoid fever. I was 10 years old. Yes, that spreaded all around. Our entire family had it. Mrs. Hall, I believe, came out to see her and administered whatever services we needed. He saw to it that the doctor mama had chosen, Dr. Grey, came to see us every day. Dr. Grey, a black doctor, lived in Thomasville. Then Mrs. Hall wanted to know how was mama financially, or how the bill would be paid. We always thought that Miss Pansy was one of the persons who helped take care of the bill. She was just nice, and she thought so much of Dennis, and Richard, and she always admired their spirit of togetherness. So she was doing whatever she could to help keep their farm together. We thought that was wonderful.

Dr. Grey and Dr. Wilson were the black doctors when I was small. There were two at that time, as I remember. Finally we had several black doctors. We had Dr. Cobb. We're talking about in the 20s on through the 30s.

JH: Go through these names again now.

The first one that I recalled was Dr. Grey, Dr. Wilson, Dr. Patten, Dr. Cobb, and Dr. Mosely. Now those were the black medical doctors. Anyway, there were about five or six black doctors, you know, that worked in the community.

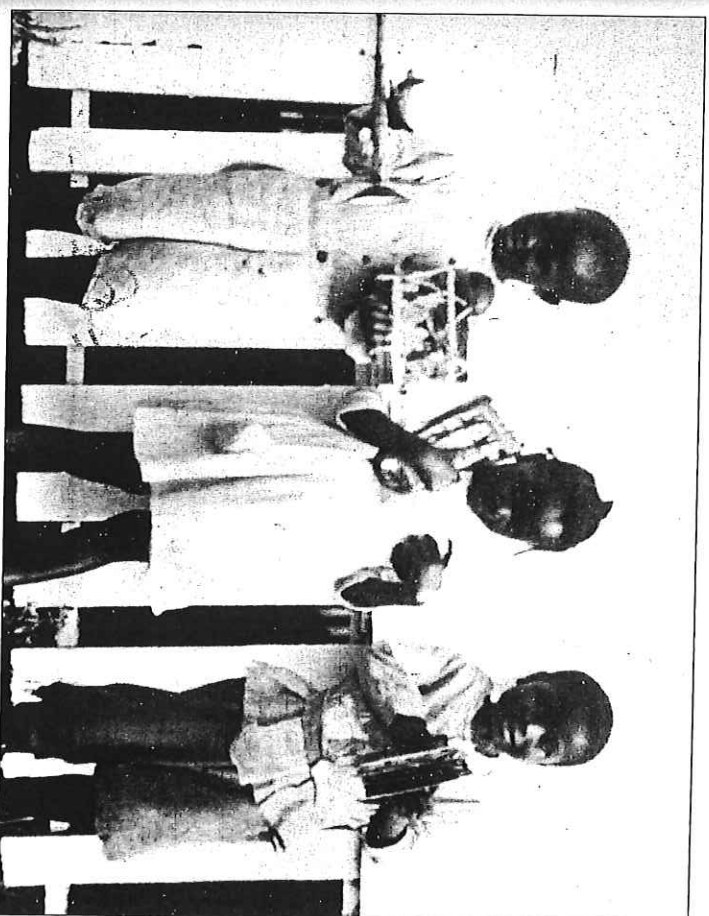
They had practices set up in Thomasville. Well, no I don't know whether they did ... but I think in the 50s, one came here and had access to the hospital. I don't think they had access to the hospitals. I don't recall. I remember one of my sisters had to have surgery, and she went to Dr. Reid, and he took her to the hospital because Dr. Grey was her doctor; but when they found out they she had to have surgery, they took her in through Dr. Reid. I don't think Dr. Grey had any access to the hospital.

Well, no, we were given service by these nurses as I was about to say; if you had any problems or anything as a child, or even grown up, they would see to you going to the doctor, and of course, they delivered the babies for the people not only on the plantation but out on the farms and people who owned their own property. They went out to their homes, too. It was called the Ochlocknee community.

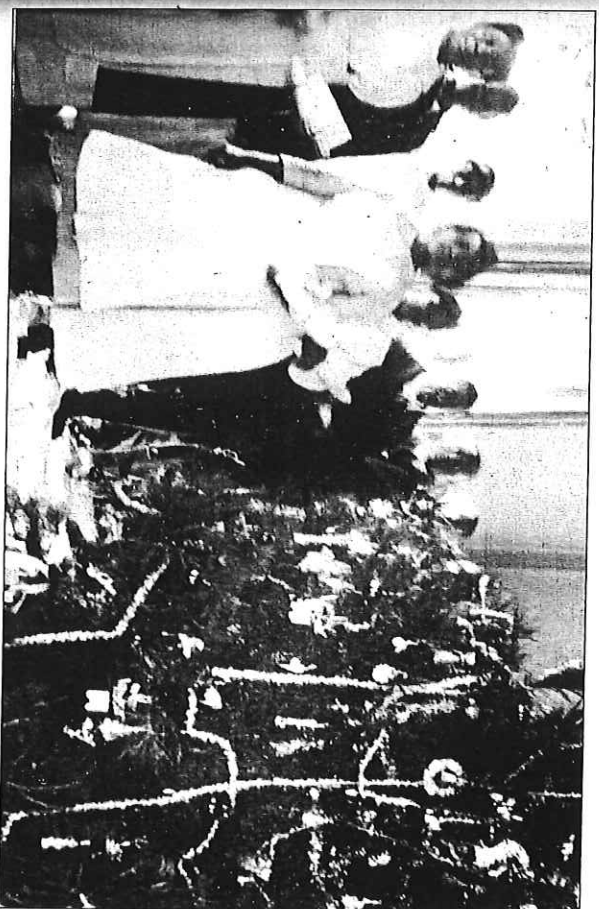
Very nice homes, very well kept—they had those carpenters that worked ... I can remember that they would come to my brother's house when I would be out there on the weekend or holidays or whatever ... if mending needed to be done to the houses, they did that. They saw that everyone was comfortable. They didn't have indoor toilets.

But later on, they put bath rooms, and deep wells were dug. These wells were dug by a machine. The water was pumped to the home by electricity ... they had a movie picture theater area in the barn or the place where they kept the buggies or harnesses. Every week, Mrs. Pansy would show pictures. That was one of the things ... or one of the community activities that was given. They would show the same movie on the plantation that was shown in town the day before. All movies were free.

I didn't go to to many of the special Christmas programs because ... well we would be at my mother's. The Christmas program was held at the Piney Grove Missionary Baptist Church on the plantation. The church faces US 319. We would celebrate at my mother's, but occasionally, we would go there with my brother and family. They would have a huge Christmas tree that was very beautiful. It would be well decorated. A very fine program of music would be rendered. Usually, a minister



Christmas on Pebble Hill was a very special day. Miss Pansy always gave toys and clothes to all the family members. The above photograph was taken c. 1906; the one below was taken around 20 years later.





A young girl smiles as her picture is taken, c. 1922.

would be asked to give a prayer or something, just a few words about Christmas. Then the Santa Claus, usually the Reverend Willie Washington or Lloyd Hadley played that part.

Willie Washington, he was the Santa Claus. Well Lloyd was the Santa Claus a while, yes, and Willie was . . . that's right he did the clown at Easter. Lloyd was the Santa Claus at Christmas. He would pass out the gifts, and he would give us, those who did not live on the plantation, something . . . Mrs. Harvey and Miss Pansy were very sweet about giving gifts to the children who didn't live on the plantation if they attended the special programs. If you went to the Ochlocknee School, you got a gift, and the elder people, like my mother, would get a check or cash money. She gave my mother money every year. Sometime it would be a check, sometimes it would be cash money, uh yes. Then they would have a musical, and the young people would sing and just entertain a few of Miss Pansy's guests. We would have a repass after the Christmas program. We would have ice cream, cookies, or some kind of fruit and nuts. She gave nice gifts.

They would get that from the schools, the measurements, and sometimes from the homes too, but I know when I was there, she would get the teacher to take the children's measurements. She enjoyed buying clothing, rain shoes and other needy things for the children who attended the Ochlocknee School.

Uh huh, and she would give gifts of clothes. Some got night garments, blankets, sweaters, raincoats, etc. I remember my mother had seven blankets that she had been given.

Ochlocknee Elementary School, the first one was a one-teacher school, but this one is the one with the two rooms. It was a two-teacher school. That is a picture of the children on the porch.

Yes, that's Pebble Hill School elementary school. I don't know much about that school. A Mrs. Greenleaf was a teacher there. Later on they had more than one teacher there.

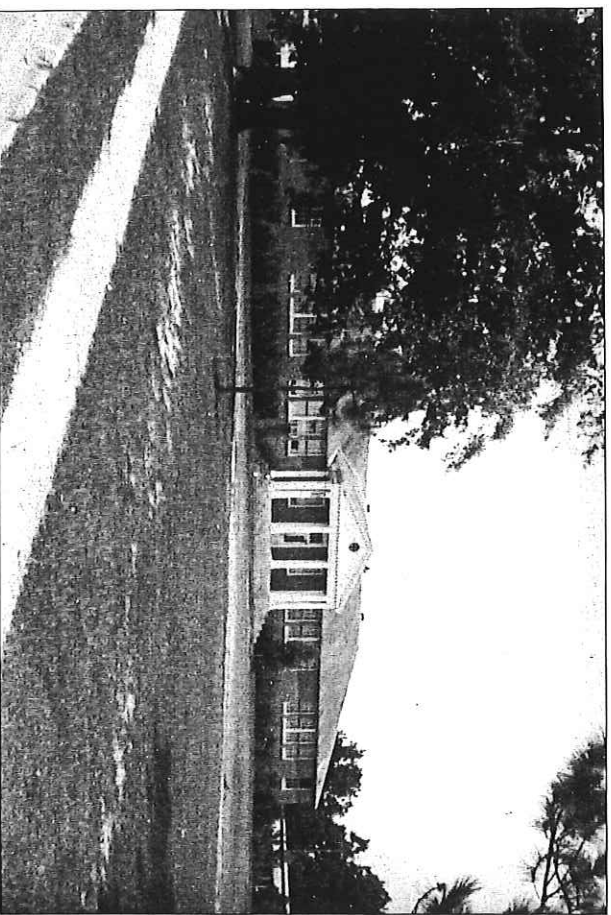
It was in the late 20s and early 30s. The team would play Allen Normal and Industrial School boys on Good Friday during the Easter week. Lloyd Hadley was the coach for the Pebble Hill team.

You all wanted to know about the doctors. Did I tell you all about the doctors, about the sickness? I told you about that, about typhoid, mumps, or whatever illness would come up, measles and stuff like that. Well today's kids don't seem to appreciate the privileges they seem to have as students, over what we had. . . . well, we didn't have the many facilities that the children have today, and the classrooms, the teachers didn't have supplementary materials other than the blackboard when I was growing up. If we had a library, a small library, they did not in the elementary school. More or less, we just had a corner, we just called it the library, maybe with a few books in a closet like section. We did not have a big building like an open room or something like they have today. Children didn't have that back then. Now when I really saw a library was when I came to Allan Normal. They had a portion of the building with a huge room. . . . you know like they have today, and it was set up with a teacher as a librarian. As far as equipment like projectors, we didn't have that, and computers and things like that were not a part of our day. We read and read and read for our knowledge.

When I first started working, I had to make my own supplementary materials on the hectograph pan. I had to use homemade gelatin for making extra seat work for the children to use in the classroom. We had to be responsible for buying all of the



Children at the Beachton School played merry-go-round and hot cross buns.



Many children from Pebble Hill and the surrounding plantations sent their children to Douglass High School in Thomasville. The school, shown here in a c. 1917 photograph taken by Jack Hadley, operated from 1902 to 1970.

extra material to teach with. Raising money to help your class was a part of the job. The county only gave you a few things like a map or two, or one or two dictionaries. We did not have many of the excess things that the teachers and students have today, and the students back then appreciated every thing that was done for them. They used it, and they tried to make the best of everything. Yes, we were given privileges to take them on short field trips, and students participated in some of the sports of that day. Students didn't go just to be jolly. They went to observe and come back and wrote stories, and a very few of us had cameras take a pictures. The children would really develop stories of what they had observed, and it would make you feel proud that the experience really meant something to them.

Charles Copeland (CC): I'm Charles Copeland, of 137 10th Street Southwest, Cairo, Georgia. I was principal of Liberty High School for 23 years. After consolidation, we consolidated with the Washington High School, and after they had total integration, I was counselor for 17 years at Cairo High School. I retired from Cairo High School in 1973. I am the grandson of Anderson Hadley and America Hadley, who were the son and daughter of Jasper Hadley and Washie Hadley. Anderson Hadley married America Hadley, which was his first cousin. Their other family members, Anderson Hadley had a sister by the name of Rebecca, Erin, and, uh, Manerva. He had brothers by the name of Robert Hadley and Richard Hadley. On Jasper's side, these were Watkins children. On Jasper side, he had a son by the name of Dock Hadley, Sam Hadley, Henry Hadley, Barclay Hadley, and Sam Hadley. Sister . . . he had Lula Hadley, which, she married Faulk, Jay Faulk. He had America Hadley, which I stated before married Anderson Hadley and . . .

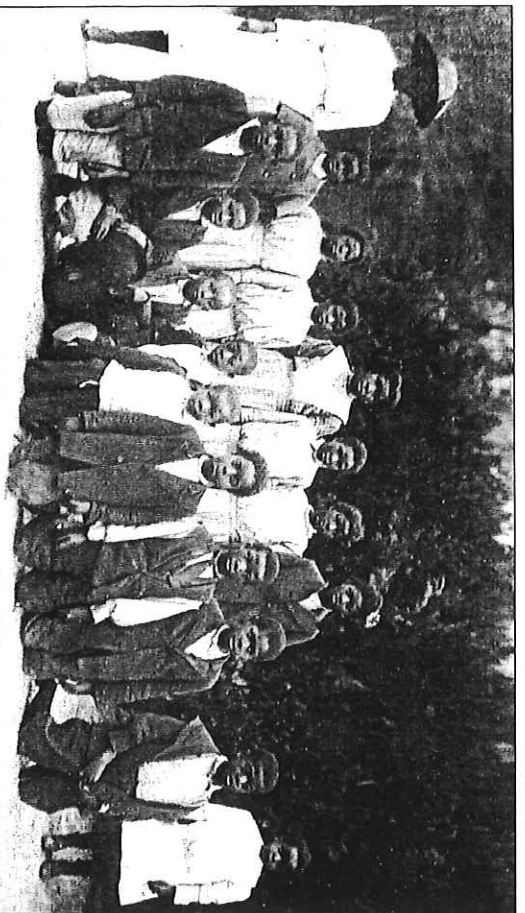
JH: *Mr. Copeland, you mentioned that you taught at Liberty High School for 23 years. What year did you start teaching at Liberty High School?*
October the 2nd, 1933.

JH: *1933, and you retired, and then you . . . they integrated the school system. What did they do? Did they move the schools, to . . . bus them all?*

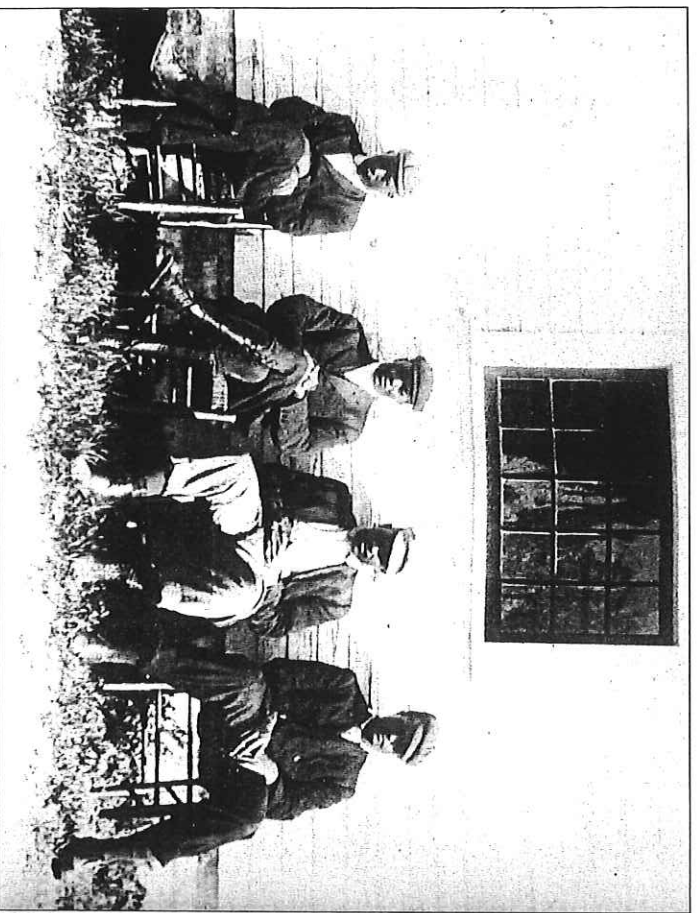
Yes, they moved the school to Cairo, and it became Washington Consolidated High School. They moved the two high schools here and consolidated about seven of the grammar schools into Washington, and of course, that made up the Washington Consolidated High School.

Well, what happened is this. When I first went to Beachton to teach, we had the schools that was known as Grady County Training School. Grady County Training School outgrew itself, so we purchased land and built a new school under my administration and over my supervision. I built the school myself as far as I was concerned. I was a carpenter by trade. And we consolidated three schools; we consolidated Ochlocknee with a school, which was on Pebble Hill Plantation, which consolidated to Cherokee School, which is on the plantation. We consolidated Rocky Hill School, which was about 6 miles below Beachton into New Liberty High School. At the time of . . . before consolidation, we were only doing Junior High School work, but we later went into four year after Richlands had become a Senior High School.

Well we had better students that lived in those days, but then naturally, we had Cairo High School. Mrs. Lucille Morris is one of the students that, when I went there, was just down in the grades, and you can tell about the quality of person she is, and that's where she got her first training. Of course I reckon then after she left there to go to the Fort Valley State College, Robert Hadley was working some place out in Texas, the manager of Sears Roebuck store, and he of course is the quality of the Lib-



Sundays were special days on the plantation. These young children are dressed for church, c. 1911.



Four men relax on a Sunday evening following a week of work, c. 1912. Life on the plantation in the late 1920s was easier than life in the city.

erty High School. And of course we have several others . . . I can name Mrs. Cora Wyche, who was working and Washington D.C. just out of the District of Washington D.C. over in Maryland, and I can name maybe 20 or 30.

Well, I think in both too, parents and teachers, because we stressed at Liberty High School, too, you must excel. You must do better than your parents has done in the past, and of course, the parents helped with their cooperation. Now on the plantations helped . . . they were able to see and be around some of the people who were high cultured and educated that came down to and hunt there in the winter, and go on from there, so I think they gained something from that.

DH: When I was over at Pine Park, I belonged to the Methodist church. I was very affiliated with the Methodist church for the convenience, after I married and moved back over in the Beachton area. I think that man and wife should go to the same church, so I joined the church down there in Beachton, but really, I come out in the Methodist church. That will always be the church of my choice.

CC: Now they had two Methodists church. They had what they call now, you know where it is. I guess just on this side of the river, it's called Hadley Church.

DH: Hadley Church, my granddaddy built that church.

CC: Now here what they did. I said it was to try to get the family together, later years they built another church . . .

DH: In Pine Park.

CC: In Pine Park, which was strictly Hadley's, but that church is not there now. It was right in Pine Park.

CC: And that is where Dock and his wife and others and even my mother went there and joined and stayed a long time before she came back here. 'Cause we are Methodist and whatnot, but they persuaded her to come and join in with them down at this church.

DH: Called Friendship.

CC: Yea, in Pine Park. Of course they never did have a large membership and couldn't find . . . and the other one, but that's what happened.

JH: So you said that the church that exist now over in . . . on this side of the river, Ochlocknee River, is Hadley CME Church, was built by Mr. Hadley . . .

DH: My granddaddy. Dock Hadley.

CC: My grandfather, incidental in that church too, because he was a CME preacher, Anderson Hadley. And of course that was the main church, but later, they built another church. Some of them pulled out of the old Hadley Church and went up there and built them a church in Pine Park. But that church went out some years ago before you got from down here. I think before you left from down here, about the time you left from down here.

Of course they were no longer CME. CME Methodist stayed gone over there. Some others, they had joined the Baptist church, or whatnot, but that church went out, but they did have two churches, Methodist.

Well if you want to keep a good type of feeling it begins from years gone by, then we have got to, uh, try to study harder, know how to get along with our surroundings and what not. We are kinda straying away from what we did years ago, the type of student we put out there before integration, it seems that we don't have that student now. I don't know why chances are . . . we feel because times are better now than it used to be that it will be that way always, and we should try to make . . . I was just saying if we want to succeed 'n whatnot, in life, we've got to do better than what

we are doing now. It doesn't seem that the students today are trying hard to accomplish what we would like to have as they did years gone by—now maybe, because of the advantages we have, student loans and those type of things. When first started in the teaching profession, they didn't have student loans; they didn't have grants; you didn't have free lunch in the beginning. Of course, we had it before I retired. But during that time, you had to bring your lunch to school because they didn't have a lunch. You didn't have a nurse or someone to care for you. You had to take him home, and chances are, as we are living now I would call the glorious ages. Maybe that is because of students losing the lack of whatnot. It seems if they might think they got it made. That is what I would say.

FD: Piney Grove Missionary Baptist Church, my understanding was it came out of Ochlocknee Missionary Baptist Church. When you joined, and I am still a member . . . some hundred and seven years ago, matter of fact on yesterday, they celebrated their 107th anniversary.

I understand this is the third building on the same site; the other two were destroyed by fire. We looked at the church on yesterday; that one, I believe Deacon Willie Johnson our neighbor was telling me he thought it was built in 1926.

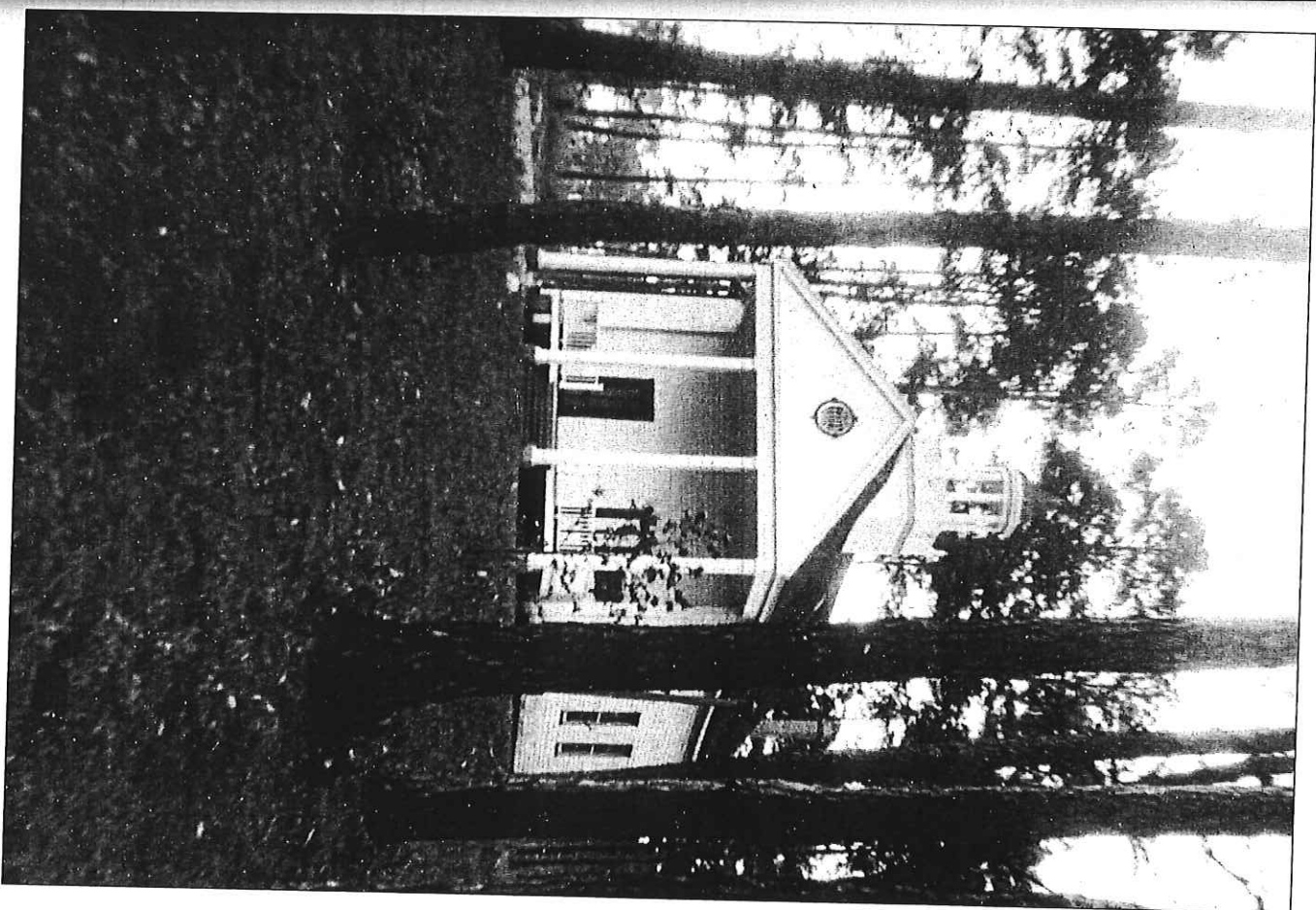
It is so pretty on the inside. It was built by Mrs. Pansy Parker Poe's mother, Mrs. Harvey, and we cared for it. That was the only really upkeep on that church was out there was more or less paint it. I think in my stay on the plantation and knowing about any form of work being on it, the only thing was painting. I think the new roof was just been put on recently. So, uh, it wasn't a whole lot of upkeep; it's a really beat up church. It's well built, inside just yellow pine and not a knot in any of it; it's just perfect.

FD: Beautiful. During the Christmas holidays, we always had a big Christmas program on Christmas . . . at Christmas day down there. Miss Pansy and Mr. Poe would come down, and for each family, they would give them monetary gifts, or we would have fruits, ice cream, cookies, and just pass out, sit up, and put on a big program. Your sisters would always sing and . . .

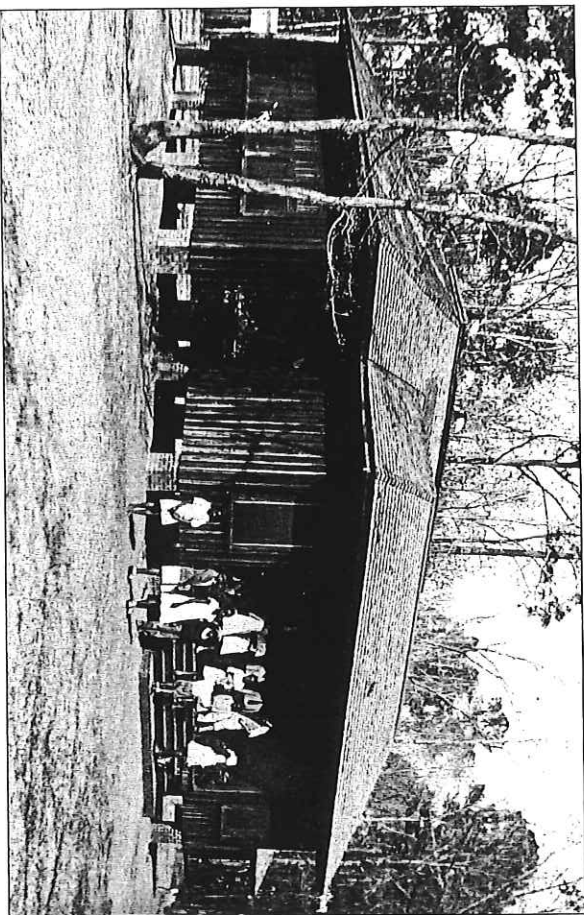
Boy, just have a super time. Hurburt Roundtree kind of like MC'ed the thing. We would always have Santa Claus to come and almost scare the smaller youngens out of the wits. Willie Washington, Muck Washington, the same fellow we saw a few minutes ago, that saved buck dancing with Joshua Walden . . . he would always be the Santa Claus. He would have something unique to say about every family that they would call family names, Dennis Hadley and his family. Then your dad and all of you all would come up, and Miss Pansy knew every youngen by name, and it was so . . . it was just another time that we got together and had a real spiritual type of service.

FD: Jack, my sisters and brothers went to this school. This is called the Ochlocknee School, and it is right across . . . south of the Grady County line. This school is about a quarter of a mile from the house I was born and reared in. I only went to visit the school one day; I never attended here as a student. My older sisters, and brothers did. At that time, a lady by the name of Mrs. Alexander was the teacher. They later consolidated this school and moved it to Beachton. They took the same materials in this school, and they moved it to Beachton and built those four extra classrooms down there on what was later known as the Midget High School.

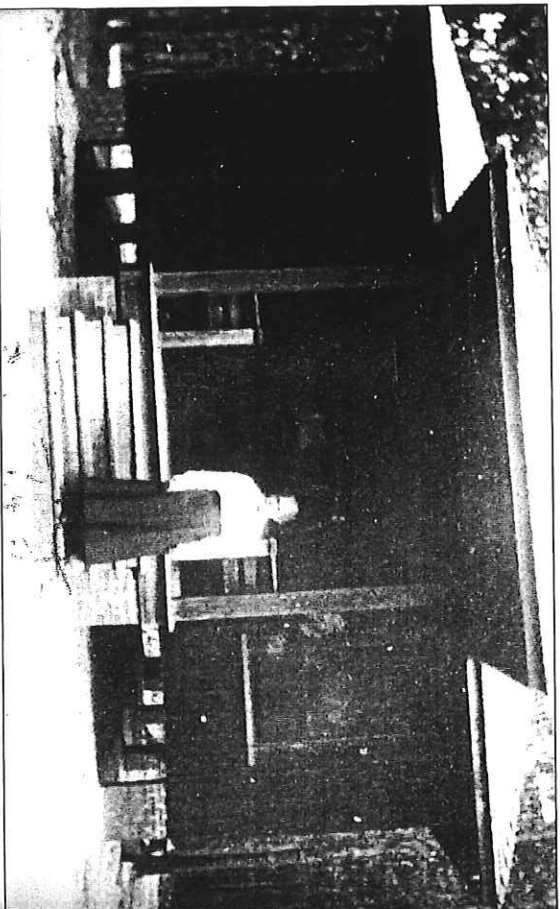
This particular school here served people on the plantation that lived on the northern part of the plantation. The school that we saw a few minutes ago took care of those that lived on the south end of it. But this school, during . . . it was a big active



Miss Pansy's mother, Mrs. Harvey, built Piney Grove Church on Pebble Hill. It is shown here, c. 1926.



The Pebble Hill School was located across from the blacks' cemetery on Pebble Hill. It began as a one-room schoolhouse, with Mrs. Emma James Greenleaf as its teacher. Later, it was divided into two rooms, and Mrs. Moore, an additional teacher, was hired. Mrs. Minnie G. Smith also worked here.



Mrs. Emma James Greenleaf, shown here c. 1911, was the first teacher at Pebble Hill Elementary School. She taught there for over 50 years.

ity taken place during the school closing here, at this school. Because right here, they put the long benches, and parents and friends and well-wishers could sit out here, and the porch was used as a stage. This building over here . . . that's the kitchen, and they built kitchens away so 'cause most times, if a fire was going to start, it would start in the kitchen. So you could lose your kitchen and never lose your main building. The school had two large classrooms . . . one on each side of this long porch here. This school was still open when I was in the fifth and sixth grade. I never did attend that one.

JH: You lived closer to Beachton area to attend school down there.

Right, but the kids that lived in what we called the quarters up there at the main house, they went there. Wardell Green, Doris Mae Green, and the kids from Melrose and Sinkola would come over there. I think that school went to maybe . . . I think the sixth or seventh grade. Then, in the eighth grade, you would come in to Douglas.

Before the consolidated school and after consolidation school, you went in to Magnolia. That school was from one to seven. Then you had to come in to Magnolia. At even the Ochlocknee School they went from, like, one to seven; then you had to come into Douglas because Magnolia was built in like '57. Before then, all my brothers that had gone to the Ochlocknee School, actually graduated from Douglas in Thomasville.

TG: Uhm, living back in the days of Mrs. Ireland, who later became Mrs. Harvey, Mrs. Ireland built the schools exclusive for her children on the plantation, and it is about 40 or more kids at the time I was going to school, and then she tried to secure the best teachers she could get, so she had Mrs. Emma J. Greenleaf, who from Beachton originally. From Bainbridge, but she went to the schools here, Allan Normal and Beachton. So she tried to secure the best teachers that she could get. Not only that, but she had this supervisor or best advice the county superintendent. The superintendent name was, you might take it in the rackets as Broughinton; Broughinton was the superintendent at that time . . . was the Thomas County Schools, and he would visit and check the schools to see how well we were doing. But she was anxious about the employees, their welfare, and their children because along with bringing the children up, that gave them a chance to, as they grew up, as they then go off to school, they would fill in and work on the plantation. But I do remember some of the girls when they got out of the sixth grade. I think we went up to about the sixth or the seventh grade. They came to Allan Normal School, and when they left there, she followed it through and sent them to Fort Valley State College.

JH: Mr. Gabriel, back to the schools; I'm a product of Ochlocknee Elementary School. I went there at the time they called it the Primer, and then the first grade, and quite natural, as you mentioned, Mrs. Ireland and Mrs. Pency Poe made sure she had the qualified teachers so that mean that you didn't, they just didn't pass you on through school, I had to repeat a grade, and that caused me to come out of school two years later when I graduated from high school, at Douglas High School. However . . . so that tells me that she did get the best teachers, and uhm, and they, I worked, like I said the Ochlocknee School. Now what year did you attend the school there? When you left in 1926, what were your age at that time?

Fourteen.

I really don't know because Mrs. Greenleaf lives in Bainbridge, but the students that she had, they were some of the . . . well, let's say, some of the best. I mean the

teachers. She wanted to be sure that the children were provided with the best in that day and time. Let her just to say something or to show you how; now Mrs. Greenleaf was a left-hander, but all students that came to her left-handed, they had to write right-handed. She wrote right-handed, yet she was left-handed, and to name one Mrs. Louise Johnson for further reference. She will tell you the same thing. She had to learn to write right-handed even though she was left-handed, 'cause that was the rule there.

Piney Grove Church was especially built for those who worked there on the plantation, and naturally, they had to service their people there in the mornings, so it was kind of afternoon before they could get there. They wanted to be sure that their people got a chance to go to church and serve the Lord, so they built a place for them and seated it and did everything to make it comfortable and convenient for them. Ochlocknee Church . . . some of the employees were working for the place, so Mrs. Poe did quite a bit of work, and I think she put that front on there and the other and a big mirror in the back. Not a mirror but a glass in the back, memorial thing in the back there. So much was done to bring up the religion as well as the recreation part of the plantation.

JH: Now, I got another question, about the schools here on the plantation. They had two schools, one Pebble Hill Elementary School, and then they had Ochlocknee School. Can you all elaborate on those for us? You know, can you tell me if any of your kids go to the schools up here on the plantation?

Sam: Yes, you had to start off at the kindergarten. I went on until I got to the fourth, then I had to quit. After papa died, I had to quit and carry the farm on.

Sam: Aw shoot, Miss Pansy built Piney Grove for the people. That was her church.

JH: That's Piney Grove Missionary Baptist Church.

Sam: She built that for the blacks to have service there.

Sid: After it got burned down.

JH: The church had been built once before? The first church; the members built it that worked here on the plantation?

Sid: Yea, just like Ochlocknee and Ray Castle was setting the woods on fire.

JH: Ray, what's his name?

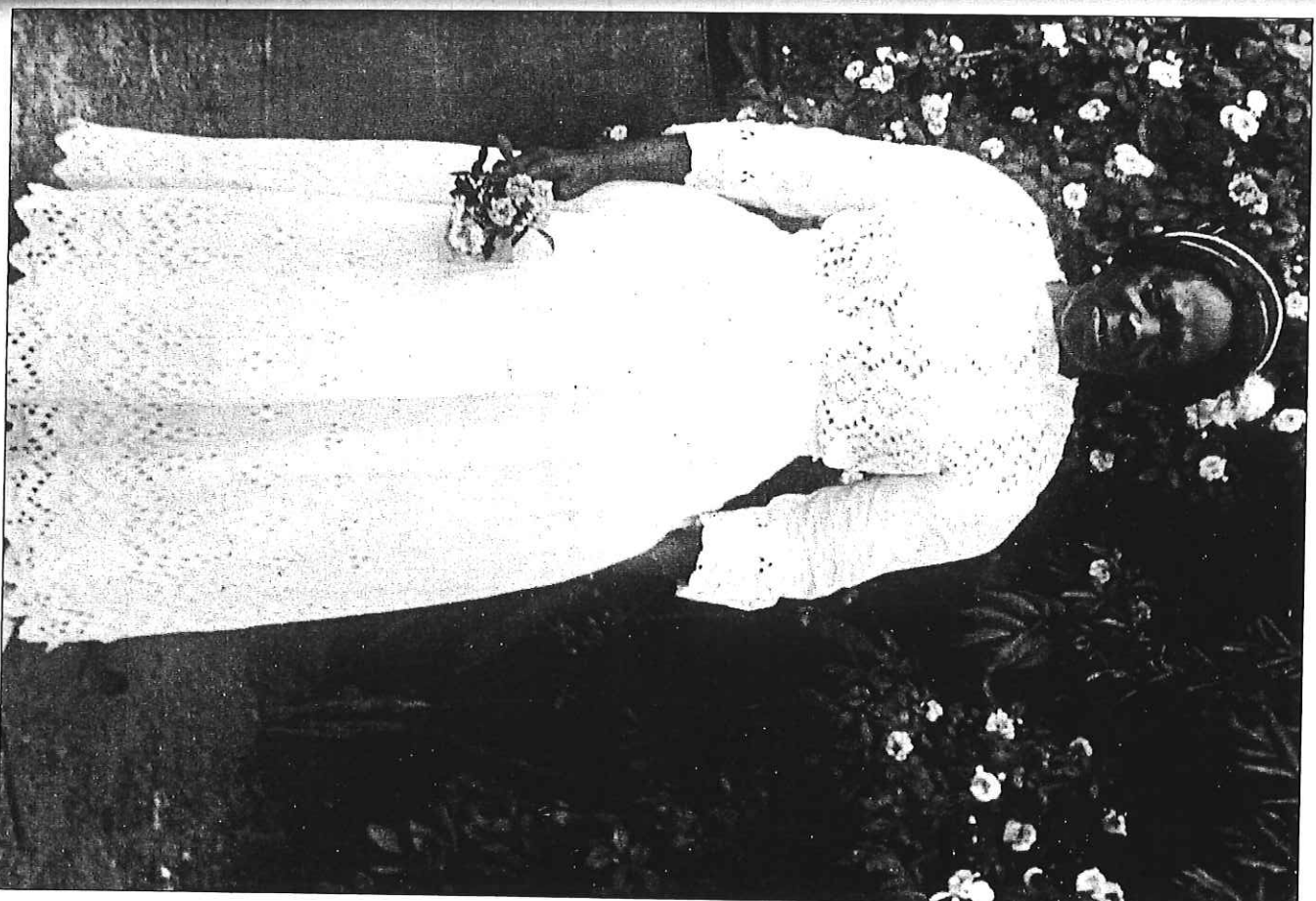
Sid: Ray Castle was burning the woods off and didn't leave anybody up there to watch. Then that church got burned up.

Sam: Her car got burned up to.

Sid: Just like Ochlocknee Church. This church here, Miss Pansy . . . Mrs. Harvey was going to build this church. Mrs. Harvey was going to build this church but after . . . then Miss Pansy. It was a long time before she started, 'cause she had meetings a long time in Ochlocknee. A long time, then the members had to make up some money, so much money; then she started on it. Then she built it, and that was all she brought at her church. Certain kinds of meeting you didn't have it in her church. Because I heard her say they had some kind of meeting there. Some kind of meeting, but anyway, she said she had to know that, and they went down there and nailed it up.

JH: Is that right? So she didn't believe in certain meetings to take place, and because she had at hold her hand. Now the church still exists, and membership is . . . I don't guess it's a whole bunch of people attend there. But it is enough members to keep the church going I understand.

Sid: Oh yea. You didn't have to; she kept the church up the whole while she was living. Well, she put running water down there. The whole while they were there, they



An elegantly attired woman poses for a photographer after a Sunday gathering, c. 1907.

wanted the kitchen built.

JH: Okay.

Mrs. Emma, she told them, she didn't want to built no kitchen onto her church, and so just cover that foundation up, what they had dug out there. But Mrs. Emma kept on at her until she decided they could build a kitchen there, but build it out towards the edge of the woods not to her church.

JH: Oh really?

That's right.

JH: So that's why the kitchen now is built away from the church and not attached to the church.

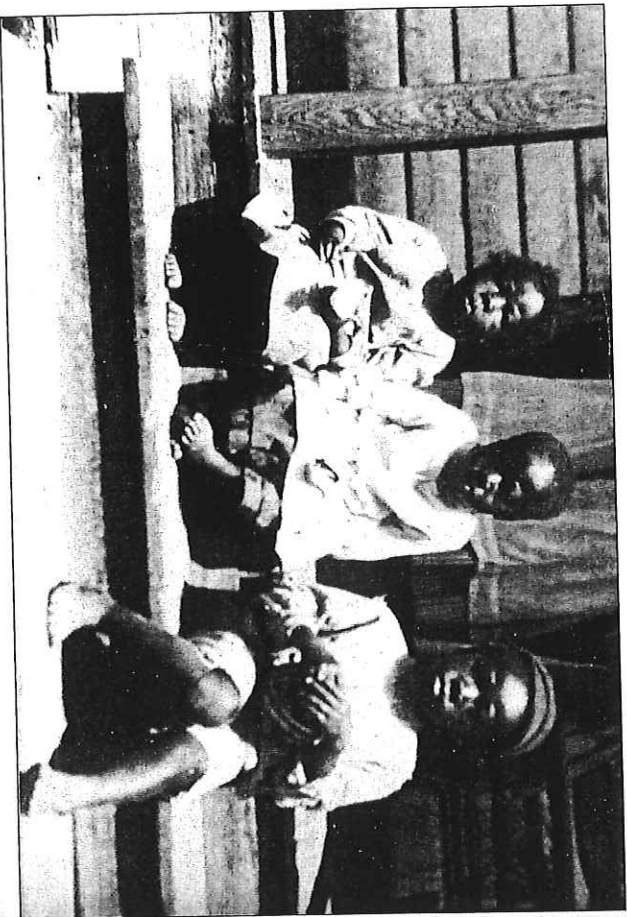
Estrella Hadley Groover(EHG): Hello, I'm Estella Hadley Groover. I was born in Dun-cansville, Georgia. At this time now, it's called Beaction, and I was born in the year of 1921, October the 14th. We lived on my grandmother's place; that's where I was born, and we lived there until I was about three years old, and we moved to Thomasville, and then we lived there, and I went to school at Allan Normal, and then I . . . we lived in Thomasville until I was ten years old, and we moved to Pebble Hill. And at that time I was at the end of the fourth grade. School was about to close. It was something like in April or May of '32. And I finished the fourth grade there, and then I went to school at Pebble Hill until through the seventh grade, and then we had our little graduation. Only two girls and four boys were in our class, and they were Ramona Stillman, James Metcalf, Edward Delaney, Anser Delaney, and Louis Cromarie. Anser Delaney, I said Anser Delaney last . . . okay anyway, those were the ones that were in my class, and we had our little graduation there at Pebble Hill, at the Ochlocknee School, which is on Pebble Hill Plantation. And as we, as uh, every-one knows during the time that I was in school down there, we had a 4-H Club and our demonstrations agent, 4-H demonstration agent, her name was Mrs. Jordan that lived in Cairo, and being that this school was in Grady County, we would always go to Cairo, where our little, uh, um, workshops in the summertime . . . and she would teach us how to cook different things, and it was under Mrs. Jordan that I learned how to do canning . . . and my mother also; we learned how to can in a can-ner. And all before that time, my mother would can fruits such as blackberries. We would pick here on each side of our house . . . there were blackberry patches, and we would go out in the summertime, and we picked, we would . . . she would can over 100 jars of blackberries. And then there were peach trees around we planted; we had peach trees in our yard. We had a big lime tree . . . a big lime tree in our yard, and at that particular time, we didn't know what they were. And mother wouldn't let us bother with them. She said don't bother them; they may be poison, but this big tree and all these big limes on there, and we didn't know what to do with them, and they would just fall on the ground and rot. But now, since I've learned what they are, I wished then that we had learned to eat them. So, then we would have crabapple trees, and we took the crabapples, and we would make jelly. Mix it in with the grapes and that would make good stiff jelly because they were real sour. And we would eat them too. Children like to eat sour things. And then there were satsuma that grew around on the plantation, and we . . . in the summertime, we would go, after we take our baths, to take daddy his lunch. We would have to take his lunch in the summer-time, and then we would just rode through the woods to the pomegranate trees and the satsuma trees and get all those things and the plum orchards and all like that. At times, we were little devils, but still we, as being kids, you know . . . but it was



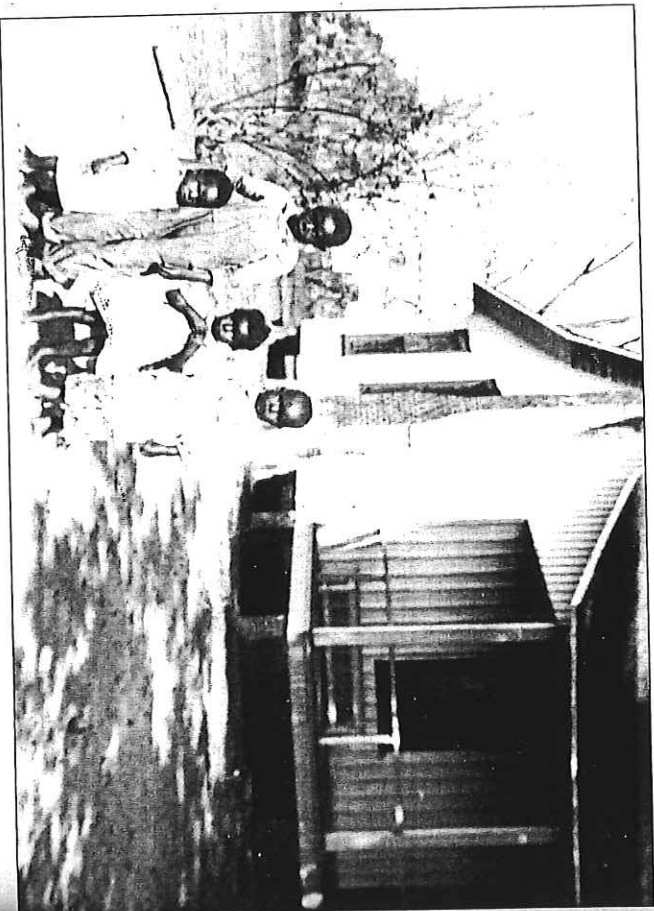
This c. 1930 school photograph is probably of students from the Greenwood Plantation School, where Mrs. Hatcher was the teacher. (Photo courtesy of Henry Cobb, a World War II veteran.)



Four school friends pose for a photographer, c. 1913.



Three children sit still for a moment, though they don't look all that pleased with the photographer, c. 1913.



Another group of children buddle together for a photograph, c. 1913.

fun for me. Mother would send us from . . . to visit our family or some of the people around in the community. Instead of us taking the roads, we'd go through the woods and the fields you know, and pick blackberries on our way and pick huckleberries, and all kinds of little things like that and then stop by the fish pond and, uh, you know, there were some springs on the plantation too, and we would go back there, and then we would go, you know, the water was always real cool, you know. We lived in the country where there was no . . . we had to buy ice; you didn't get ice 'til on Saturday. And, uh, we would get up and go down there and on, down to the springs and get this cool water, and it was very . . . to us at that time, it was very good because it was real hot. Uh, we had a 4-H Club, and, uh, we would learn how to do handicraft work. We made, uh, place mats, and we made hot mats to put hot plates on. We made baskets that you could sit flower pots in, and we made rugs out of pinestraw. We used the long needle pinestraw and used wrapping. There was a type of wrapping that the teacher would order, and she'd get great big bags, and then she'd pull it out, you know, and we would use this wrapping to make these objects. And oh, we just made some of everything. That's where I got most of . . . This was at Ochlocknee school.

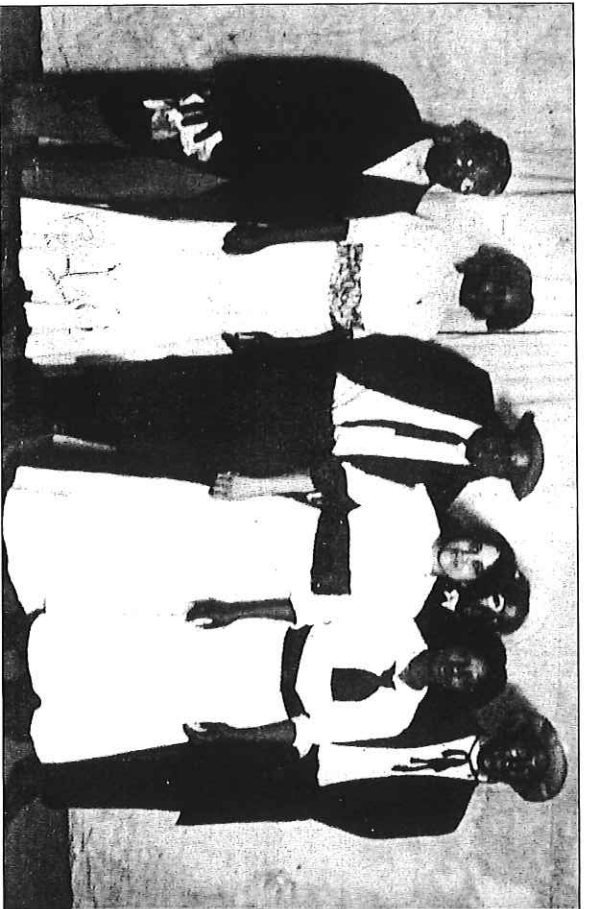
All this I got at . . . I went to . . . the next time I was at Pebble Hill School, it was just like September 'til Christmas. And I was like second grade. But this was done on Pebble Hill.

We were from a family of fourteen, and, uh, when I was in high school, my first two years in high school, I stayed with Aunt Betty on Fern Street. Then it was time for J. D. to start to Douglass. Well, he went to school to Douglass. They would make sure that all three of us went to Douglass three years, at the same time. Then . . . after then, he took J. D. and L. C. Daddy out of school and put them to work, 'cause he said he wasn't able to pay for us going to school. See he had to pay Mrs. Hadley to, uh, . . . see I roomed with Auntie the first two years, but after they started going to school, then it was cheaper for Auntie the first three of us to go on the bus. I think it was like 50¢. I don't know if it was 50¢ a week or 50¢ for something, a person. At that time, he wasn't able to send them to school.

JH: What grade was they going into, the eighth grade?

Well, neither one of them finished high school. It must was like ninth grade. But they went to Douglass, so they must was like taken out of school at . . . when they were in the ninth grade. Maybe one was tenth and the . . . no I think Junior was ninth grade and L. C. had ninth grade . . . he was taken out of school. But neither one of them finished Douglass. J. D. went off to . . . he went to, uh, Georgia Baptist College or somewhere up there. High school—he finished high school there, and L. C. never did finish. He never got a high school diploma. He the only one of the children that never got a high school diploma.

At Christmas time she would always have a Christmas tree. And this tree, when I was a little girl, this tree was at the barn in back of where they kept the buggies, the buggy stable. In front, it was what they called the main garage. They would move the buggies; they had a place at where they kept the buggies there. They would move them one side or do something with them. But they would make a space there for us and put benches there for us to sit, and she would have a little program. And Mr. Mutt Washington, well we called him Mutt, but he became a minister later. Reverend Washington, his name is Willie Washington, before he came a Christian and a minister he used to would buck dance up on a table at Christmas time. He would be dressed all up, you know with his mouth all white and all kind of old clothes on



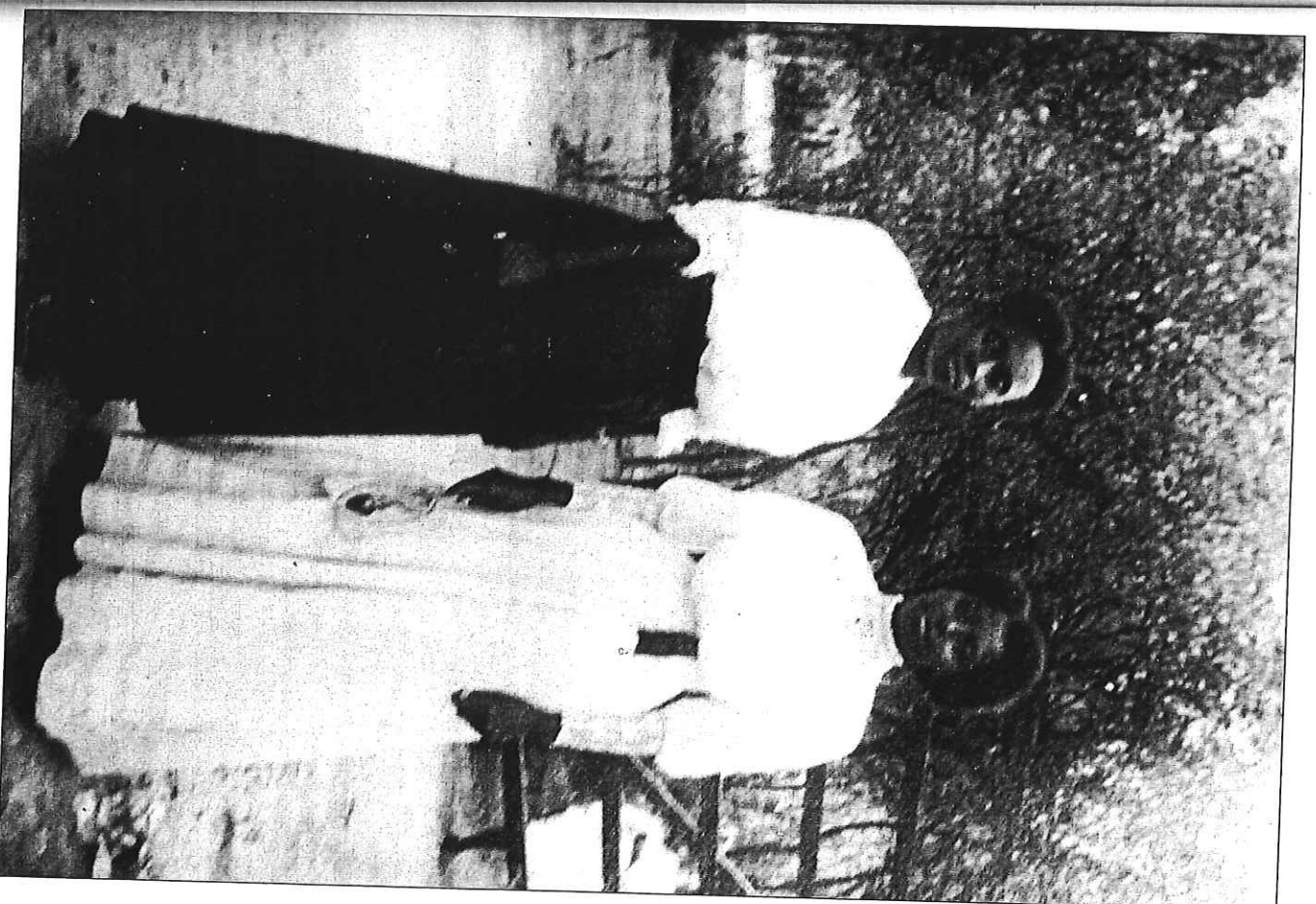
These Pebble Hill players entertained on special occasions, c. 1907.

everything. After he do his little doing, then they would have we kids to sing a little song. You know we were small at that time, but she would have us to sing a little Christmas carol.

These were all black kids on the plantation. And after we get through with that, then she would start passing . . . she would call up the family, and that's how we would know who all the families were on the plantation. Because sometime maybe, last, somebody would be here this Christmas, but they moved in on the plantation that wasn't here last Christmas. Because on the plantation, they people that didn't do anything but farm. They were sharecroppers.

There were sharecroppers like the Simmons and the Roundtrees and all, they were sharecroppers. And there were quite a few that were sharecroppers. And when Christmas time, she would call the families up, and she would always leave our family for last. She would call all the small families up where maybe there was nobody except the husband and the wife or maybe two or three in a family. She would get all them up . . . call them up first to get them and give them their gifts. And then she'd get on the big families. She would call the Roundtrees; she called the Simmons; and then when she get to Dennis Hadley family, we were always last. Because we were always . . . we were the big family. And she would give everybody a gift, and at that time, our gifts would consists of two dresses. Maybe this Christmas you would get two dresses and then of course some kind of toy or either a book. I remember getting a story book. Then we would get fruits and nuts and candies and things like that, and a sweater. If you got two dresses and a sweater, next Christmas you got two dresses and a rain coat. And then the wives, which were the mothers, would get like, uh, maybe two blankets this Christmas, and next Christmas they might get like sheets, I believe it was.

They would in the summertime, they would always send somebody around and



Holidays were festive occasions where people dressed in their Sunday best. Mannie McQueen and a friend pose for a photograph, c. 1910.



Lloyd Hadley played Santa Claus for the kids and gave out presents on Christmas Day. This photo was taken in 1940.

get the sizes. Uhuhh, and then they would, you know, measure you, and then you know or either if you knew if somebody was away like some of the children was at school or something like that; their parents would tell them, "oh well, she wore like a 12 or whatever."

Oh yes! Cousin Lloyd was the Santa Claus, Lloyd Hadley. Lloyd Hadley, he is a cousin of ours. He was big and fat and everything, and they would have him all dressed up in a Santa Claus suit. He would always come out there with this "Ho Ho Ho" and all like that . . . just like Santa Claus would, and he would do his little jolly, jolly talking and, you know, right at the beginning of the program.

And I'm sure they did, I don't know how far they went in college. See back in those days, you could teach school if you finished high school. Princetta finished Allan Normal, "teacher's course." During the high school, the 12th grade, they had a teacher's course. And then when they graduated, they could go right on to teaching school. So I'm sure they had at least a high school education.

Chapter Three

RECREATION AND LEISURE

PHG: Free movies on the plantation, the children were given the privilege of going. There were certain hours and certain days she would have movie shows for the children . . . everything was free. They lived on the plantation in a nice big home. As long as they worked they had a free home. I understand in the later years, people living on the plantation paid rent.

Fourth of July was not celebrated on Pebble Hill. They had a celebration on the Hannah's place; I think they called it Sinkola. Now they had a picnic and ball games and other fun activities. These were always quite enjoyable times.

Now the 20th of May was celebrated when I was a little girl. Now that was just among the people in the community. She (Miss Pansy) didn't have anything to do with that. When I was a child, it was just by the local people in the Ochlocknee community, I understand in later years, Mrs. Pansy started having something up there near the plantation Big House. But the 20th of May picnic would be celebrated at the Ochlocknee School.

Well it was suppose to be the time when the slaves in the Ochlocknee Community found out that they were free. I think it was on the 20th when some of the areas got the word. I guess that was the day when they found out that the slaves were free. When they got the message . . . now that is what my mother would tell us. I would have to go by what she said because it was the practice. The people would come together and have a picnic and retell stories of their parents. Games, dances, ring plays, and other stage and ground activities were held.

Easter Sunday was one of the most enjoyable celebrations given for the plantation people and their families and friends when I was a girl. The picnic was held in a large open space between Mrs. Harvey's house and the tennis court. Tables were set, and

families were to sit together. The food came from the kitchen of Mrs. Harvey's home. The butlers, maids, and cooks served the tables. This was done as if you were in an open dining room. When dinner was over, everyone would gather close to the Big House, where the benches from the tables were places for people to watch the games and other activities. Another section of the yard designed as a puzzle of shrubbery served as the place to hide the eggs. When the egg hunt was over, special prizes were given to those with the lucky eggs. Children would sometime perform on a make shift stage. Then Dr. Martin L. Walton, a black dentist, and his quartet would sing. Mrs. Harvey, Miss Pansy, and their guest sat in a special section in the yard and observed the fun.

Yes, he had a quartet, and they would sing a number. Along with this activity, she would have several little games like sack races, apple biting, people taking eggs in a spoon and see how far you could walk. I can remember they would have . . . my mama would called it a cake walk. You would put a bucket of water on your head and see how far you could walk with that without the bucket tumbling. I can't remember all the different activities, but there were a lot of things going on. Many, many prizes were given to the winners.

Yes, a lot of things going on that you could win little prizes . . . she would have. Who ever would win would get a prize. Everybody who entered the contest would get a prize one way or the other. She would have something to encourage you for competing. They had a lot of games they would play. They would play all afternoon. Lunch would usually begin around 11:30 or 12:00. This would be a big dinner. The eating was continuous until about 5:00. The evening would end it up with the greased pig race by the men. Whoever, would catch the pig got a prize and the pig as well. Year later, the picnic tables were discontinued. Lunches were given instead on baskets. I was too large to help past the baskets, but the regular activities were still going on.

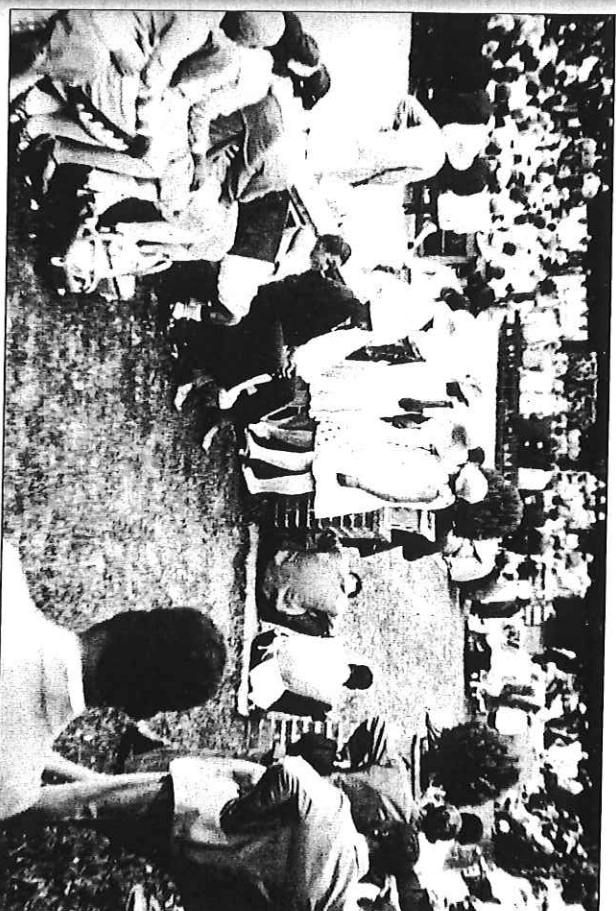
Twenty-nine or thirty. Thirty was when she would give the baskets that they had fixed in the big kitchen. Everything was fixed up in the big kitchen, and then school kids would form a line. The basket would passed to everyone. People would sit in chairs and on the ground. Children from both schools would take a basket and pass them out to all the people who were invited. Everyone sat around on the ground and enjoyed the fellowship and eating. They would give you so many hours to have your lunch, and then after that, everyone assembled back around the big house for the usual activities.

EHG: Well, you know, I think that came from years ago where we depicted as clowns . . . and I . . . whenever there was a movie made, they would always depict black folks as clowns! They would always have their mouths white, and they would even blacken their faces dark enough. They have on some crazy hat or something on, and old raggedy clothes. Well, you know, maybe some lived that way, but you know not all of them. And so he was depicted as the way black people . . . the way they saw the black people.

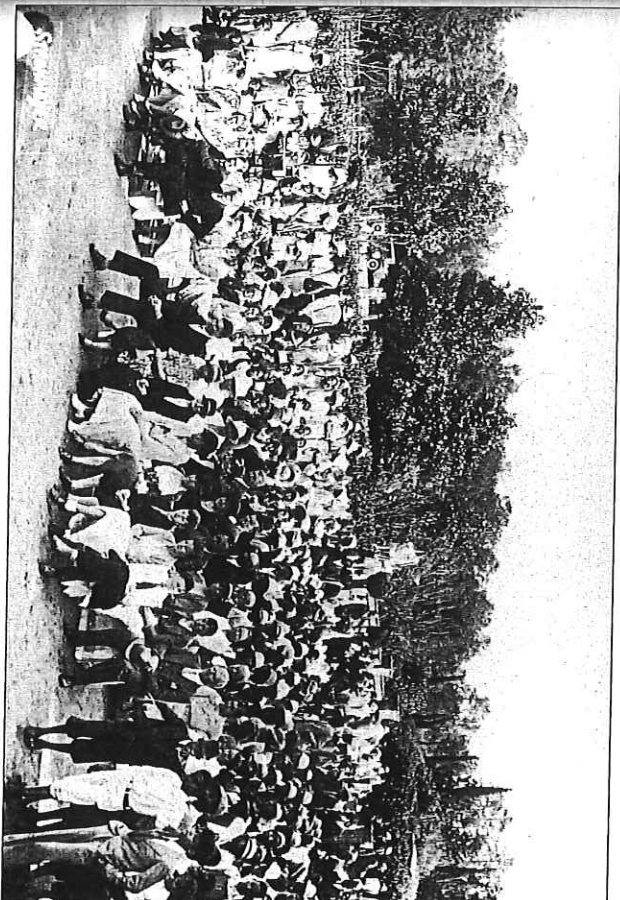
JH: *He just clowned, and everybody enjoyed seeing him clown, white as well as the blacks.*

And he would always have something to say funny concerning Mrs. Harvey or Miss Pansy, and it was funny to them too. And everybody laughed. He was just a real clown of the show.

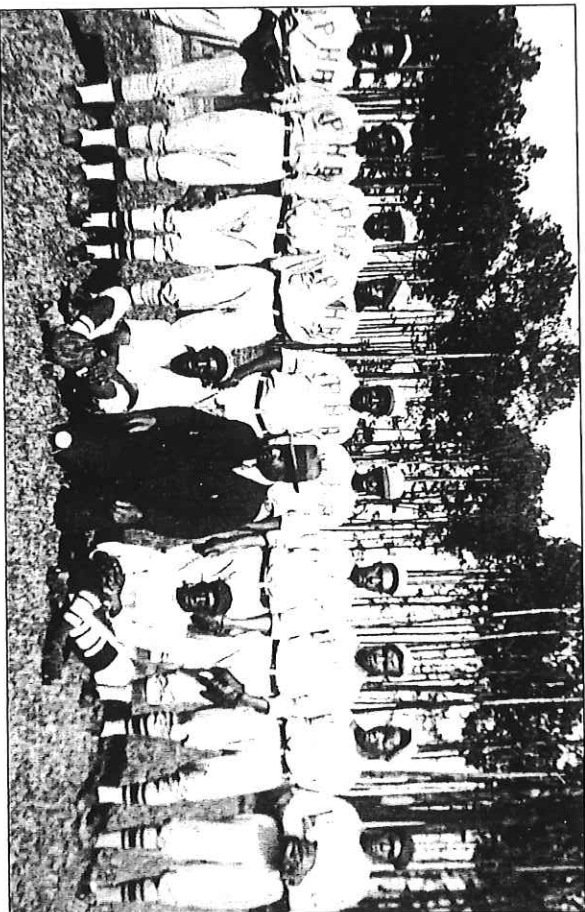
Well, that was great, but Fourth of July . . . but they didn't have the Fourth of July picnic on Pebble Hill. They had them on the Melrose Plantation.



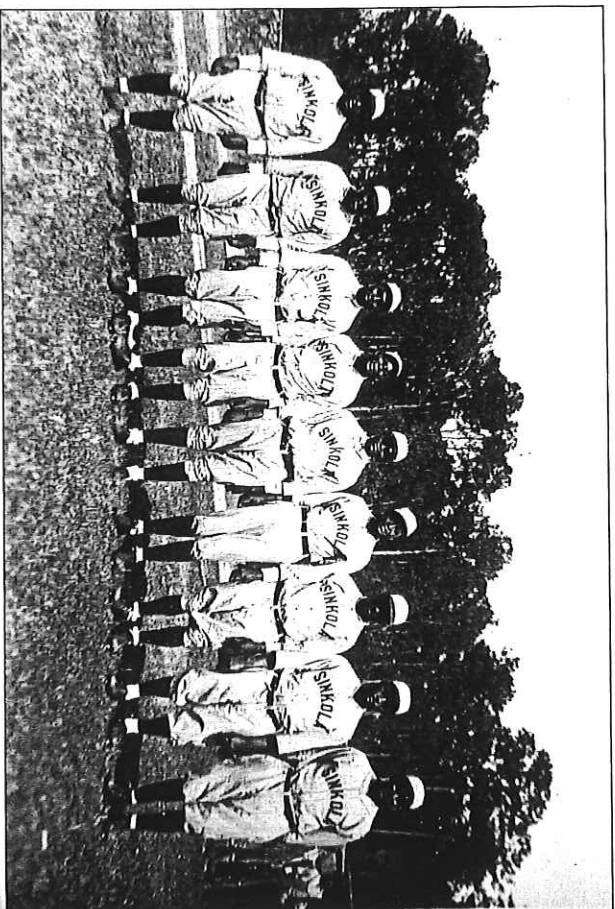
Easter was a remarkable day for the owners and workers of Pebble Hill. People were able to kick back, relax, and enjoy each other's company.



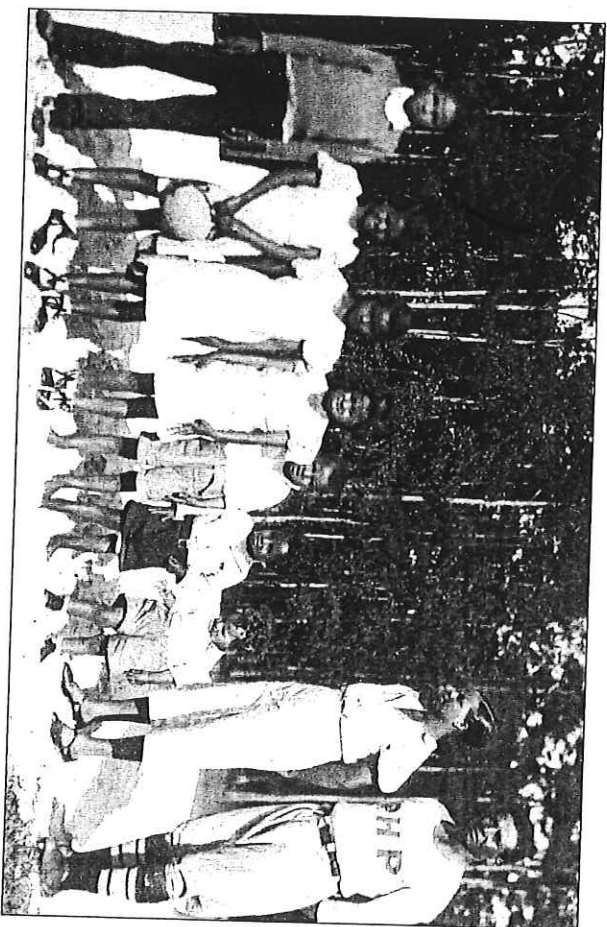
Celebrating Easter brought everyone together. This photograph was taken c. 1931 by H.A. Strohmeyer Jr. of New York.



The Pebble Hill baseball team was well-dressed out by Miss Pansy. Manager Lloyd Hadley is in this c. 1923 photograph. Other plantations had teams, too.



The Sinkola Plantation team, shown here c. 1923, was very good as well. The big game between the two teams took place every year on July 4. Ice-cold watermelons, ice cream, barbecue, and Brunswick stew were available to everyone.



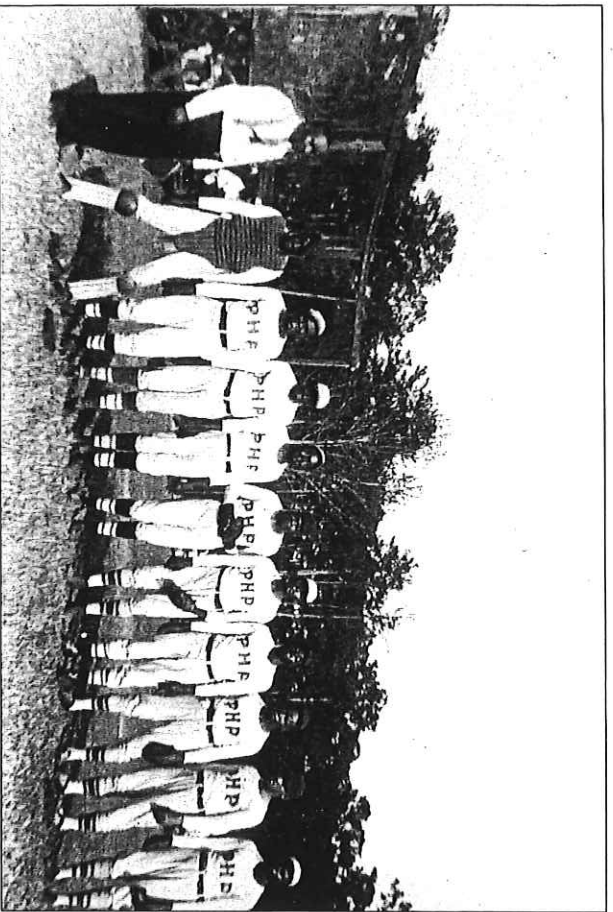
Josbus Walden Sr. was the first black man appointed as a superintendent on any plantation in the southwest Georgia area. He ran the Maybaw Plantation for 50 years, until his death in 1968. Shown here c. 1930, from left to right, are members of Josbus's family: Robert Livingston, Lillian, Francener, Juanita, Josbus Jr., William S. "Bill," Hallard, Fleeta (Josbus's wife), and Josbus Sr.

They had a rather big ball diamond over there, and they had this great big picnic ground, and then there was this great big field that they had for the team. There was thing because Miss Pansy would always be there.

And they were all black. Cousin Lloyd Hadley, our cousin, was the, uh, umpire. . . . and if Miss Pansy was there, Pebble Hill won, every time! She would buy the uniforms, 'cause they didn't have to buy those.

Well, we don't know. It was on the Melrose plantation where we had the picnic. And the plantation furnished all the . . . all we did was just go there and eat and have a good time. They had barbecued chicken; they would have barbecued goat; and after you get through eating, then they would start busting watermelons. We never took time to cut them; we never cut some into, but some, we just bust and eat out of them like that. Then they would have big barrels of lemonade. And, uh, anyhow, you had a good time, and then you would go and sit and watch the ball game. And different teams would play.

Well, you know, the 20th of May celebration they would have like a little barbecue something at Pebble Hill, and it was mostly, you know, it wouldn't be a whole lot of people there 'cause it would be like the plantation folks. Go down there, and they had a place set off, you know, like a little picnic like, and they would have barbecue. It was nice. It wasn't a great big thing, but it was nice. They would always have one on the 20th of May.



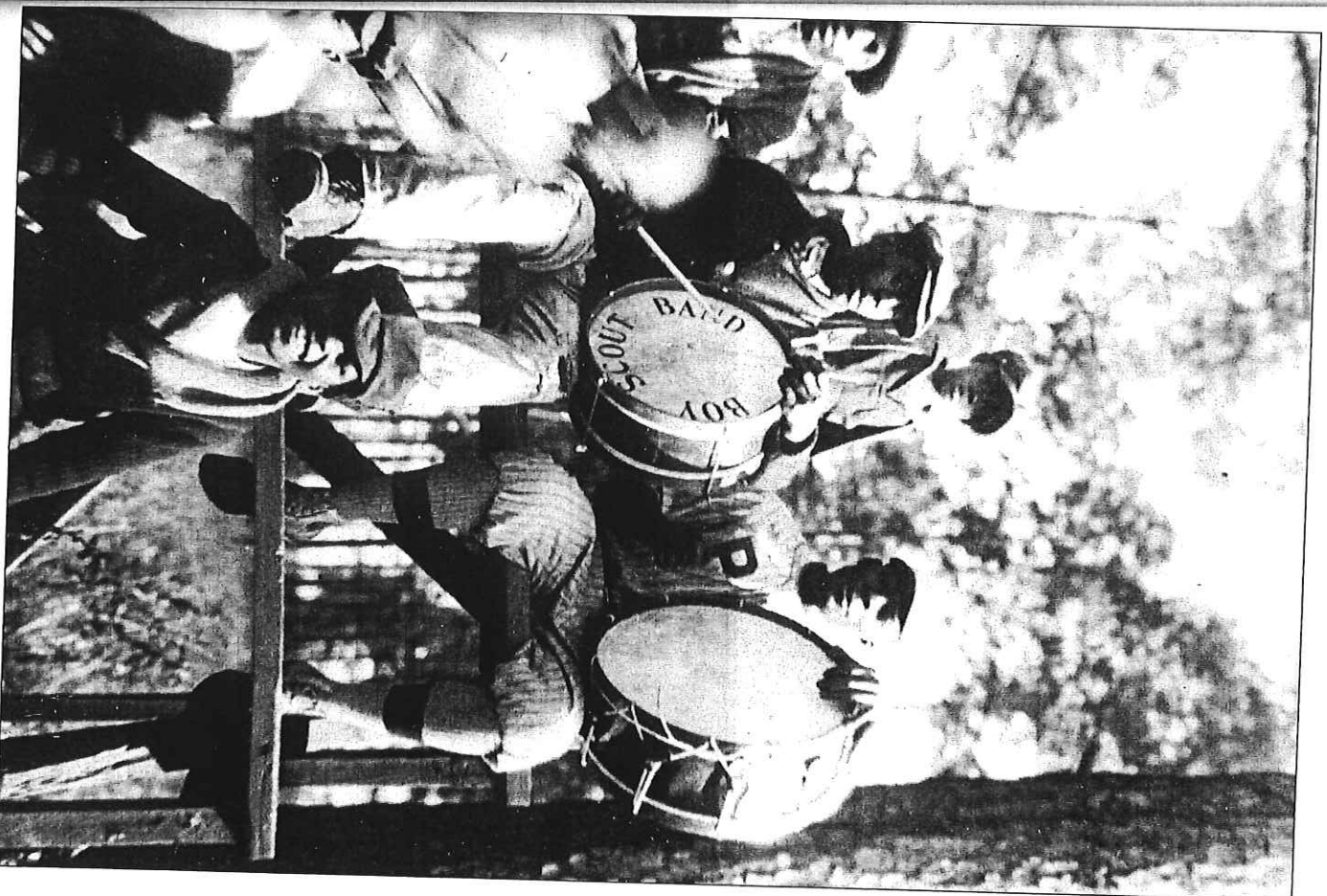
Baseball was the sport of choice on all the plantations. Pebble Hill's team played Greenwood, Sinkola, Melrose, and other plantations, c. 1923.

Well, the 20th of May was the time when the slaves were suppose to been freed. And, you know, Georgia celebrated two. They celebrated the 20th of May, and they celebrated the 28th. And the reason they celebrated the 28th, because they said the slaves in Georgia didn't know about it until eight days later. Now that's what was told to me when I was a kid. 'Cause they, some plantations, would have 28th of May, but out to Pebble Hill . . . they would always have a 20th of May picnic.

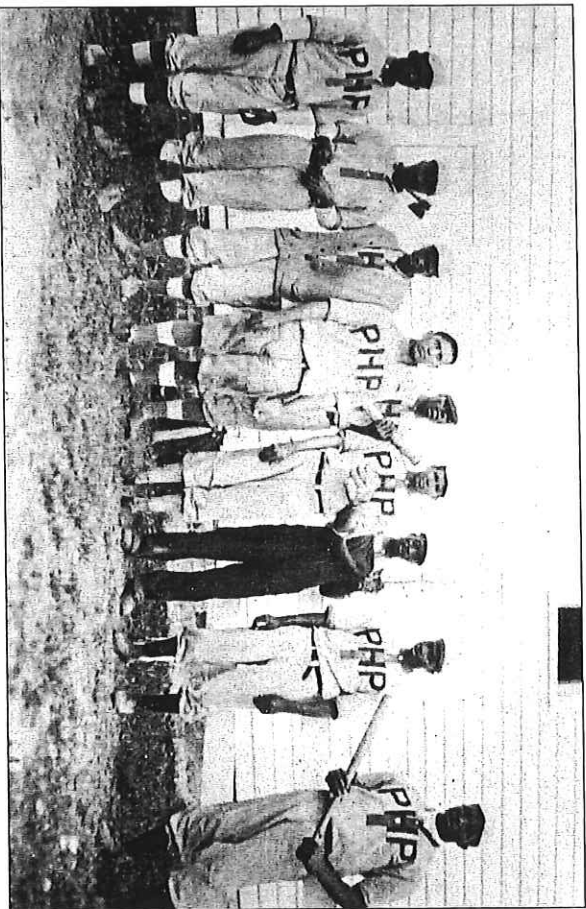
DH: Yea, all kind of baseball, and well, after school I think that would . . . Mr. Copeland can kind of know about that. They were interested in basketball, baseball, which we had on Saturday afternoon; it was very good. I'm speaking about living on the plantation now.

CC: It's on the plantation, remember now, they had a baseball team up at the Haskell place, and couple of the others from other plantations had a baseball team, and they would come up and play each other. They had baseball teams and things, and then of course they had the 20th of May . . . was the picnic and so forth. That was prominent. That was when the negroes were set free on the 20th of May down here. And everybody took off on the 20th of May, and of course they would have big picnics and what nots. You remember that? Of course the Haskell place, where they come out to Chelgood, or stay on Pebble Hill, and they had a baseball team. And up at Pebble Hill, there was a fellow by the name of, I make a mistake, Jim Mitchell?

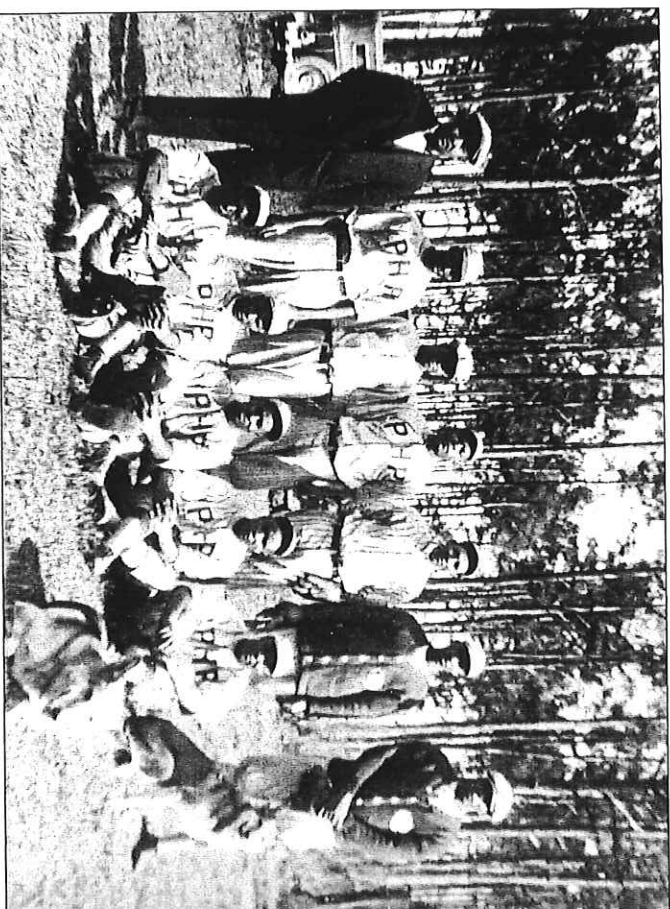
He worked dogs up there at the time up to Pebble Hill, and of course . . . and it was nothing degrading on the plantation so far as around about think that the people off the plantation, living in town were superior to the plantation people. Not the plantations that I know about.



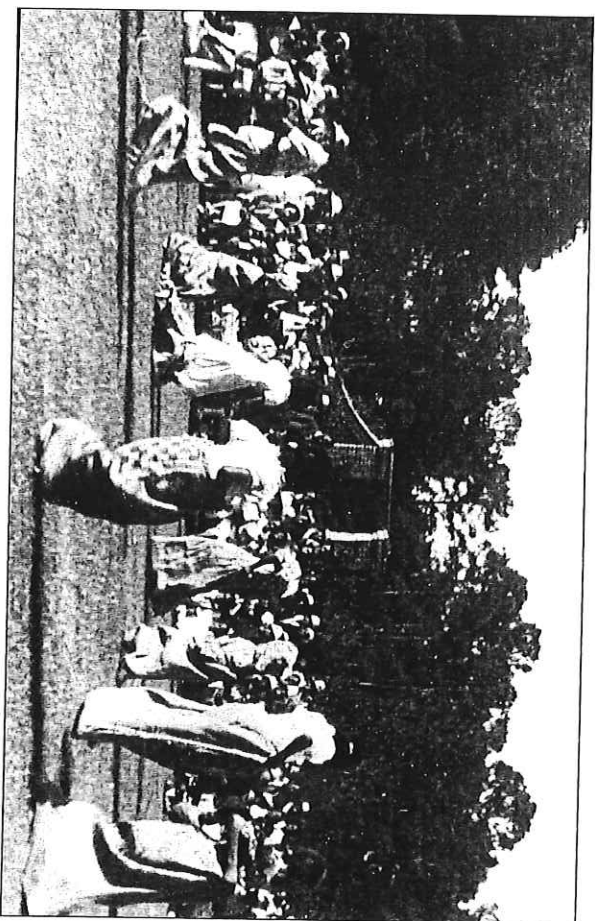
Having a drummer at the games was very exciting, c. 1918.



The Pebble Hill baseball team was ready to play, c. 1918.



The Pebble Hill team was the best team around, c. 1929. Lloyd Hadley, manager, is at the far left.



Young ladies scramble for the finish line during a sack race, Easter, c. 1939. A game of threading the needle is also going on.

That right it was local; it reached all the way from around about, I'd say Albany back down around to Cairo, to Grady County all through Thomas County and what not in particular. You couldn't get a person to work on the 20th of May. You see, that's the day you set free. I remember when I was a little boy, and they had this little settlement out there. That's when all the Hadley's would gather up out at Jake Faulk's place out there, and they would have a big, big celebration, and they would bring in the food, and they would have barrels of lemonade, and uh, then they would have someone out there with a drum or something like that.

After that they would go over to the baseball and have a big baseball game. That was, uh, what they did in this part of Grady County and Thomas County, of course, and other locals, they, uh, celebrated the other days. So far, the day they celebrate now is the Emancipation Proclamation; uh, most people didn't celebrate it then.

Oh, I went up there a few times, of course you know, to see what they were doing up there, 'cause people came from as far as Albany and Tallahassee and Valdosta, and in fact, the thing grew so big until they had people stationed at the gate. That's where you had to have a pass in order to go in. Because they had several hundred people there, and they had, uh, what they call . . . they have the Easter egg hunt. They would have the greasy pole climbing, and they would have a greasy pig they turn loose, and that's who catch him can have him . . . you might remember that.

They had the threading of the needle. The woman hold the needle, and man go and thread it, and the one who could do it the quickest, of course, would get a prize, and uh, they just had all kinds of things there; they had amusement on Easter. Everybody made it to PHP if you could get there, if you could get a pass on Easter Sunday. Then of course, Dr. Walden came in from Thomasville . . . he had a quartet, and he would go out and sing. Miss Pansy would get him to come out with his quar-

ter and go out and sing for the people and whatnot for the people on that day, of course, everybody seemed happy.

JH: Dr. Walton, he was our first black dentist in Thomasville.

DH: Pebble Hill really had a nice thing for Christmas. They would have . . . give away baskets of clothes and serving ice cream. I used to think that you couldn't eat ice cream in the wintertime, but they would have ice cream and those cookies and whatnot. And had a very nice time on Christmas day.

CC: They would give away food; they would give away clothing, and you got some money.

DH: Clothing and money.

CC: You got some money, and she would have something for everyone in the family . . . Mrs. Stewart used to come around. When she would come by she wouldn't do it down . . . before she would come by . . . but I know she would go around . . . she had children that come off PHP, and she would come around and get their measurement and everything and whatnot. They had clothing, toys. They would have whatever they thought you should have, and particularly, she would give bedding if there were eight people in the family; everyone got a sheet, plus food, clothing, and toys.

CC and DH: She was a nurse.

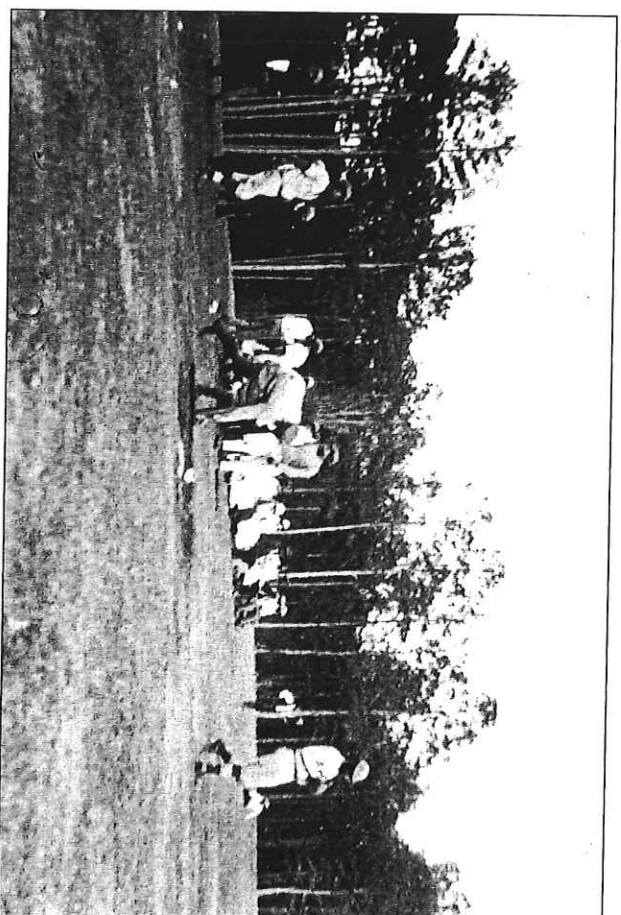
CC: In November, or sometime like that, she would come around and start measuring them up and getting ready for that, putting it order for their gifts and things. If a baby was gonna be born by Christmas time, they general have something there for that.

FD: Well they had it, I understand it, before my time. They had had some super baseball teams out there, but we had some great baseball teams too. Now . . . but I don't think that they were a heck of a lot better than we were. Now I understand that the . . . during the year, the time that Lloyd Hadley, and we called him Uncle Lloyd, was . . . managed a baseball team. They had some great pitchers of, uh, players and things of William Mitchell that came down and played with them and, uh, Cleveland Mitchell and the Massey boys, Freddie Massey and Arthur Massey and all these super athletes, Tommie, Gabe, and all of them. But I think we had some pretty good boys too, now. During my time.

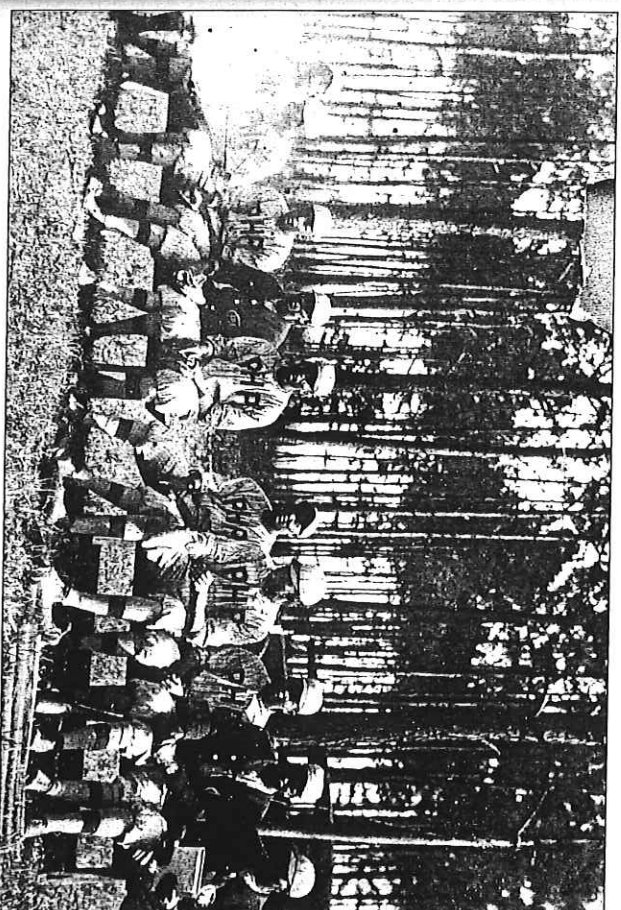
Yea, Cleveland Mitchell is still living, and we got Deacon William Mitchell, Freddie Mitchell them father you know, and his brother is a Mitchell, and these fellows are still around and Cleveland and ask . . . to tell you about their baseball teams and things. I guess we all feel like the team we played on was probably the best one they had. I hear those fellows from out there at Greenwood . . . they want to say that they had the best around, but I think Pebble Hill over all, they took the . . . everything.

Fourth of July was still taken place during my time. The Fourth of July was an activity that during my time was held at Sinkola Plantation. The only activity, or festivity that took place for a holiday of any sort during my time on Pebble Hill was the 20th of May.

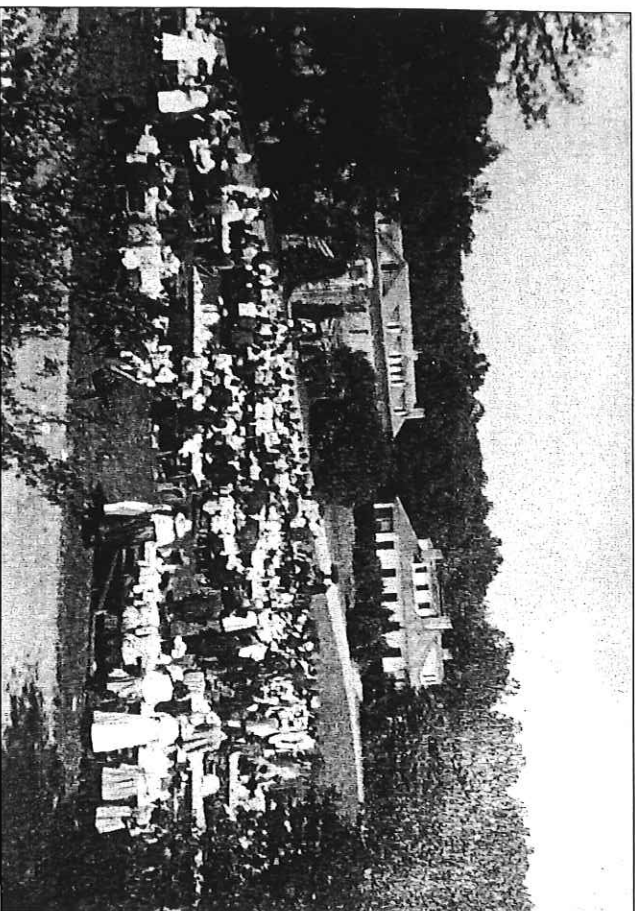
The 20th of May was the day that, you know, they set aside . . . that when actually we found out that the people in the South were free. And during my time they would talk about it and that Thursday night was probably coming up to that twentieth, or whatever it was or Wednesday. The week coming up to that was a lot of anticipation for us. 'Cause we know we were going to have a lot of food and a lot of dancing and singing around and just people getting together and just having a good old fashion time.



Pebble Hill and Greenwood played each other, c. 1907.



The c. 1930s Pebble Hill team consisted of, from left to right, Tommie Mitchell, Lloyd Austin, William Mitchell, Arnold Austin, Joe Hill, Tom Delaney, Arthur Massey, Jessie Austin, and Junius McQueen.



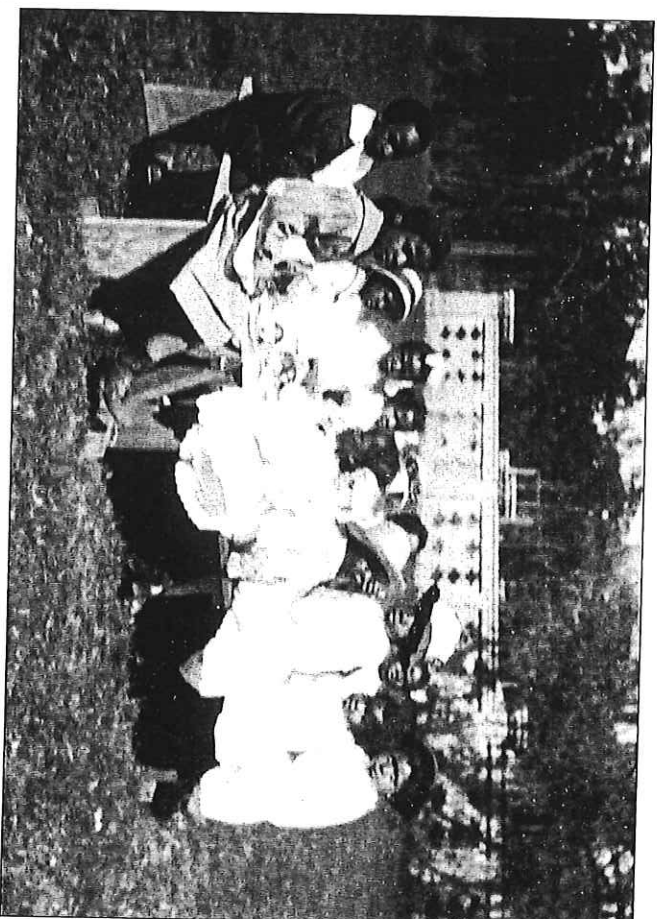
Families gather on Pebble Hill to celebrate Easter, c. 1920.

And the night before, I think, when the men that prepared the food . . . they probably got their biggest kick out of it the night before, because they never had an opportunity to be away from the smaller kids, and their wives and younger boys, younger men, and, you know, we had an opportunity to come out and hear some of the good old tales that they were telling. All the fellows that done the cooking . . . boy you could hear some strange things.

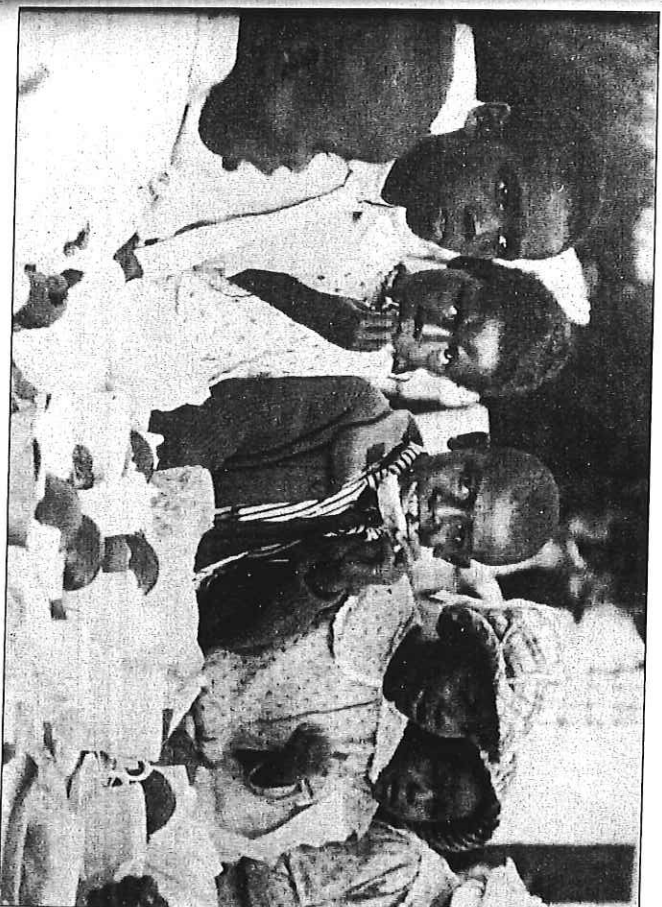
So uh, it was super. Then twelve o'clock that day, you know, come around and really give thanks to the good Lord for really blessing us and seeing us through another year. And then just sit and eat and be merry.

TG: The Fourth of July, uh, the most of the people the . . . well let's say the head folks as we called them, they were gone back up North. So . . . but they gave us the day off to celebrate, and in the last years, they put on picnics for the people out there. They had baseball or horseshoe or whatever they would like to do on that day. And on the 20th of May, it was the same way out there on the plantation, but the goody part about it was when I was a kid, all of the plantations all over gave us the 20th of May off as freedom day. And on this freedom day, everybody would come together, and we didn't have so much ball game, but it was just the matter of fellowship. On the place when I was a kid, this old school house had been there during the slavery days, and upstairs, in the sonic hall, that's where you would hear them talking about freedom, different lectures going on. Every plantation would give these people that day off, that they might fellowship one with another.

JH: Mr. Gabriel, I can recall when I was a kid they used to dig a pit into the ground. I can vision seeing hogs and ribs and stuff laying out on this pit. They



Sharing food during special celebrations brought the community together and created a sense of fellowship. The above photograph was taken c. 1916; the one below was taken about two years before that.



would be barbecued on the 20th of May. Is that correct?

Yes, in the later days, after they had . . . we had quit doing it down there on the plantation because most of the old timers had moved away, and, uh, and wage an hour come in, and on those kind of things, people couldn't get off very well like they would like to. But the plantations continued this with their special fair were here. With their help out, they wanted them to still enjoy the things that they were used to, so they gave them all of this by way of refreshments, lemonade. You name it, they gave it to them so they might invite their friend and just have a good time. And baseball was one of the main games that they had.

JH: From whom . . . who were . . . you said baseball. Who were these teams? Were they teams made up on PHP, Sinkola, or their neighbor to the plantation, Melrose and Greenwood Plantations, or people from the city? Who made up these different teams?

Miss Pansy was the originator of the baseball thing, 'cause the several years at school there where the kids played when they were little. But as they moved up, she had games for the adults, and all of these plantations, you name them, had baseball games. They had teams; each team would compete with the other team, but one of the better teams that we had was Pebble Hill. Everybody recognized Pebble Hill as that team.

JH: During your time, who was the captain of the team? Who was the manager of the team? Was it Lloyd Hadley?

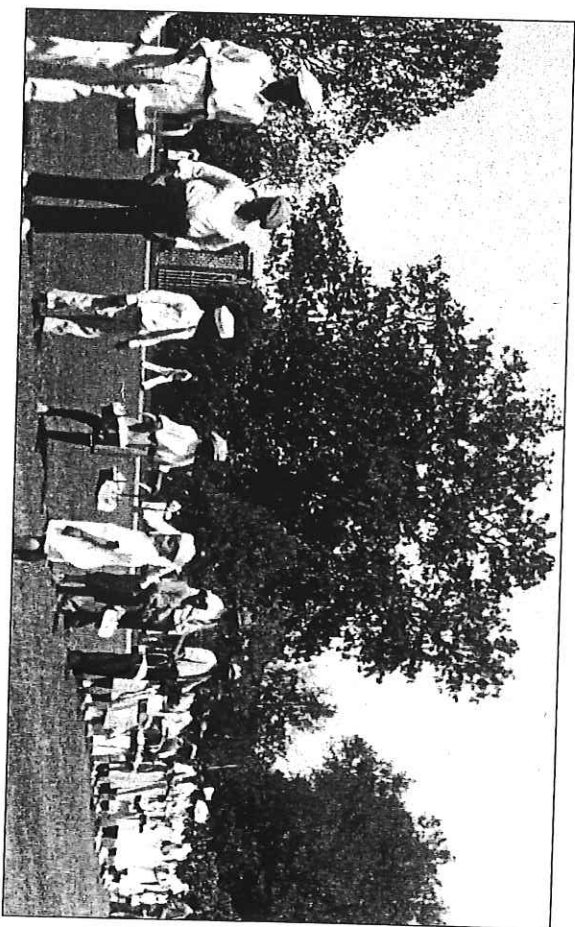
Lloyd Hadley, Lloyd Hadley was the . . . in fact he was more than the manager; he was the general supervisor. You name it, and he was there.

JH: Now I know we talked about something about Easter time. I can recall we had Easter baskets, and I know we talked about the sack races and stuff like that. Was there anything else that we may have missed?

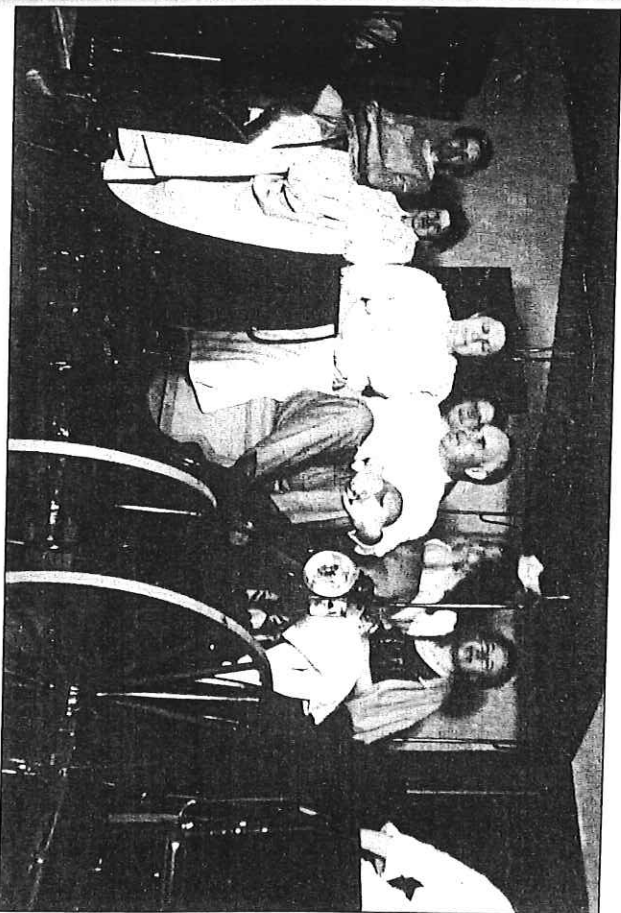
During the Easter celebration after . . . that pretty well covered it, because they gave every family a table. The head of every family could invite all of their friends or his kindred especially to come and sit at the table.

Well in my time, we used to hold it down at what we call the buggy barn, and then at the buggy barn is where they kept most of all of these buggies. We would sit on the benches over there, and the teacher had us prepared to come and say little speeches by way of entertainment. After that, Lloyd Hadley was the Santa Claus even in that day. And, uh, after that was over, they had what we called the handle baskets, or market baskets at that time. At one time, if you ever go shopping, they had a little basket on it, and they carried overalls in there and dresses, aprons, you name it, the things that they had.

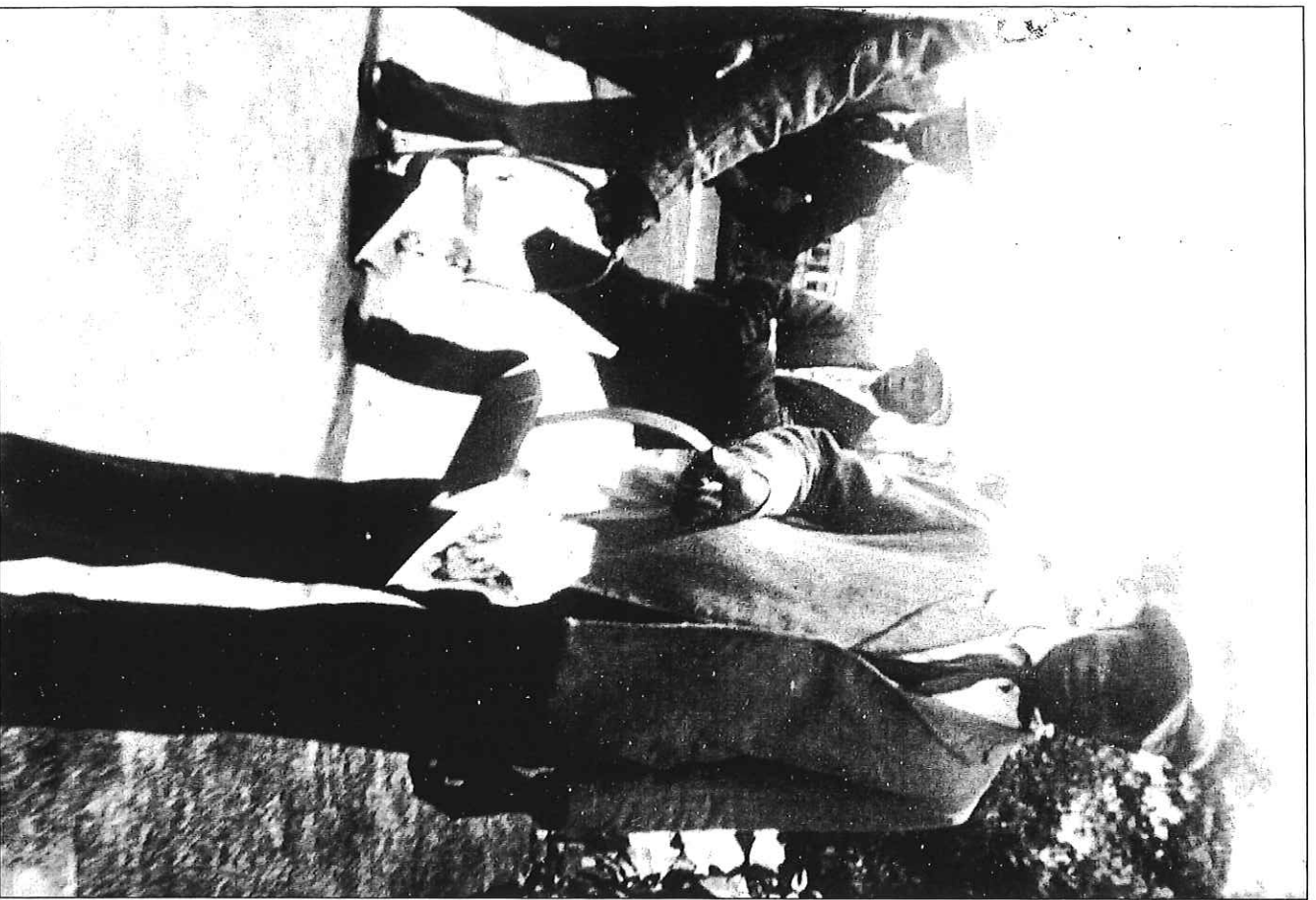
Miss Pansy used to get bands from Thomasville or wherever and bring out, have them brought out there in order to entertain her people, especially those who were close up to the house and around. Many times as a boy, I would get to go up there to see those people dancing because they gave us refreshments. That was a time when there was a conference at one of the churches down there, and one of the preachers came in, and he wanted to have the conference, and they had an event up there then. So when the night of the conference, nobody showed because they were up there. There was one old lady, who was the oldest member of the church . . . they asked her. Now the preacher, since everybody is away, he didn't know how to go about . . . he just had to jump on her to get at the rest of them. He said, "Now Aunt Classic, that was Aunt Classic Mitchell. 'Aunt Classic, now you know that you couldn't dance now. What are you doing there?' She said, 'I just wanted some of that ice cream.'"



On Easter, baskets were passed out that contained sandwiches, fruit, little cakes, and two cans of sardines. The children were also served milk, and the adults coffee, c. 1930s.



Pebble Hill owners enjoy a performance while sitting in the carriage house of the horse stable, c. 1907. The buggy barn was often the location of entertainment for workers and owners alike.



A young boy receives an Easter basket with a smile, c. 1924.

JH: Uh-huh, uh-huh, so really no one really knows; evidently this was built on a planning stage. Pebble Hill is something like a resort plantation. Was it a profit making type plantation? You know did they . . . ?

Sid: No, no, this wasn't no profit making.

JH: It was a hunting ground; just people would come down and hunt, and then they would come back during the summertime.

That's it. Well, you had some guests down, and her mother's time. In her time, Miss Pansy didn't do no hunting herself. He would do the quail hunting, and she would ride on the buggy. But when they would shoot doves . . . but her mother would hunt. Her mother would hunt. See when I was big enough to know, Miss Pansy didn't do no hunting. I remember on the quail hunt she said they would frighten her when they fly off. But her mother would hunt. And way later on then she, Mrs. Harvey had her mother marry Mr. Harvey. When he used to hunt, her stepdad, that was her stepdad.

JH: Okay, tell me about the 4th of July and the 20th of May, those particular, and Easter time. So y'all can pick the choice of who wants to talk first about which one. We going to talk about the 4th of July celebration. I understand that people used to come together. The 20th of May, I understand people used to come together, and then Easter time, they used to come together. And also Christmas time they used to come together. So let's just really hold on those celebrations. Who wants to talk first? Let's talk about Easter.

Sid: Well, Easter time, they used come from all around. She used to invite them and give baskets out on Easter time. They used to pass bags from the Waldorf here down there in front of her house, down there. Bunch of children get together and mens, too, and I give you the bag, and next, you would pass it from there. Then after you eat, they have people running in croker bags. They'd have a greasy hog; they didn't have it the same. You'd have all kind of obligations going on for Easter.

JH: Right, okay. So it seems as though that was a really enjoyable time. You said that people from all over, from other plantations came on?

Yes, that's all from Thomasville, all what she invited, she'd give badges. If you didn't have that badge, you didn't come in.

JH: Okay, uh-huh. So these baskets would have what, candy, Easter eggs, and stuff like that in them or what?

You would . . . well she had . . . you eat all those stuff in there you be full.

Sam: They had eggs, sardines; Lord, they would have a basket full of different stuff.

Sid: After you eat all that you would be full.

Sam: You'd be full.

JH: What about the 4th of July? . . . Before we answer that, you mentioned about sack races; and was this during the time that Mr. Mutt Washington used to paint his face, and act out things for them?

Sid and Sam: Yes, yes, that's right.

JH: Why did he paint his face? What caused that?

Sam: Well he done that to be a clown.

JH: He was a clown. He was the plantation clown?

Sam: Plantation clown.

JH: And the people really during that time . . . really enjoyed seeing that.

Sid and Sam: Yes, yea, they enjoyed seeing him.

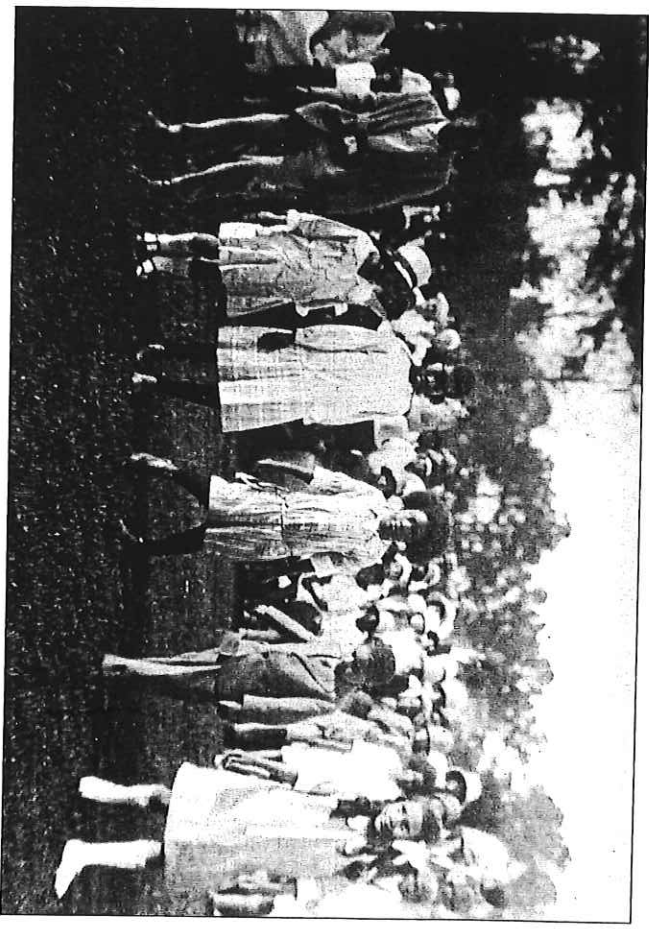
JH: I noticed on one of the pictures, which is in the exhibit where Mr. Joshua Walden was; he must have been sort of like "come-and-call-on-type fellow?"



Easter celebrations brought everyone together. A variety of games and races were played, including climbing greased poles, catching pigs, racing in wheelbarrows, and leapfrogging to a finish line.



This Easter obstacle race took place on Pebble Hill, c. 1939.



Children clown around at Easter and try to do the "Buck Dance," c. 1926.

Sam: Yea, he would boost him up.

Sid: Joshus Walden would go boost him up. Rode him in a wheel barrel. Come round there one day.

JH: *Rolled him in a wheel box? In the exhibit there is also a picture where they did ing, all this stuff was done during Easter time.*

Sid: Yes, that right—jumping, turning over head over heels, all like that.

JH: *But the people would be all dressed up looking good, ladies with the long dresses on.*

Sid and Sam: Yes, yes, that's right.

Sid: Everybody got dressed. I never did do all that jumping myself. You would get a prize, whoever would run the fastest in the croker bag.

JH: *Is that right?*

Sid: They would hide eggs back down there.

Sam: If you catch that greasy pig and hold him he your hog.

JH: *It's your hog, huh? I guess that greasy pig was pretty hard to hold on to?*

Sam: They would put about a half a can of lard on him. What you said?

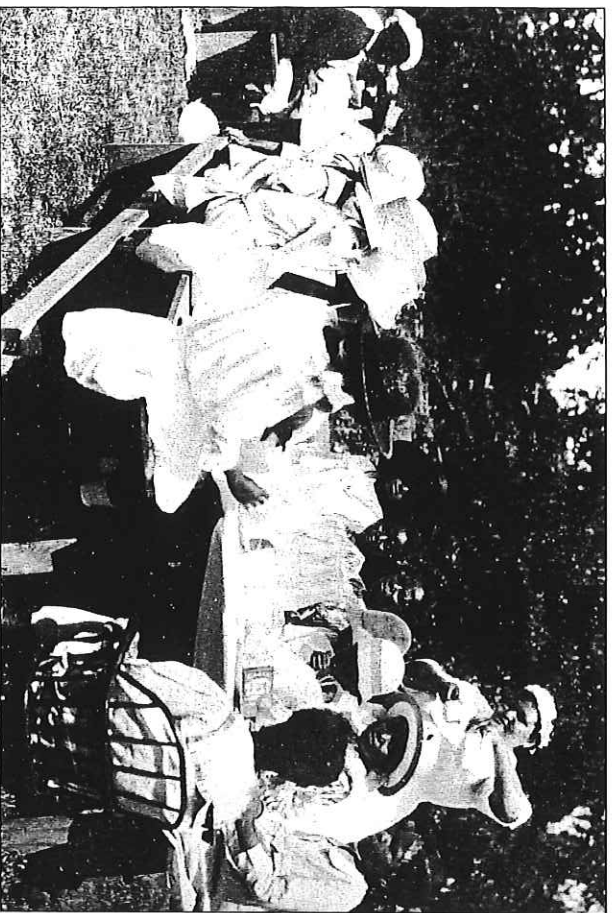
Sid: Bubba Feet, little Bubba Feet caught him twice. The last greasy pig I think they had, nobody never could catch him. He was a wild pig.

JH: *Is that right?*

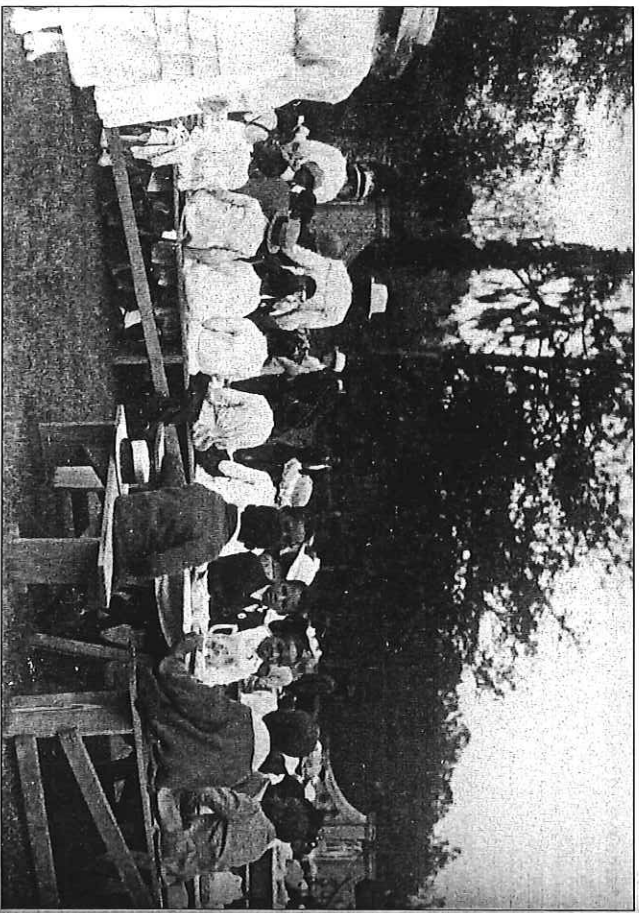
Sid: I seen him down near 7 mile barn; a car had hit him.

JH: *Uhm, tell me something now, was this greasy pig in some kind of little pen? Did a person get over in there and try to grab him or something?*

Sid: No . . . they had him in a cage. Alright, then they turned him loose. They was



Maggie Phillips, one of Pebble Hill's leading cooks, serves milk to a group of children, c. 1914. She worked at the big house and made around \$30 a month.



Children have always enjoyed games, races, and good food.

right down there. They turned him loose, and now you go catch him. They turned him out of there, and you couldn't do it. You got a job to hold that greasy pig.

JH: You got to hold him down?

But, Bubba Feet, Bubba Feet would catch that pig. I know he caught two, and boy he would be greasy all over.

JH: The 20th of May celebration, isn't that the time when they would celebrate? They would have barbecues and so forth. Can you recall that, down here at Pebble Hill, The 20th of May . . . ?

Yea, they had the barbecue the 20th of May, barbecued goat, and, uh, barbecued beef. They would have all of that, then drinks and watermelons. They would have that on the 20th of May here on Pebble Hill.

JH: On Pebble Hill?

Uh-huh, right there. Then on 4th of July, Sinkola would have a big barbecue. Pork and goat, pork, beef all that they would have. They would cook all night; they would start that night. That evening around 7 o'clock, they wouldn't have all that meat ready until that next morning about 8 o'clock; then they would start to cut it up. Then around 11 or 12, they were ready to serve it.

JH: They would be ready to serve. Who would provide all of this, the plantation owners? Would they provide all of this?

Sam: Yes, the plantation. See Miss Pansy . . . she bought all of this on the 20th of May.

Sid: But not for Melrose though.

Sam: I know, just for Pebble Hill.

Sid: Just for Pebble Hill.

Sam: And Sinkola, Mr. Hanna . . . them had to buy all of that for Sinkola."

Sid: Sinkola, Mr. Charles would invite Pebble Hill over to the picnic.

JH: On the 4th of July?

Sam: On the 4th of July.

JH: Okay.

Sid: People all from Cairo, from Washington High School, them boys would come over here and play ball.

JH: Okay.

Sam: Pebble Hill, it just only was for the people on the place, when I come here.

JH: Well, why did they celebrate the 20th of May? Do y'all recall why that was a special day?

Sid: Well . . . the 20th, that was the day . . . that was the day they said they were free.

JH: The slaves were free.

And, uh, on the 20th. And Glasco (community near Monticello, FL) started taking the 28th.

JH: The 28th?

Uh-huh.

JH: Glasco is another community?

Uh-huh, they were taking the 28th. And down here, they taking the 20th, but they don't have that no more now.

JH: Nawl, aw, aw . . . they really don't, and I think the Retired Senior Mens Club have started an annual type of affair on the 20th of May in Thomasville.

In Thomasville; they had to come up there this year.

JH: Christmas time. Tell me about Christmas time. I can recall when I was a kid that they used to give us clothes and new toys and stuff like that. Lloyd Hadley used

to play Santa Claus for them. Can you all elaborate on that?

Sid: Well, when I was at Melrose, she used Sam Bunyon used to be the little man around there when I was at Melrose. Give out clothes and stuff like that and, uh, after that, I come round here, and then Lloyd Hadley was the Santa Claus, but when we were living down there, up there, Miss Pansy would give us toys and things just like we were living on the place.

JH: What do you have to say about that Sam.

Sam: Yea, the children, they get toys. Christmas time they give the children toys and give them a piece of money. And you get a chance to eat, and you get clothes; well, that's Christmas time you get a piece of money.

JH: She gave you some funds too, right? Now . . . and Lloyd Hadley would play as the Santa Claus. I have one of his pictures there in the exhibit also when he had dressed up in a Santa Claus suit during that time.

Sid: And after he died, Reverend Washington would stand in for him.

JH: Reverend Washington was Santa Claus also. That was Mutt Washington.

Sid: I don't know who had called himself but, I know they had tried to get Leroy, but Leroy wouldn't take it. Little Frank Delaney did act like Santa Claus one year.

JH: Frank Delaney did, huh? You mean the dad?

Sid: No, the son.

JH: The young son? Okay.

Sid: The last time they had that, after Mrs. Pansy died, they didn't have no more Santa Claus.

Sam: They didn't have no Santa Claus when I went up there.

Sid: Never did.

JH: Okay, I think years later on she started going down at Piney Grove Missionary Baptist Church and handing out money instead of having a Christmas program, a whole Christmas day, late in the afternoon. Y'all recall those days?

Sam: Yea, that she hand out money and serve ice cream and cookies, apples, and oranges.

JH: And she would give some money to each member of the family?

Sam: Each one in the family, a piece of money.

JH: Okay, tell me about the baseball team, the baseball team here on Pebble Hill Plantation. I understand Pebble Hill used to be one of the top teams around here.

Sid: She had the top one. Sinkola, they . . . Pebble Hill and Sinkola almost tied up. Sometimes they had to play two weeks, or three weeks, to get the tie off, 'cause Miss Pansy, she wouldn't let Charles' men beat her men up. She was going to show them. If they play like I say today and beat her men, she would call that game back tomorrow for her men to play, and when her men would beat them, she stop them for a day.

Sam: That Greenwood had something over there too.

Sid: Yea, Greenwood.

JH: That's Greenwood Plantation?

Sam: They ain't have no stuff with them.

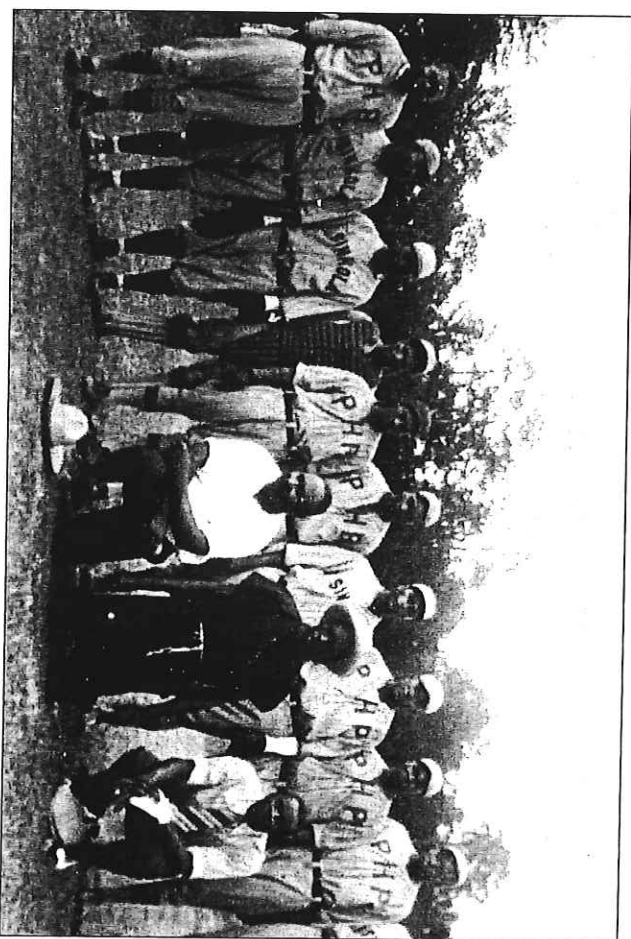
JH: Is that right? That was a tough team also, huh?

Sid: Old Tom Madridge, old Tom Madridge . . . anybody could play ball, he would hire him.

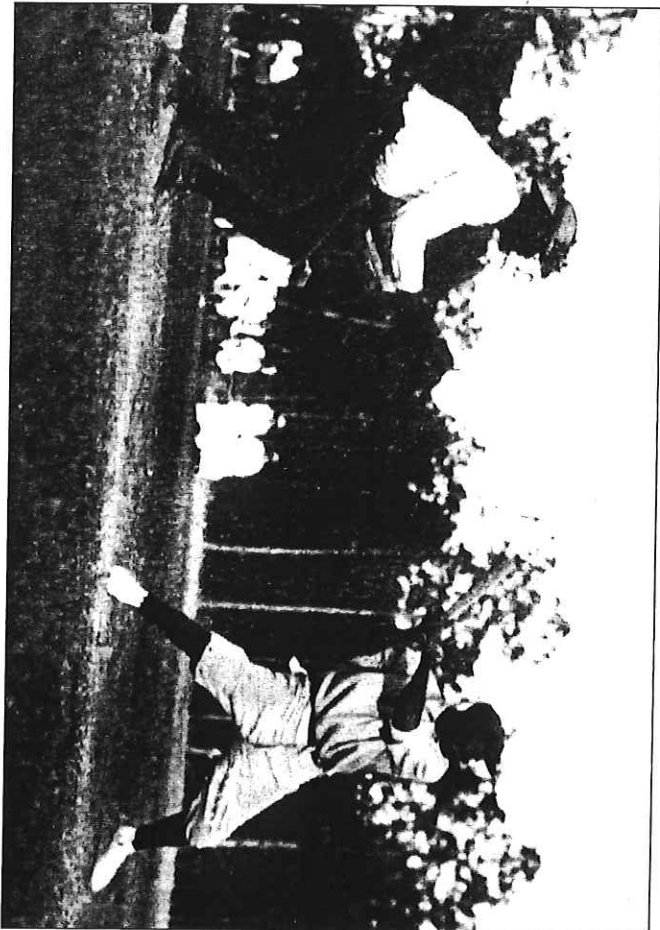
Sam: That's how Crosby done.

Sid: Oh yea, that's what Crosby done.

JH: Who is Crosby, now?



The Pebble Hill and Sinkola baseball teams take a photograph together, c. 1923. Pebble Hill manager Lloyd Hadley is pictured here.



This batter is swinging for the fences, c. 1924.

Sid: Mr. Crosby over there with Sinkola Plantation.

Sam: Mr. Crosby is Sinkola Plantation.

JH: Sinkola Plantation. You say be were birng; what do you mean? He would bring them from downtown and . . .

Sam: He would give them a job.

Sid: Give them a job.

JH: Okay, okay, birt them on the plantation and in order to make sure they play on the baseball team.

Sam: A good player from Miccosukee or Cairo . . . he just like you a good player. He'd just pay you so much money to play.

JH: Is that right? So they really took baseball at their heart during that time.

Sid: All these plantations had a baseball team. Springwood, that is Springwood down there. All of them had players. Chapin (Plantation) had him; all the plantations around here had a ball game.

Sam: Had a place every Saturday to go and through the week. Sometimes, about once a week, we had to knock off because of a ball game.

JH: Is that right? So they were a really popular sport then, huh?

Sid: Yea. Just like if she wanted her men to go and play today; she'd say y'all knock off 11 o'clock, go home, and the game would start at 3:00.

JH: Uh-huh, uh-huh. Okay, so anyway she provided the uniform and stuff like that. All the equipment.

Yea, she would buy all of that.

Sam: I know Mrs. Hanna was staying up to Melrose when she bought them uniforms for them men. She liked ball.

JH: She liked it, huh?

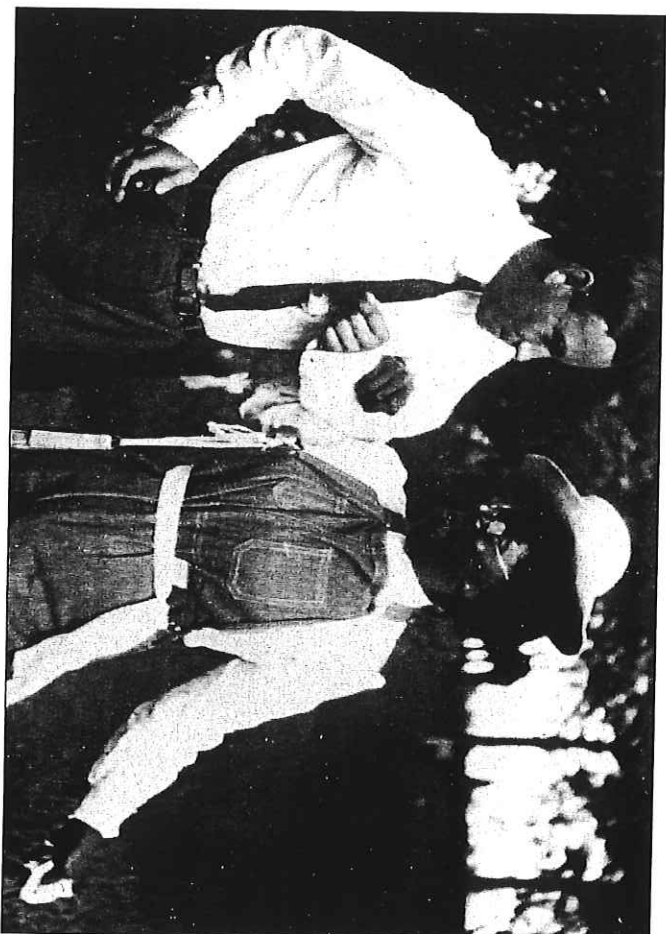
She liked it.

JH: Would they go out and watch y'all watch people play? Did either of you gentlemen play?

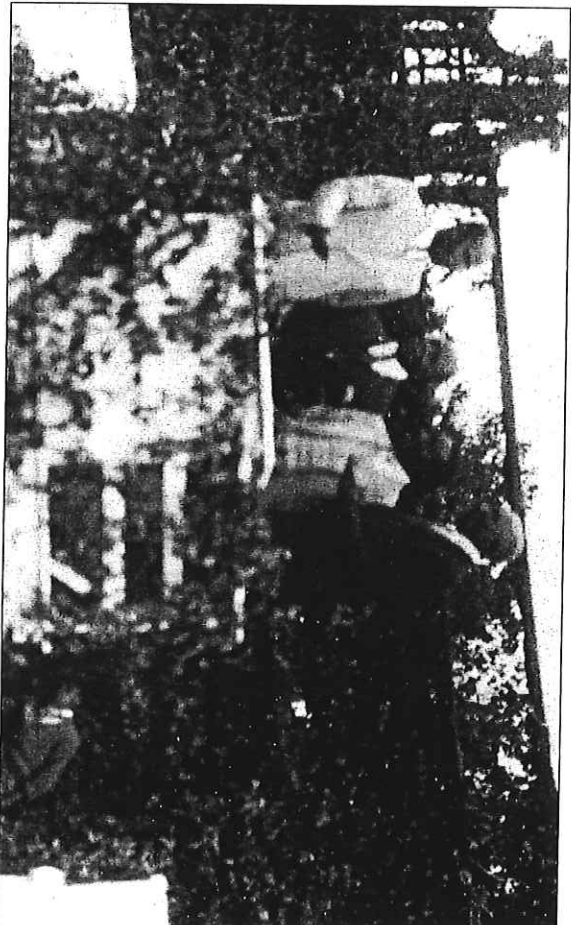
Sid: I didn't play.

TG: Going back over some of the good things that we had at Pebble Hill, being a kid, being how they handled the Easter services and Christmas services. I went to school right on the plantation, right almost a stone's throw off the big house. That gave us an opportunity to go back and forth through the place everyday. We had an opportunity to meet the Mrs. Ireland. That's the mother of Miss Pansy Poe. She was one of those people who wanted everybody to be happy; she wanted them to smile when she met them, and if someone come along and it seemed like they were hurt or disappointed or having a bad day one of the things, she would pause and ask them what's the matter. Is there anything that she can do. She had it so fixed that she had a nurse; Mrs. Hall used to be the plantation nurse. Anybody sick, brought them to the city hospital. That was before Archbold Hospital setup. Anybody that needed dental work that's in order to be sure that you'll be able to smile. She uh, Dr. Walden was the dentist, and we can just go over many, many things about the activities that we had.

For example in Easter, Christmas time, the Pebble Hill School kids would put on little plays for them at the barn, the buggy barn I believe that is what they call it, the buggy barn. They would come down and sit in and listen to us saying our little Christmas speeches. Easter time, every family on the plantation, the heads of the family, there were tables placed on the lawn, and each head of the family could invite all



Allyn F. Harvey (PW. Harvey's brother) was the uncle of Miss Pansy. He is shown here with Sarah Johnson, c. 1905.



Dr. M.L. Walton (in the white suit) was the first black dentist in Thomasville. The short man is E.E. Brown. They were part of the St. Thomas Harmony Four and are shown here on Easter Day, c. 1932.

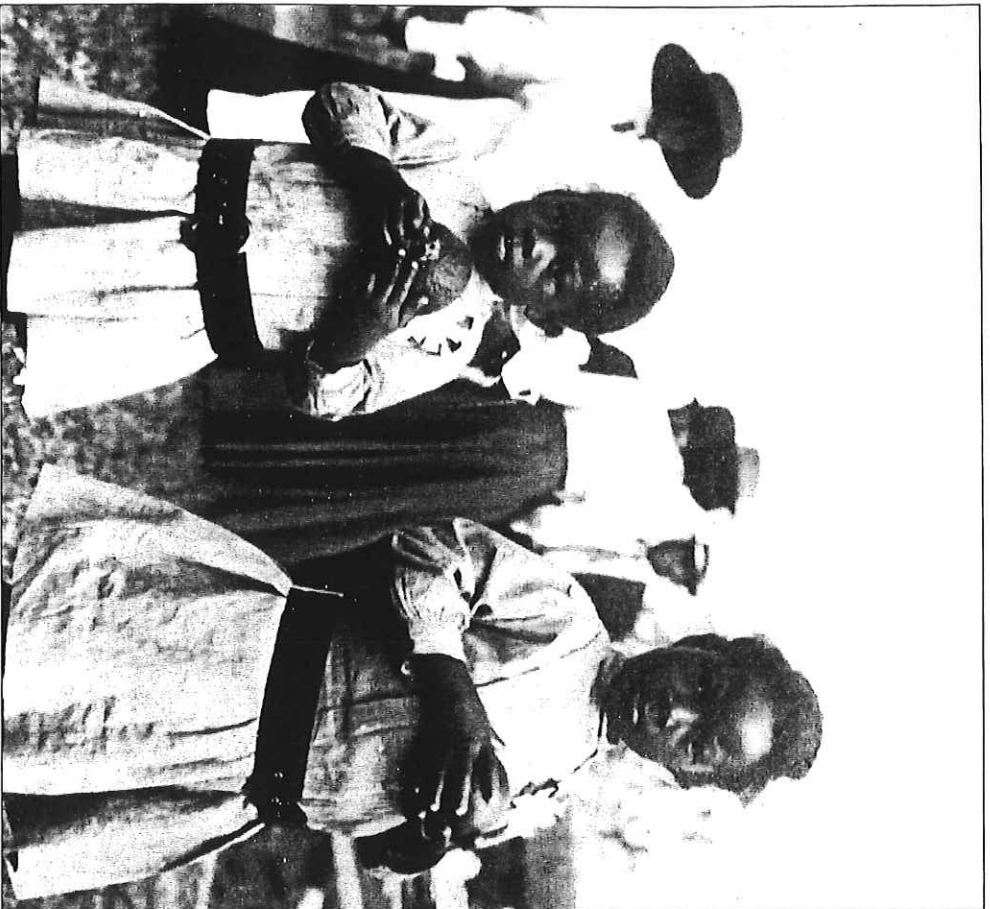
of his kin folks to sit in with him. And it was so beautiful to see that lawn out there covered with tables and families there. Some of her best silver was put on that table. She spared nothing to make us happy, so in reality, we thought it was heaven. We thought it was no place in the world like Pebble Hill.

Willie H. Johnson, Jr.: I feel the blacks that lived on the plantation had an advantage over blacks that were reared in Thomasville, the city, or anywhere else around here, because of the fact that they were around quality. They handled quality. For instance, my dad drove Cadillac and LaSalle, such as that. When blacks who lived in the city hardly rode in a Ford or anything, and people who worked in the big house, they knew quality furniture because they worked around it. Quality silver and quality everything because they were around it, so if they ever were able to buy something, they knew what quality was. They could feel the garments as for as the material; they could tell if its furniture or whatever it was, it groomed you to know what real quality goods were. And I feel that that was an advantage, and if you notice, a lot of people that you go into their homes now, and if they were reared on a plantation, some of them have pretty nice stuff, have some pretty nice furniture, nice something; whatever they like, they do have something that is real nice in their home. I don't know of any of them who ever served any time in prison. If they have been, I don't know about it. I feel as though those folks did a good job of rearing their children, and there were supposedly some pretty rough time as they were growing up, but I didn't never know of any that did anything bad enough to go to prison. If they did they didn't have to stay very long.

VOICES OF AMERICA

African-American Life on the
**SOUTHERN HUNTING
PLANTATION**

Titus Brown and James "Jack" Hadley



Two sisters enjoy the special events on Pebble Hill, Easter Day, c. 1913.

Cover: Pictured is Willie Jackson, c. 1945. For 43 years, Mr. Jackson took care of horses at Greenwood Plantation.



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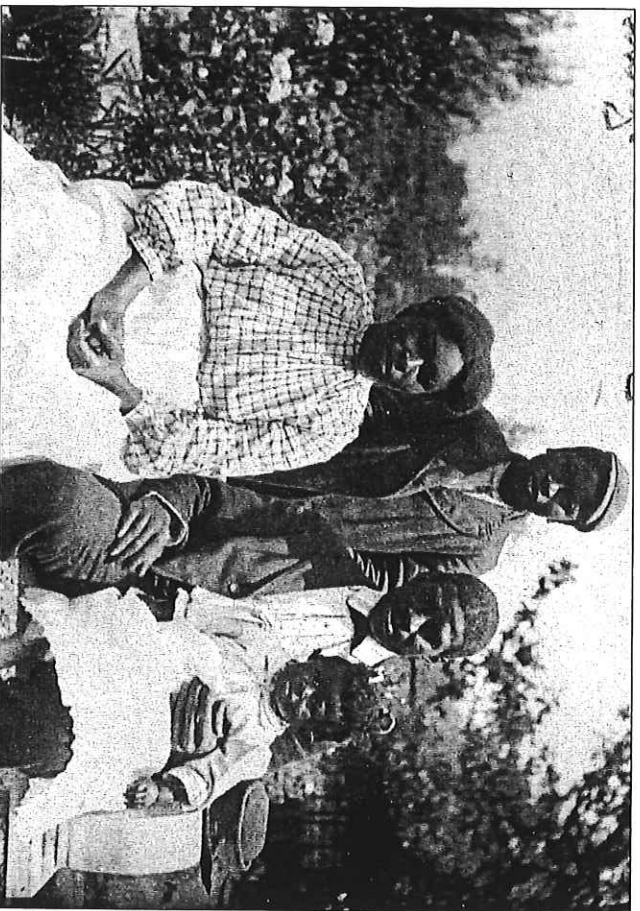
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Harry and Mammie King pose with their children, c. 1904.