

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

SOUTHERN ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Interview

with

Nettie Carter

Winston-Salem, North Carolina

July 16, 1984

By Robert Korstad

Original transcript on deposit at
The Southern Historical Collection
Louis Round Wilson Library

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92 years old. Born in Anderson County, South Carolina. February 8, 1892.

Grnadmother was 7 when freedom came.

Stories on farm life

NC: We paid \$1.50 for three rooms. I came out of Reynolds many times with \$4.98 and kept a family of four going. My husband got a job finally. In Hoovers time, one crowd worked three days, and another crowd worked three days.

Started in seasonal work.

Worked in the stemming room at 256. Retired from #60. Worked on stemming machine. Worked 33 years and three weeks.

NC: It was hot. they could make it hot or they could make it cool. It would depend on your overseer. Some would try to make it easy and some didn't care how they made it just so they get it done.

If you needed time to pay for something, you'd say Well, I work for Reynolds. They wasn't afraid to give it to you.

NC: My husband had relatives that came here. They got credit here and came back all dressed up. Everybody just wanted to go to Winston-Salem. My husband stayed on to gather the corn; it was a bad crop that year.

We sold out our cow, hogs, that's all we had. Didn't have no stock because we were working on halves.

One of my neighbors said, Were are you going? I said, I'm going to Winston-Salem. He said, "Oh my God, you can't stand that stinking town." When I got in there my cousin sent her son to meet us and went spent the night with her. I got up the next morning and the oder just come to me. I said, I can't stand this stinking town.

I can't stay here.

If you'd of stopped, you'd have never left, cause it's a money making place.

Cousin got her a job.

Good story about getting a job.
Husband got a job on the railroad.

NC: Sometimes if you play a fool you can get more information than you can if you act like you've got some sense. I had a friend who acted like she was just a fool. She said to Mr. Kirk one morning, "Mr. Kirk, they tell me we're going to have to vote for that old union again." He said you not going to have to vote, but I want you to vote. You don't have to vote for it. You know the company is working five hundred people right now that they don't need on account of ya'll didn't get that union back in here. If you vote it back in here, you all are going to be out in the street.

"If you got a job with Reynolds, you just about got all you need."