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## **U.19 Long Civil Rights Movement: Breaking New Ground**

Interview U-0659  
Charlie and Larry King  
21 June 2011

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## **Abstract – Charlie King & Larry King**

Interviewee: Charlie King & Larry King

Interviewer: Robert Hunt Ferguson

Interview Date: June 21, 2011

Location: King residence, 2444, W. Clubview Circle, Yazoo City, MS

Interview Length: 1:29:05

Overall, this interview focused on discrimination the Kings faced from the State of Mississippi when their land was bypassed during levee construction along the Yazoo River and from the federal government when they approached the USDA for a loan to purchase more land. The Kings showed me documents they had filed through various avenues in order to get some redress for the discrimination they experienced. Other than being plaintiffs in the Pigford I case, they have not felt that they were adequately compensated for the discrimination they experienced as African Americans. The remainder of the interview involved flooding along the Yazoo River from the 1920s to the 1940s and Charlie King's recollections of growing up on the farm – mechanization, education, food, community events, etc.

## Field Notes – Charlie King & Larry King

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THE INTERVIEWEE(S): Mr. Charlie King was a farmer for half his life in Yazoo County, Mississippi. The other half of his life, from the early 1950s to the early 1980s, he lived and worked in Chicago, Illinois. Charlie King was born in Satartia, MS in 1904. The family farm, originally purchased in 1905 by Charlie King's grandfather, was 1,000 acres of sandy soil in Satartia, MS. The land abuts the Yazoo River. The majority of the land was in the family continuously from 1905 to the present. While Charlie King was in Chicago, the farm land was operated by his father and uncle. Mr. Larry King is Charlie King's son. Larry King was born in Vicksburg, MS in 1949 or 1950. When he was two years old, he moved with his parents to Chicago where he grew up, went to school, and became a dentist. After quitting his dentistry practice in Chicago, Larry King moved back to Yazoo County in the 1980s to farm his family's land full time.

THE INTERVIEWER: Robert Hunt Ferguson is a PhD Candidate at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Ferguson is white, male, native North Carolinian, aged 32 in the summer of 2011. His research focuses on race relations and labor in the rural Jim Crow South.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERVIEW: The interview was conducted in the living room of the King's residence in Yazoo City, MS during a break between two violent thunderstorms that came through the area that afternoon. Charlie King revealed that he had suffered a stroke several years ago and didn't speak as well as he used to. His son, Larry King, accompanied his father at the interview as he put it "to support my father." The bulk of the interview centered on the hardships that the King's faced in farming their family land. Since their land abuts the Yazoo River, floods had devastated the farm in 1927, 1932, 1937, and 1945. However, the farm was able to sustain those floods and continue. In the 1970s, though, the State of Mississippi built the Satartia Backwater Levee and the Yazoo Backwater Levee and bypassed the only black owned farm on that stretch of river, which was the King's farm. Now other farmers, all white, were protected by the levees and the King's farm was not. The levees were completed in the 1980s and by the early 2000s, the King's could no longer compete with farms who were not at the mercy of the Yazoo River floods. Secondly, in the 1980s, when Larry King approached the USDA for a loan to purchase several hundred acres of the original 1,000 acres of family land that had been sold outside the family, he was, as he said, discriminated against by local USDA officials. His loan was denied, he appealed, and eventually his loan was granted. The King's

were plaintiffs in the Pigford I case and received \$50,000 in settlement monies. Larry King, though, estimated that the losses suffered by the farm due to the levee bypass and USDA discrimination were in excess of \$1 million. Over the years, the Kings farmed cotton, corn, and soybean. They supplemented their income by raising hogs, hunting, trapping, and commercial fishing on the Yazoo River. At the conclusion of the interview, Larry King told me he was shy about doing the interview but did it to support his father. When they spoke of the overt discrimination they faced from the government, they were downtrodden and frustrated. After I turned off the recorder and was leaving, Larry King remarked that he had been treated like a second class citizen by the local USDA official in Yazoo City. The white official had put his feet up on the desk, spit tobacco into a spittoon on the floor, and had been informal and unprofessional during their meeting and outright lied to Larry King about qualifications for the loan. King said that this official still worked for the USDA but had been moved to Jackson, MS. Overall, they felt that they had been treated well by white farmers and neighbors, but wholly discriminated against by the governments of Mississippi (Yazoo River levees) and the United States (USDA).

## Interview Transcript – Charlie King & Larry King

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Interview Length: 1:29:05

### START OF RECORDING

RF: Ok, so my name is Rob Ferguson and it's June--

CK: I'm Charlie King. I was born in Sartartia December 21, 1924.

RF: Ok, now what was the name of the town again?

CK: Sartartia.

RF: Sartartia, yes. When did you move to Yazoo City? To this area?

CK: In '87.

RF: 1987?

CK: Yes.

RF: Ok.

CK: But [pause], I lived in Sartartia until '51. I moved to Chicago. And I came back in '95.  
Moved back in '95.

RF: So you were about twenty five or twenty six when you moved to Chicago?

CK: I was twenty six.

RF: Twenty six, ok. And did you move there for work?

CK: Yes.

RF: Ok, what did you do when you moved up there?

CK: I worked for Campbell soup and Dairy (Crew, 1:22), some long shoreman work. Long shoreman. Until I was twenty six I was living on the farm, farming. You know I was helping my father's farm.

RF: So your father owned the farm?

CK: Yes, and my grandfather.

RF: Ok

CK: My grandfather--well anyway--was born in Vicksburg around 19 I mean 1868.

RF: And that was your grandfather.

CK: That was my grandfather. And he [pause] passed in 1940. My father was born in (Phoenix, 2:15) and they moved down to Sartartia in 1905 and bought land and the Kings been owning land down there bout 1,000 acres ever since 1905 we're close here. They finished paying for around '38. About 1938.

RF: So they purchased it and then finished paying it around 1938.

CK: Yes.

RF: Ok.

CK: And we had to clear up the land for farming purposes. All the way until--well anyway up until the 60s. So we farmed and my daddy farmed. Farming was going on all the time in 1905 down there on the farm.

RF: Had your grandfather rented land before 1905? To farm?

CK: No he just rented to his son and son in law, and he was farming. And my dad rented out some of his to Coleman White in 1936. The rest of the years he was farming all of it.

RF: Wow, that's a large piece of land to farm.

CK: That's right. All of it wasn't cleared up at that time. It was some--you know, we had to clear out. All of us cleared up about 1960, just about.

RF: So the total acreage was about 1,000 acres?

CK: yeah

RF: And about how much of that was in production in the 30s or the 60s I guess.

CK: How much?

LK: Oh back at that time I really don't know. As my father stated, my great grandfather purchased the land in 1935, ok, about 1,000 acres or so. Since that time it was cleared and made productive, ok. In terms of how much was cleared at that time or cultivated I don't know.

RF: And what did you mainly grow on the land?

CK: Cotton and corn. And soybeans we started growing soybeans. Cotton and corn and soybeans in 1955. Wait a minute, no it was 1945.

RF: Was when you introduced soybeans?

CK: [mumbling] We started growing soybeans in 1945. Soybean, corn and cotton.

RF: Ok. [to LK] Would you mind introducing yourself for the recorder and when and where you were born?

LK: Ok my name is Larry A King. I was born in Vicksburg, MS. My family moved to Chicago when I was two. I grew up in Chicago. I moved back to Yazoo City, MS in 1994. I'm a retired Dentist, and a retired farmist [farmer] as well.

RF: Ok. So that was in the 50s, when you moved to Chicago. Was that right?

LK: Yeah about 1952 I guess.

RF: Ok. And you said you were two at the time?

LK: Yeah about two.

RF: Ok, so you grew up in Chicago.

LK: I grew up in Chicago.

RF: Did you go to school there as well?

LK: I did. I went to Loyola University and I went to the University of Illinois College of Dentistry.

RF: OK, so that would have late 1970s or early 1980s when you went to graduate school?

LK: Yeah I went to-- I graduated from Loyola in 1970, started dental school in 1970, and graduated dental school in 1974.

RF: Ok, so did you practice dentistry in Yazoo City, or?

LK: No I practiced in Chicago. Chicago, Illinois. And I got out of dentistry because honestly I didn't like what I was doing, so I moved back south to Mississippi to farm and found that I couldn't really make a living in farming for two basic reasons. The main reason was because almost on a yearly basis, we would get flooded out. We would plant crops and get flooded out. The reason we would get flooded out was because in the late 1970s, they built a levee called the Sartartia backwater levee. That levee, when they built that levee, they bypassed our property, and because they bypassed us, we were at the mercy of the Yazoo River. So basically once again we would plant crops and almost on a yearly basis we'd get flooded out. Basically we were forced out of farming and that was the primary reason. The secondary reason was because at that particular time the farm economy was very depressed. Commodity price was very low and we just couldn't make a living.

CK: And they built the Yazoo backwater levee too on the northwest side of us and we were in between two levees. In between the Sartartia backwater levee and the Yazoo levee.

RF: Was there ever a reason given why they bypassed their farm?

CK: Um--

LK: Yeah, well--

RF: This was the state of Mississippi I assume.

LK: Yeah this was the state of Mississippi. You know, to be perfectly honest with you, we think that it was racially motivated because we were the only black family farm down in that area. For a long time, my grandfather Thomas King and my uncle Henry King tried to get some kind of plausible explanation as to why, when they built that levee, they didn't protect their land. They could never ever get an explanation as to why they bypassed us. My father and I, we then tried to find out why they did that and we could never find out. Finally we contacted Senator Thad Cochran, we contacted his office. And

what he did he wrote a letter to the core of engineers and they said--they report to his office, ok--and in that report they stated three reasons as to why they did what they did. But it is our conclusion that, the reason they stated were totally erroneous. Totally bogus. One reason they gave was that they attempted to follow the riverbank as closely as possible, but that's not true, because had they followed the riverbank as close as possible, they would have protected us, ok. Cause our farm is shaped like a horseshoe-like. Bottom line of it is that they didn't follow the design and configuration of the riverbank. So that was the number one reason they gave. The second reason they gave was at the time that they were planning to build the levee, ok, they stated that our land was totally forested. That was totally not true. When they built that levee by the way, they bypassed us, but they protected a 13,000 acre farm that was right adjacent to us.

CK: And a smaller farm.

LK: Well, yeah. Anyway, they protected this 13,000 acre farm and the ironic thing was that that land was for the most part was forested, and our land was not. They didn't really clean that land up until the 1970s.

RF: And that 13,000 acres was white owned?

LK: Yes, absolutely.

RF: Wow.

CK: The (12:22) would call me up and bought the woods, the 13, 13,000 acres. We're talking about 13,000 acres, and they cleared it see. Then they built the levees. And, uh, they messed us up when they built the levees to protect the 13,000 acres.

RF: So the levee was put in in the early 70s.

LK: The late 1970s, correct.

CK: Yeah in the 80s, they were working on it in the 80s too. And by the way, look, they didn't--they bought eight acres of my land, you know my grand father's land. They bought eight acres. Well, my cousin's land, bought eight acres. That's all, uhuh. And they bought eight acres, and they didn't buy any land from a black person. Not one acre other than that in building the levees. That's right.

RF: So how soon after the levees were in did you all stop farming? Were you forced off the land?

CK: How soon? We stopped farming in '02.

LK: I don't have a copy of that, but that's what I allege. We even filled out a claim in terms of the economic losses. We've tried basically everything to get redress in terms of what the court did, but we've been unsuccessful.

RF: Wow.

CK: Now when they would have meetings in the parties about building the levees, our people didn't know about it.



LK: Excuse me, I'm sorry your name is Robert, right?

RF: Yeah, you can call me Rob.

LK: Ok, Rob, I tell you what. I'll have copies of that but what you could do is, if you wanted to take that with you you could, but, you know, promise me that you would send it back if you wanted to.

RF: If you're comfortable with that.

LK: Yeah, if you're going to send it back I'll let you take them.

RF: I'll make copies tomorrow morning and put it back in the mail tomorrow.

LK: Ok, alright well then good luck. Good luck.

RF: Thank you very much.

LK: Yeah.

RF: So the project we're working on will eventually be a book. And we're running into similar stories, not just in Mississippi along the levees, but all over. In fact just a couple of weeks ago I spoke to a woman in North Carolina who, their army of engineers in the state of North Carolina flooded her farm, 1,080 acres, flooded it down to four acres, to build a lake. And they uncovered that if a black farmer lived across the road from a white farming family, both those farms were protected. If it was a black farmer across the road from a black farmer, those farms were not protected.

LK: Mmhm, absolutely.

RF: It's very similar and just downright sad. Yeah I'll take a look at this.

LK: Yeah and just, mail it back if you would.

CK: There's some history, some of what we might have mentioned, you can look over and get a copy of it.

LK: Yeah and you can send that back as well.

RF: I could mail it back tomorrow as well. This will help me out in typing up notes tonight.

CK: Ok.

RF: That would be great, especially with some of the spelling because I'm not from Mississippi. Yeah, thank you. So let's see. I want to backtrack for just a second. So while you all were in Chicago, who was farming the land that the family owned?

CK: My dad and uncle was farming and they retired. Then my son and I thought, my son--

LK: We started to--we were still living in Chicago but we would come down on a yearly basis--we started to do that in about 1982.

RF: And so, you essentially took over operations in the early 80s.

LK: Yeah we did, we took over my grand fathers farm in about 1982. My uncle died in uh--

CK: '86.

LK: '86.

RF: [CK] This was your brother?

CK: This was my uncle.

RF: Your uncle ok.

LK: Yeah and what happened was he willed his land to really his mistress because the land had been in the family since 1905 it was of great sentimental value to me. So what I did was I tried to purchase the land. In doing so I tried to borrow money from the USDA, and I was overtly discriminated against.

RF: Have you been a part of the Pickford case?

LK: We were, yes, we were.

RF: Ok. And has that worked out in your favor? Do you feel that?

LK: Well let me just--I'll answer it like this, ok. We were successful, to be honest with you, ok, but although if you know anything about that that involved 50,000 and when you considered the type of discrimination we went through on a yearly basis, that was peanuts, really.

CK: Peanuts.

RF: And losing the family farm, that's what it amounted to. This piece of land that was sentimental to you.

LK: Yeah well we still had the land, ok, but we were forced out of farming and that's what we loved to do, ok. Alright. So we couldn't do that anymore.

CK: You see, the farm surveyers took out years from my father's land in '20, '29. It was cotton based on it. It was cotton based on it, because my brother was farming. And he farmed till '81, and that was the only land they took the yield. And what they did they'd take a yield. And what we did is we'd go into have the production, well they tell me that they already have the production. That's what they would tell me.

RF: This was the USDA?

CK: Yes that's right. And I would go on through the procedure just like that and I know what was going on but I had to accept it because I couldn't do anything. And my son, you know, when they took the yield--because he was there, it was bad but we couldn't do anything about it.

LK: Let me give you some idea how they tried to discriminate against me. I tried to once again borrow money from the USDA to purchase this land that had been in the family for such a long time. And when I approached the Yazoo County supervisor, he blurted out about four or five things that just weren't true. What he told me was, number one, I had to be a full time resident of the state of Mississippi. At that time I was still living in Chicago but, as I stated before, I was coming down on a yearly basis to farm my grandfather's land. But he stated that I had to be a full time resident of the state of Mississippi. He told me that I had to live near or on the farm--and this is to qualify for, to even get an application to apply for the

loan-- he told me that the person who owned the land at that time would not sell to me. He told me that there was no way that I would get a clear title to the land, ok. So basically what he did was try to discourage me in every way possible. And so, when I left his office, I knew that these things were not true, so I just took it upon myself to, I wrote a letter to the USDA's office in Washington asking them was it true that I had to be a full resident of the state of Mississippi to apply for a loan. They responded and said that was not so. So I had it in black and white that that was not so, alright. And the person who owned the land at the time, you know, that was not true that she wouldn't sell to me. It wasn't true that I had to live on or near the farm in terms of getting a clear title. None of that was true. He just overtly tried to discriminate against me. But finally he did provide me the application. Not that day, but it was months after that, because I persisted. And I filled the application out, sent it in, but I knew I was going to be turned down, you know I KNEW it. True enough, I was turned down, but I had the right to appeal. So I appealed that decision. We had that meeting in 1990 at the office in Jackson. And bottom line of it is, the supervisor himself wasn't there but he sent two of his representatives to the meeting, and they couldn't provide any logical reason why they turned me down. So bottom line, I won the appeal. And I was able to borrow the money to purchase the land. But had I not been persistent--

RF: And gone all the way there.

LK: Right, ok.

RF: Ok. So this was additional acreage to what was already in your family?

LK: No.

CK: See, oh go right along.

LK: Ok. Bottom line, once again, initially when my grandfather purchased the land it was about 1,000 acres and close to that. My grandfather owned about 318 or so. My uncle, Henry King, owned about 442. The 442 was the land that I attempted to purchase. In other words, as I said it before, he left the land to his mistress, and I wanted to purchase the land and bring it back into the family.

RF: And she's the one who sold it to you eventually?

LK: Yes correct.

CK: She's my part (24:37). She's my--. My father, it was never out of the family, Thomas King, you know.

RF: So, does that mean that, now that you've purchased from your uncle's mistress, that 400 odd acres, does that mean that the 1,000 acres is still in the family? That all of that was purchased (in '85, 25:04).

LK: Basically my father and I we own about 840 acres, plus or minus. The other 150 that's also family land, we have relatives in Memphis and like that, ok. But he and I we own about 850 of the original 1,000, or close to it.

RF: So the land's been completely fallow since '02, or something like that?

LK and CK: Well--

LK: You?

CK: No you tell him.

LK: Ok. What I did was, because we were forced out of farming because of the flooding problem and because of the depressed farming economy and like that, we had to seek an alternative. That alternative was in the form of CRP, are you familiar with that?

RF: I'm not.

LK: Ok. CRP stands for Conservation Reserve Program. It's a government conservation program whereby you sign basically a fifteen year contract and you basically take your land out of farming and the government, in return, will pay you a yearly rental fee. Now that payment is not a big payment. It's about enough to keep us going, barely pay the bills. But it was an alternative, because we just couldn't make it in farming because of the flooding and things like that, ok. So the CRP was an alternative so that's what we're in now.

CK: But you know we had a big flood. It's killing the trees. The trees are dying right now. The flood knocked over some of them, and they died.

LK: What he's talking about there, is that when you signed up for the CRP, what you have to do is you take your land out of farming and you have to do one of two things. Either plant trees or let the land grow up into native grasses. We planted those trees in two phases, 2003 and 2004. We have a total of about 636 in the CRP program. But because of the flooding, once again, I would conservatively estimate, since we planted those trees, we've lost about 20-30 percent of the trees because of the flooding.

RF: Which wouldn't have been a problem if the levees--.

LK: [laughter] Yeah yeah we would probably still be in farming. You know because we come from a farming family and it's in our blood. But, uh, we just couldn't make it.

RF: Was is it hardwood, pine? What's planted on the land now?

LK: Hardwood trees, ok. We planted about four or five different species. Let's see, um, they're all hardwood trees.

CK: Red oak. White oak. Ash trees.

LK: Green ash, Shumard, Willow oaks, Nutall. You know four of five different kinds.

RF: Ok. Yeah I've been reading this is the worst flood since '27.

LK: '27 yeah correct. That's correct.

RF: [to CK] Do you remember the '27 flood?

CK: No I was two years old.

RF: Two years old. There was another bad flood in '37.

CK: '37, oh I know about that!

RF: Ok, tell me, what do you recall about the '37 flood?

CK: In '37, water it came up. We had made good crop there in '37. Look, we had a big water, and '22 [he means '27] was nothing like '37. We had water, a flood in '28. And in '28, my people lost all that crop. In '29 they didn't get the chance to plant. In '32 there was a big flood, well close to '37. But it went down early and they made good crop. We made good crops. Yeah I started it in the field. I started in the field in '32 I was cleaning new ground up when I was eleven years old in '36.

RF: What do you remember about the work that you did?

CK: What in '37?

RF: Yeah, well when you first started in the field.

CK: In '32, I started in '32 after the flood of '32. I started chopping and picking cotton. My father was a fisherman too. He caught plenty of fish behind that flood water. It helped them out. If it had not been for him fishing and trapping coons and everything, they couldn't have made it down in that time.

RF: Now was that just for subsistence? Or did he sell the fish and the skins to--

CK: He sold the fish and coon eyes and snake eyes. See that water was coming.

RF: So the animals was coming to the farm.

CK: Uh huh. But anyway, on the farm, I mean on the crop they was all in '28.

RF: But in '37 and '38, you made a piece of the crop--

CK: After the '37 crop, the '37 water, there was another flood and until '45 it was light. My father and grandfather made crops after '45. It didn't cover all the land, see, the levee wasn't there. So it didn't bother any more until '73. And after '73 they slide on over those levees. And they did it, they built those two levees. The Sartartia backwater levee and the Yazoo backwater levee. One on the northwest side and one on the south side of us.

RF: Do you remember the first tractor on the farm?

CK: Yes. There was a tractor. I was little. The first tractor, I was small. My daddy and my grandfather they had bought it. Steel wheels. They had in '44 bought a case tractor. And I logged with the case tractor used to log in woods with it. And you would use it on the farm and in the woods.

RF: You plowed with it and hauled off lumber with it as well?

CK: No, didn't haul off lumber, we hauled logs, uh, wagon, a log wagon.

RF: Ok.

CK: And it had mules. We broke the land up on the farm and we had mules that was pulling it until in the '50s, you now we got to using a tractor.

RF: Right.

CK: It had an (33:44). She had the tractor and all like that.

RF: Do you remember about when that tractor with the steel wheels, do remember about when that was when you first got that tractor, or when your parents did?

CK: That first tractors, I was about, maybe around five or six years old.

RF: And before they used to use mules.

CK: Used mules uh-huh.

RF: Ok. Goodness, let's see. Can you describe the house you grew up in, what the house was like that you grew up in?

CK: It was a four room house. And it had two bedrooms and a kitchen and dining room. Well, anyway, later, in '50, that was my father, built, he knew how to build. He borrowed money from, well the government, and they cheated, they cheated on the house. So they didn't put the money that he'd wanted. They cut it short. Smaller rooms and everything. So that's the way it was.

RF: Was that, I wonder what program that I was. I guess that wouldn't be the GI bill or anything like that. I wonder what program that was, that the house was made through.

CK: That bill--

LK: Oh, Farmer's Home Administries.

CK: Yeah.

RF: Farmer's Home Administries?

LK: Yeah.

RF: Ok.

CK: [to LK] I can't think like you!

LK: Which is now the Farm Service Agency.

RF: Farmer's Service Agency.

LK: Farm, yeah, Farm--just Farm--Service Agency.

RF: Ok and both of those houses, both the one you grew up in and the one in the fifties were both of those on the farm?

CK: Yes, we had it somehow, you know it was--. Well, anyway we had five or six families at one time that we was farming on my daddy and grand daddy's land. Around five or six. Six was too big. My grand father, my dad, my uncle, my aunt, and my God, Coleman White, Hampton Brown all of them, you know.

RF: And so a couple of those, Coleman White, they weren't family they were renters right?

CK: No, no, they weren't in the family. Coleman White and Hampton Brown they weren't family people.

RF: Were they also black families?

CK: Black families yeah.

RF: Did your family ever rent to white families/

CK: No. Well, anyway, what about Henry?

LK: Well, now my uncle, Henry King, in 1983 I believe, he rented his land to a white farmer, ok. That lasted from about 1983 up until 1991 at which time I purchased the land.

RF: Other farmers in the community, in your area, when you were growing up or when you came back and started farming the land, was it a fairly, did it feel like a tight knit community? Was there cooperation among farmers in the area or did you feel pretty isolated?

CK: No. See the black farmers owned the land--well some of them lost the land. See, they borrowed money from the bank and they couldn't, the bank call them in, you now, following the money. A white man see it and he wants it. They would call for the money, and they couldn't produce his money and they were foreclosing.

LK: In other words what he's saying--and you probably know this, Rob--but in the 1920s, there were almost 1,000,000 black owned farms. By the 1970s or 80s that number had dwindled to about 17,000 and now you know its even less than that. But I guess maybe your question was, you know, maybe did we kind of get along with the white farmers?

RF: It's two questions. One is did you get along with white farmers, and the other question is did the neighbors, the other farming neighbors that you had within a couple square miles, was there a sense of cooperation? Did they help with crops? Did they help with barn raising? Did they help with other things if somebody gets sick? Was there some labor trade going on?

LK: Well, you know, to be honest with you, when I moved down and started to farm--once again, very very few black farmers, bottom line of it is--the area where we farmed, we were really basically the only black farm down in that area. In terms of the white farmers, ok, you now, basically they were pretty good to us, so if we needed some help or something like that, you know, they basically provided the help to be quite honest with you.

RF: Ok.

LK: Yeah. The only, once again, the only really overt discrimination was really on the part of the USDA, to be quite honest with you.

RF: Ok.

CK: You take around us, we were going to farmers around there. It's not in the black, there used to be plenty of them--they had more mules and everything. But anyway, they lost that farm, some of them. One or two were sold. One was sold, I think it was five hundred acres for \$36,000. And one sold the farm for \$65,000. Well anyway they got a little money but that's the way it was. It wasn't in the black farmers. It's not in the black farmers anymore. Out there in the hills, a friend Grier, I talk with him, I wanted him to meet you, but I don't think. Anyway I talked to my cousin, Pop Johnson.

LK: I don't know. But were you aware of that number by the way?

RF: Yeah. Even before I got involved on the project I followed the Pickford case and knew the numbers through the case. And actually I'm a graduate student my dissertation is on a farm in Holmes County. A cooperative farm in Holmes County that, the residents of the farm were chased out of the farm in the 50s by the Klan, actually. It was a black owned farm. So yeah I've come across those numbers before.

LK: Yeah I'd figured you would be aware of that.

RF: Yeah. So how do you think your family was able to hold onto the farm for so many years?

CK: The reason why was they raised hogs, cows, and my father was a commercial fisherman.

RF: Oh a commercial fisherman ok. [42:25]