

ANNA DELASBOUR
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An Oral History of Southern Agriculture

LU ANN JONES: I'm not sure I've met him [Don Caffery].

ANNA DELASBOUR: Mr. Don? You haven't met him yet? Oh, I raised them. Mr. John, Jr., his oldest brother, he passed. Mr. Don T and Mr. Clegg and they had a sister named Miss Mary, well, we brought up together, me and her. Yes ma'am. But she passed, too. Yes, ma'am. Now Miss Lydia, the baby sister, she's in Houston. I been with 'em all my days.

LAJ: I was going to ask you when were you born and where were you born?

AD: I was born at Four Corners. They call it Jeanerette, Jeanerette, Louisiana. I was born August the 11th, 1903.

LAJ: So you're gonna be 85.

AD: I'll be 85 this coming of August, on the 11th. Yes, ma'am. I'll be 85.

LAJ: What did your parents do?

AD: My parents, they was from Four Corners too. Yes, ma'am. But they've all passed.

LAJ: What did they do?

AD: Well, my daddy, he had worked in the field and my mother, she had cut cane too. She was mother of 14 children.

LAJ: Really?

AD: Yes, ma'am. Eleven girls and three boys.

LAJ: Where did you fit into that line-up?

AD: [Laughter] I was the sixth child. After that, when I got of age, I was about eight years old, well, I had two of my sisters were working for Mrs. Caffery before I did. They'd work a while and they didn't want to stay. So they come and got me. Mrs. Caffery told my mother, said, "If they don't

want to stay, Clementine, I'll bring 'em back."

LAJ: She said she would what, if they wanted to stay?

AD: If they didn't want to stay. You see, they were small, too, you know. But they wanted somebody to play with the oldest little girl. Well, they worked a while and they didn't like it. So they brought 'em back and I was sick. So my mother said instead of I stayed in the bed where I was, I got up and come to the door. So Mrs. Caffery said, "Oh, Clementine, how about this one? She's just the right size for Mary to play with." So my mother told her, said, "Well, she's always sick." And say, "We got her under doctor treatment." She told my mother, said, "I got a brother is a doctor, Dr. Frere [?]." Said, "We'll tend to her." And that's where they took me.

After they brought me there, I didn't want to come back. They were so nice with me. Treated me so nice. My husband's great-aunt, she was Mr. and Mrs. Caffery's mammy before they married, both of 'em. So she told my daddy she would help Mrs. Caffery and them tend to me. Well, we grew up there. And they were so nice with me I didn't want to go back home. When it was time for me to go and visit my parents, I didn't want to go. They was so nice.
[Laughter]

LAJ: When you say that your great-aunt--did you say your great-aunt?

AD: It was my husband's mama's aunt. So that was my husband's great-aunt. Yes, ma'am.

LAJ: When you say she had been their mama, what did that mean that she had done?

AD: Well, you see, she had nursed Mr. Caffery before Mrs. Caffery, and after that she went and nursed Mrs. Caffery. She was Mrs. Caffery's mammy and Mr. Caffery's mammy. And finally come to find out she was my husband's mama's

aunt. My husband's mama's mama and Mammy was two sisters. Yes, ma'am. And so I just stayed there with 'em until I got married. They was so nice with me. After I got married, I continued working until they passed. Mr. Caffery passed February the 4th and Mrs. Caffery passed August--I think Mr. Caffery passed February the 2nd, something like that, and Mrs. Caffery passed August the 4th and buried the 5th.

LAJ: Of what year?

AD: That was '57. I think it was '57. I got the paper. Yes, ma'am. '57 or '58. But I be more sure it's '57.

LAJ: So you were eight years old when you came there?

AD: Yes, ma'am, but I went back. I went back home until I was 13 years of age, when I went to stay with 'em. I didn't want to go back home.

LAJ: Why not?

AD: Well, they was so nice with me, I didn't know the difference. They was so nice. And Mammy was there and they had the cook, the housegirl, the wash woman, Emma. Emma was the wash woman. And Florentine was the cook. And Matille [?] was the housegirl. And they just wanted somebody to play with "Miss Sis." I called her Miss Sis, but her name was Miss Mary.

LAJ: How many of those people lived there full time?

AD: Before I did?

LAJ: Say, by the time you got there, when you were 13. How many of these people actually lived in the house? I mean people who were working there.

AD: Oh, it was Mammy, Emma, the cook, the housegirl and the yardman. There was about six of us; I was the seventh.

LAJ: And you all lived there?

AD: Yes, ma'am.

LAJ: Where would you sleep?

AD: We had a house. They had premises. They called it premises. They had a nice house in the back of the yard for us and fixed up so nice. Everything was so convenient.

LAJ: Had you had a chance to go to school?

AD: Oh, yes, ma'am, yes, ma'am. I went to school. I went to Four Corners and then to Sacred _____ a while. I had a chance to go to school. They give me what--you know a long time ago wasn't like now. Everything done changed.

LAJ: What do you mean?

AD: Everything done changed, you know, in the work line, because before they had the mules, they had to load carts, put the sugar cane in the cart and they didn't have no tractor during that time. It was just mules. And them mens had to load the cart with the cane. Mr. Caffery used to take us out riding to see how the people would be working, you know.

LAJ: Before you came here, did you ever work in the fields any?

AD: No, ma'am. I never did work nowhere but same people here. And my husband, we worked for the same people. We never did went nowhere. See, they came here when he said he was eight years of age. So they never did move nowhere. Him and I worked for the same people all our days.

LAJ: How did y'all meet?

AD: [Big laugh]

LAJ: What's so funny about that?

AD: They would have him to come take us to the show, you know. Mrs. Caffery and them, they wouldn't let me go with anybody. Eugene and them, they

was a nice family of people. I could go and visit them and that was all.
Yes, ma'am.

LAJ: So Mrs. Caffery wouldn't let you go and visit anybody else?

AD: No, ma'am. They didn't let me go visit anybody. Just visited the Delasbour family. Well, I could've visited because they was a big family, too. Well, they were invited me to their house because Mammy was their great-aunt, too, you see. And when I wanted to go home, well, they would send me home. They had a little truck, they called it Manley [?] truck or some kind of truck like that. I wish my husband was there to tell you about it. I just enjoyed everything. Until they passed, I continued working for them.

I lost my health. I worked for Mr. Don. When they would go away I would go take over to the house. I helped Mr. Clegg nurse their children a while. We come up all together.

LAJ: Did you always live here, or did you live in the quarters after you were married?

AD: No, ma'am. Right here, 64 years. Right here. Sixty-four years I been married. We been in the same house. But that's Mr. Caffery's house, you know. Lived in the same house. Never did change house.

LAJ: Would you go and visit in the quarters?

AD: In the quarters? No, ma'am.

LAJ: Why not?

AD: I don't know. I just didn't go visit.

LAJ: Did that seem very different to you since you worked in the house?

AD: Everybody was so nice, they was so nice. But I never did take time. I always was working all the time, until I lost my health. I had my children and them to tend to, and I didn't take time to go visit. My used to

come and tell me, say, "Anna, why don't you come and spend the night with your children?" And my husband'd work all the time at the sugar house, always doing something. Never did stop, always doing something.

LAJ: How old were you when you got married?

AD: I was 19, and I would be 20 that August but I got married the 3rd of March. Yes, ma'am, I was 19 years of age.

LAJ: Where did you get married?

AD: In Baldwin, Sacred Heart Church. Dr. De _____, I think he's dead now because he was dead when he married us. I've been married 64 years.

LAJ: Did you have any kind of honeymoon?

AD: No, ma'am. During that time we didn't [laughter]. No, ma'am. No honeymoon. We had to go to work. [Laughter]

LAJ: After you got married, were you still living in the house at the Cafferys?

AD: Yes, ma'am. I was right there with 'em, working in the house. I worked in the house. Do housework. I done do everything over there. I did nurse, housework, wash and iron, and cook. On the last there, I had to run the kitchen myself. They didn't have to tell me nothing, because, you see, I know everything. They didn't have to tell me nothing. Didn't have to tell me what to cook or nothing. When they just go sit to the table, they know just what I had cooked was all right. [Chuckle]

LAJ: When you first went there, there were seven people working there. How long did they have a house staff that was that big?

AD: Well, you see, some of 'em didn't stay on premises. Just the house girl and the cook and Mammy. We had to stay on premises. But the rest, well, they go home in the evening after they get through their work.

LAJ: How long did you continue to live there?

AD: Continued to work?

LAJ: Continued to live there.

AD: On premises?

LAJ: Um-hum.

AD: Until I got married.

LAJ: And then you had your own house.

AD: Yes, ma'am. Yes, ma'am. After I got married, well, I came over here but I still continued working for the Cafferys. Yes, ma'am. Still continued working for 'em. They was so nice with me it didn't make no difference and right now, oh, those children, they crazy about me. [Chuckle] I like 'em, too.

LAJ: Who took care of your children while you were working?

AD: Well, my husband's mother, she was a very nice person. I say I'll never forget her. She was nice with me. She would take care of my children and my sister, Margie, she would come and help with my children. They would help me with my children. So that's why I could work, you know.

My husband, we just raised everything. Hog, cow, chicken, geese, duck, turkey. We had raised everything.

LAJ: I was wondering if you could just describe for me when you got married what were you doing at the house.

AD: When I got married?

LAJ: What a typical day at the house would be like.

AD: I was doing housework when I got married. Yes, ma'am.

LAJ: What would you do? How would you go about your work in a day? What would your day be like?

AD: Well, I would go on from seven to four. And sometimes she would have parties at night; we would have to go serve for the parties. It was easy. You know, when you catch on to things it's not hard. And I was brought up—I had done caught on to everything. It wasn't hard.

LAJ: Who had taught you how to keep house?

AD: Mammy. Mammy had taught me how to do everything. Taught me how to take care of the children. She taught me how to do housework, taught me how to cook, wash and iron. She always did tell me when I got to do something, take my time and do it right. Say if I'm not gonna do it right, don't do it. [Laughter] I had to do it right. I enjoys it. And I thank her, because I can go anywhere. If I had my health and you know, younger, I could go anywhere and get a job. Yes, ma'am.

LAJ: What kinds of things did you like to cook?

AD: I liked to bake. I liked to bake. Make dessert. I liked that.

LAJ: What kind of dessert?

AD: I would make all kind of dessert. You see, Mrs. Caffery, she didn't tell me nothing what to do because I just had everything in charge. Just anything I would cook or dessert I would make, it was all right.

LAJ: Were specific dishes?

AD: Mr. Caffery liked chocolate ice cream.

LAJ: Oh.

AD: [Laughter] Chocolate ice cream. And I used to bake cookies, bake cake. And what you call those little coo-coos? After you bake 'em you roll 'em up in sugar, powdered sugar. That was good. I just would cook anything I wanted. She didn't worry about to come tell me what to cook. Anything I would cook was all right. Yes, ma'am. Because I'd seen the way Mammy had do,

you know. And Mammy had told me, after she passed, well, I'd just have to take over.

I had to churn, make butter. You had to skim the cream off, and take the cream and make butter with it. Talk about good butter. Make cream cheese.

LAJ: Say, when you were washing, were you still washing with a washboard?

AD: Yes, ma'am. I was still washing with them rubbing boards and go hang 'em on the line.

LAJ: How long did you use a rubbing board before you got a washing machine?

AD: Oh, I dis-remember what year but it was a pretty while before we had got a washing machine. But after that they got a washing machine, washer and dryer. Yes, ma'am. I enjoys it. You know where you're working and everybody's pleased and satisfied, makes you feel good. And anything you do, they appreciate it, it makes you feel good. But I say if I wasn't too old and could see, I would be working for those Cafferys. Because my mother always did tell me she wanted me to be a mammy like Mammy did. [Laughter]

LAJ: That's what your mother told you?

AD: Yes, ma'am.

LAJ: Why did she want you to do that?

AD: [Laughter] Because Mammy was a mammy, you see, and she wanted me to do that too. But I got disabled and blind.

LAJ: When did you have to stop working?

AD: Well, I'm not working anymore.

LAJ: I know. When did you have to stop?

AD: Well, I stopped, what year that was? I dis-remember what year. I stopped working about '67 or '68. I stopped working.

LAJ: Almost 20 years ago.

AD: But otherwise I could be working. But after my health was getting bad, Dr. Fernandez [?] had stopped me from working because my heart _____.

LAJ: Is that like a pacemaker?

AD: Yes, ma'am. Yes, ma'am. He had stopped me from working. I know I'd have those weakness, those dizziness. But I ain't had 'em for three week. I went and got my check-up and I ain't had 'em for three week.

But the Cafferys been so nice with me. We come up [together]. I say we're sisters and brothers. I whip 'em when I see 'em. [Laughter]

LAJ: After Clegg, Sr., then did you go and start working with them?

AD: Clegg, Jr.? No, I used to nurse Clegg, Jr.

LAJ: No, his father? When his parents got married, did you go and start working with them?

AD: You see, they had Florentine. Florentine been working for them since they got married. But when Florentine wouldn't go on, I would go. And those children was crazy about me. Miss Anne use to say, "You can know when Anna coming because they sit on the steps." It was little Clegg, Jr., and little Anne, and little Margaret. [Laughter] They would be waiting for me. But I nursed their daddy when he was small. They was very nice. They're nice to me. And when I don't see 'em, I be worried about 'em. The other day I was worrying about 'em, so my daughter called to see how they was doing. Yes, ma'am.

LAJ: What kind of jobs did your husband do on the place?

AD: Sugar house work. But before, he used to run tractor. After he got off the tractor, he went to the sugar house. He been working at the sugar house all his days. Yes, ma'am. That's why I say, if he was there he could tell you everything about the sugar house and he could tell you about the field, because his daddy was overseer here.

LAJ: Oh, really?

AD: Yes, ma'am. And those ladies would be lining up in the field cutting cane by hand and his daddy was overseer. It was his daddy, Mr. Smith and Mr. Armond [?] and Mr. Brother Smith used to be overseer.

LAJ: Mr. Brother Smith, how is he related to the other Mr. Smith? Is he related to the other Mr. Smith?

AD: That was his daddy. His daddy was the overseer, and Mr. Smith was young. He's overseer over here now, I think, if he's not retired. But I been here all my days. My husband been here all his days. We never did work for nobody but for those Cafferys.

LAJ: Why not? Why didn't you go somewhere else?

AD: Well, we just brought up here and we just stayed here. [Laughter] We just stayed.

LAJ: Did you ever think about going somewhere else?

AD: No, ma'am. After I had my family, I said I didn't want to separate. We just stayed right there. We never did go nowhere. But the onliest thing, I say I'm sorry I didn't get my own home, you know. If I had my own home, so my children and them could have something to remember me.

LAJ: Do you rent this place?

AD: No, ma'am. I stay here for nothing.

LAJ: But you don't own it?

AD: No, ma'am. That's the Cafferys's. But I'm sorry. All of my other sisters, they have their own home. You know, I set down and think I don't have nothing. And all my other sisters, them, they have their own home.

LAJ: What did your brothers and sisters end up doing?

AD: My brothers, I ain't got no more brothers. But they all had their home at Four Corners, the brothers.

LAJ: What did they do when they were living? What kind of work did they do?

AD: Well, my brothers had worked in the field for Mr. B_____ and them. But my sisters, them, they went to Texas, in Port Arthur, and that's where they're still at. And they was working for some white people and the people who they was working for bought 'em a lot and they still got their lot. Yes, ma'am. Still got their lot. I ain't got nothing. I'm the onliest one in the family ain't got nothing. All the rest got their home.

Sometime I say maybe if we had go, we would've had something. You see, they wasn't paying good and my husband said he didn't want to go buy no home. He know he would have to pay for the home and had a family and he didn't want to starve his family out. See. So just stay with his family and support his family, so we ain't got nothing.

LAJ: How much would he be earning and how much would you be earning?

AD: I used to make \$4 a week, seven days a week. When I was nursing, I was getting \$3.75. But when I started to cooking, I was getting \$4 a week. Now, after that, I was making \$15 a week, and that was all.

LAJ: For seven days a week?

AD: Yes, ma'am. Yes, ma'am. And then sometime I had to go serve a party.

LAJ: Did you get paid extra for that?

AD: Oh, no, ma'am. No, ma'am, that'd go on my weekly. That was big parties.

LAJ: How many people would come?

AD: Oooh. Always they'd have parties. Always they'd have big parties. We had to fix the meal. Mrs. Caffery used to say, "Boo, we gonna have a party." I would go decorate the house. [Laughter]

LAJ: Was that the old Mrs. Caffery?

AD: Yes, ma'am. The old Mrs. Caffery. They're dead now. The mama and the daddy died. When they passed, I thought I was gonna pass too. But he always did tell me--the cook and two nurses what he had, they said, "Anna, you should tell those young Cafferys what Mr. Caffery used to tell 'em." Said, "He's sorry that he didn't do what he wanted to do before he took sick." Said, "But to tell me not to worry because those boys gonna do good by me, and if they don't, go to those girls. They gonna see about me." But I never did tell 'em, and every time those two nurses see me--see, Mr. Caffery had a nurse for 'em after they took sick. But you know, after they took sick I had to tend to 'em. They didn't want the nurse. I had to see about 'em. Both of 'em. The nurse said, "Did you tell Mr. Caffery and them what Mr. Caffery--?" I said, "No, I didn't tell him."

LAJ: Why didn't you?

AD: Said those children was gonna tend to me. And if those boys didn't pack [?] fair with me, said, "go to those girls. Those girls gonna pack fair with you, Boo." They all had called me Boo.

[End Tape I, Side A; begin Tape I, Side B]

LAJ: Why didn't you go to them?

AD: I didn't tell 'em.

LAJ: What did he mean by that?

AD: I don't know. Because he told Dorothy and Anna, (see, my name Anna, too) he say, "Anna know all four corner of them houses." Say, "Any corner you put her in, she know all four of the corner of the house." So I didn't tell 'em.

I stood by 'em until they passed. I nursed both of 'em. That's all Mrs. Caffery [used to say], "Boo, Boo, Boo, Boo." Now, you know, when she passed, you know a echo? That's the last word she called me. "Ann-a!" And that was all. Looked like that sounded like a echo. Yes, ma'am. I was there that morning when she passed. I see she was gonna pass, I stayed with her all day that Sunday. I stayed there till that Sunday, so I told the nurse, I told Anna, "Let me go run and take my bath and I'll be right back." And I come take my bath and I went right back. She died that Monday morning.

But they was sweet. Oh, I can't say nothing about 'em. They were sweet. But I ain't got nothing. I say maybe that just the way it had to be, huh.

LAJ: By the time you quit working, how much money were you making?

AD: I was making \$15 a week. Same thing, never did go up.

LAJ: Did you ever ask them for more?

AD: No, ma'am. I didn't ask 'em for more. You know, Mrs. Caffery used to tell me all the time I was a poor person to ask. [Laughter] She used to tell me all the time, "Anna, anything you need, ask." Say, "Tell me." But "Anna is a poor person to ask." I don't know, I was just shy.

But my sister and them, they're sick in Port Arthur. And you know, not

the older people, they done passed, but the children, them, they got people to go and tend to 'em. Yes, ma'am. I just wished you would see. Yes, ma'am. Two of 'em done lost their health. But they send people to do for 'em, and see to 'em get the right meal and everything. See, they had raised those children just like I come up with the Cafferys. Well, that's the way my sister and them did. They raised them people's children, and they don't forget.

LAJ: While you were doing all this work in the house, what were the children's mothers doing?

AD: Well, Mrs. Caffery, she didn't do nothing. She was rich [said in low whisper].

LAJ: You're talking about the older one?

AD: Yeah, the older people. I didn't work for those young ones. I used to go help out. I would go help out, but I didn't work for them young ones. When they would call me to do something, I would go give 'em a helping hand, but I didn't work for them.

I stayed to the yard all the time. They wanted me to go to the yard, but look like I just can't go.

LAJ: They wanted you to what?

AD: Miss Deborah in that old house where I used to work. Might as well say I was raised up there to that old house there.

LAJ: Where was the house that you stayed in?

AD: They had brought it to Mr. Clegg's house. It was a three-room house and they brought it to Mr. Clegg's house after he got married and they kept adding on, adding on. But sometime I said, I don't know, maybe if I'd go away like my other sisters and them, I would've had something I could say my

own. When you got something of your own--. But I ain't got nothing, but children.

LAJ: I was getting ready to say, you've got beautiful children that I've seen.

AD: That's right, I got children.

LAJ: How many children did you have?

AD: I had 16.

LAJ: You had 16 children?

AD: The oldest one passed, Eugene, Jr. He passed. I've got 15 living. I've got nine boys and six girls now.

LAJ: How did you do that and keep on working?

AD: Well, my mother-in-law was so nice. That's why I say I'll never forget her; she was nice with me. And my sister, Maude, she passed too. They'd come here and stay. My mother-in-law, she was living right next door to me, you see. And I could work, and she said she'd see we needed it, you know. So she tended to my children. When I would come, everything would be so nice and clean and I wouldn't have to cook. [Laughter] My clothes done washed and folded up, waiting till I get home. She really was a good old lady. I say I'll never forget her; she was nice.

LAJ: When you were pregnant, did you continue to work or did you get time off?

AD: I would work until it was time for my babies to born. And six weeks after they born, back to work. [Laughter] Back to work.

LAJ: Did anybody nurse them?

AD: Yes, ma'am. My mother-in-law would tend to 'em, give 'em bottle, you know. A lot of children didn't want to nurse me. Dr. H _____ say I

had fever in my breast, in my milk. They didn't want to nurse me. And my mother-in-law would fix bottle for 'em, you know.

LAJ: Did you go to a doctor, or did you have a midwife with your children?

AD: I had three with the midwife.

LAJ: Really?

AD: Yes, ma'am.

LAJ: Was there a particular midwife that you used?

AD: It was Aunt Louise and Amadaus [?]. She was from Four Corners. I had her for three of those children. But the rest I had the doctor more.

LAJ: Were any of those pregnancies that were difficult?

AD: The one [daughter] staying with me, she was difficult, and one of my boys. That's the onliest trouble I had.

LAJ: What kind of trouble did you have?

AD: She come foot-forward. And my other boy, they say I had hang clothes up too much, raised my arm up too much, the naval string had done wrapped all around his little neck. That's the onliest trouble I had. Well, I had to have the doctor for them.

[LAJ plays back some of tape so AD can hear what she sounds like.]

LAJ: I'm interested in the navel cord was wrapped around him because you had raised your arms too much?

AD: Yes, ma'am. The doctor say I had hanged clothes too much. The baby's navel string--oh, we thought he was gonna [die]. He was blue, blue, blue. They had to pat him, just beat him, pat him on the back. And Anna Louise, she come foot-forward. I don't know why. That's a bad birth there.

LAJ: Were you ^{at} had the hospital for that?

AD: No, ma'am! At home. We didn't know [about] the hospital.

LAJ: So, you didn't go to the hospital with any of 'em. No, ma'am, all of 'em born right there. And when the midwife would get here, they had done born. The midwife just have to come and cut the little navel string.

LAJ: Your mother-in-law had delivered them?

AD: My mother-in-law and my mama, they would be right there. Yes, ma'am. We didn't know what's that, hospital.

LAJ: Who would come and stay with you?

AD: My sister. Always had somebody--my sister or his sister. They was right there with me. They always so nice; they always so nice with me. Just, all I'm sorry I didn't get my own home. That's the onliest thing [I'm sorry about].

Before my husband passed, he called me to the bed and he told me that he was going home. I said, "No." He thought he was in the hospital. I said, "You're not in the hospital. You're at home." He said, "Oh, no, I don't mean this home." Says, "Up there." I said, "Oh, no. You're already home." He said, "I'm going, but I feel sorry for you." I say, "Why?" I say, "Don't feel sorry for me." Said, "Because I know what you're gonna do." I said, "Why?" Said, "I'm going, but you ain't got nothing but your children." I said, "Well, I got somebody. I've got somebody." He said, "Well, just didn't have no home." The little money we was making, we had to put it on the children, clothes and groceries. But I had one of Mr. Caffery's cousins from San Antonio, Miss Clegg, she used to send me big boxes of clothes for my children. She christened Laura, the one in New Orleans. Laura named after her, Laura Clegg, because her godmother was Miss Laura Clegg, you see. And

one of my sons named Luther Clegg, after her husband. That was Mr. Caffery's cousin. [Chuckle]

LAJ: What did your children end up doing?

AD: Some of 'em here; the rest in Texas. And some in New Orleans. I used to have one in--oh, I forgot the name of that place, but she's back in San Antonio.

LAJ: What kind of work did they do?

AD: Well, my daughters, some of 'em nursed, some of cook, head cook in the school, you know. Those boys, they have different works. I don't know what kind of work. He [son who was visiting] work at the Delta.

LAJ: Delta Airlines?

AD: Yes, ma'am.

[Phone rings]

LAJ: Does that daughter live here with you?

AD: Yes, ma'am.

[AD talks on telephone to daughter who lives in New Orleans.]

AD: Hello. Who that? Sue. Oh, that's you again Sue? Yeah, you know where we been? To the _____.

That's my daughter I was telling you live in New Orleans. Yes, ma'am, that's my daughter live in New Orleans.

Sue, I just now been talking about you. Yeah, one of Miss Deborah's friends, she's here. One of Miss Deborah Caffery's friends? Yeah, Mr. Clegg Caffery's wife. Yeah, yeah. They're [daughter and son] under the tree.

LAJ: You want me to run and tell 'em? I will. I'll do that for you.

AD: Thank you, ma'am.

Sue, she was interviewing me. Yeah. About long time ago. Yeah. Gonna

make a history. We was waiting on Chuck [a son who used to drive tractors on the plantation]; Chuck didn't come. Yeah. Well, just a few questions, you know. Yeah, that was so nice. Oh, that ain't nothing. We were just sitting there talking.

Oh, she said that's so sweet of you. Oh, she said, she wishes she was here. Yes, ma'am. That's the one named Laura, after her godmother. Yes, ma'am. Oh, she said that's so sweet. She's nursing a rich lady, too, in New Orleans. They have good jobs. She's a nurse, you know. But she nurse at the house. She went to the lady's house and nurse at her house.

And my oldest daughter, she's a nurse. She's nursing a lady in St. Martinville. Yes, ma'am.

Oh, just now been talking about her.

LAJ: You said she gave your daughter clothes. Did they ever give you other things like clothes?

AD: Just clothes, yes, ma'am. Nice little dresses. All kinds of pretty things. But she's dead now. Oh, she been dead. And her daughter, Miss Amy, she died too. Yes, ma'am. I'm sure her husband's dead, too. But they was nice with me.

LAJ: Were you ever able to bring food home, or did you want to do that? Did you ever bring food home?

AD: Bring what home?

LAJ: Food? From work?

AD: Oh, no, ma'am. Couldn't bring no food. Just had to cook enough what they could [eat]. But, couldn't bring no food. The white people been nice, they really been nice with me. Right now, they give me things. Yes, ma'am. Right now they give me things.

LAJ: Were you able to keep on going to church since you had to work seven days a week?

AD: I didn't go to church that often, but when I would get chance we had to walk to Baldwin.

LAJ: Where would you go to church there?

AD: We would go to Sacred Heart Church in Baldwin. But now they transferred us to town. You got to go to town to St. Jude's. But the preist in Baldwin said we didn't need to transfer. Said we could've continued. You know, they said everybody on this side of the bridge, go to Franklin and everybody across the bridge, go to Baldwin. So we went to Franklin, St. Jude's.

LAJ: Now, that was a Catholic church?

AD: Catholic church. Yes, ma'am, yes, ma'am.

LAJ: Did black and white go to church together there?

AD: Yes, ma'am. Black and white, all mixed. All mixed. And everybody so sweet. Oh, they was nice with me with my husband. They used to come and have prayer for him. It's a white club, you know, and they would come and have prayer for him all the time. Yes, ma'am. They really was nice. White and black, they really been nice to me. I didn't think I had that many friends. But you know your friends when you're down. And my husband was sick a long time. Two years he could handle himself, but them other three years, he was afflicted. Look like he had a stroke. He couldn't do nothing for himself. We had to help him and everything. You know, handling sick people look like it make you sick, too. But he had courage. He had courage.

LAJ: What job exactly did he have in the sugar house.

AD: Well, he was a all-over man. But he had run the double-_____.

LAJ: The what?

AD: The double-_____. Some kind of machine. He'd run that all the time. But he was a all-over man. Could do everything. See, I didn't know what's that a mechanic; I didn't know what's that, a carpenter. I didn't know what's that for nothing. He'd do all of that, all of that work. You see that living room there and bathroom for him and the other bathroom, he put them up. Now, he always did say he wanted to finish this kitchen but he took sick; he couldn't do it. But those children say they gonna finish, they gonna finish the kitchen for me. You could see he was going down when he was working because he wasn't feeling good. He had courage till the last. He say he wasn't gonna let his children and them starve. Work all the time, all the time.

LAJ: During the grinding season, how many hours a day would he work?

AD: Oh, they would go at seven, gets off at four. But during the grinding time, they'd go 12 on, 12 off.

LAJ: Would that be seven days a week?

AD: Yes, ma'am. Long as the sugar house was going. Yes, ma'am. And after they would get through, they would have to overhaul something. They call that overhaul.

LAJ: When was the busiest time for you? Was there a certain time of the year where people had more parties around here?

AD: At the yard here? Mrs. Caffery used to have parties all the time. Sometimes she would have parties in the morning. Right after breakfast, have party, 11:30-12 o'clock. That evening, she have another party. She was a pretty women. Oh, she was pretty.

But that's all they know, Boo. All they call me, Boo. [Laughter]

LAJ: Why was it they called you Boo?

AD: You see, when I was there, Mr. Don and Mr. Doc be back of the door. When I would pass, they would scare me, Boo! They would call theirselves scaring me. [Laughter] They was nice children, though. They're nice up till now. They're still nice. I told 'em I still can rule 'em. I still can handle 'em.

LAJ: How often do you see them now?

AD: I haven't seen 'em--we none don't want to see each other, because my husband passed and Mr. Don's wife passed. Oh, Lord, my heart gets so full. I cry for 'em all the time. They all were so nice with me when my husband passed. We was always together. And Miss Lorraine was right there. She was a pretty lady.

LAJ: And that was Mr. Don's wife?

AD: Mr. Don's wife. She was pretty. I hate to see 'em.

LAJ: Well, I appreciate your talking to me this afternoon.

AD: I enjoys that. I didn't know you had that [tape recorder] on.

LAJ: You have a nice voice.

AD: No, ma'am, no, ma'am. You know I got that cold. I've got that cold. Day before yesterday you couldn't hardly understand nothing I say. I had to whisper. I've got that cold. I don't know how I caught that cold. Yes, ma'am. I don't know how I caught that cold.

LAJ: Well, I don't guess your son came.

AD: I don't know what happened to him.

[End of interview]